

Bed Sore FAQs

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS FROM A NURSING HOME LAWYER

What steps should I take before meeting with an attorney to discuss a case involving bed sores?

When you become aware of a situation involving bed sores at a nursing facility or hospital it is important to get your loved one the medical treatment they need and then get into ‘fact collection mode’. In fact collection mode, you are beginning to collect information about the incident, acts or neglect of the staff and medical condition of your loved one. Doing some preliminary work before you meet with a lawyer will prove for a more effective meeting.

Don’t assume you will remember all facts regarding the incident. As time goes on, your memory will begin to fade. The following steps will help you organize your thoughts during a stressful time and to give an attorney the information he needs to work best on your behalf.

Despite the urge to block out the unpleasant facts and circumstances leading to an injury, much of the information listed below should be obtained as soon after an incident as feasible. The following information will prove to be valuable in both assessing the facilities responsibility and potentially as evidence to be used at trial.

Photographs- Take pictures of the physical injuries themselves, the area where the incident took place and if possible, the people involved. In cases involving particularly gruesome medical conditions (pressure sores, amputations, surgical wounds) no medical record can do justice to what your loved one experienced. Use a real camera as opposed to a camera-phone as the photos will be better quality.

Start Writing- Write down as much information about the incident or events as you can remember. Write some more. Details can be particularly helpful in the course of litigation as many nursing homes have high rates of employee turnover that can make obtaining information difficult. Concentrate on: names, dates, room numbers, names of facilities and medication dosages (if relevant).

Medical Chart- The medical chart from a nursing home and / or hospital is crucial to determining what a facility may have done or failed to do that resulted in injury or death. If your loved one sustained an injury that resulted in subsequent medical care at a hospital, these records will be important as well.

Chronology- This does not need to be one's life story. However, if a condition developed over time or there are multiple facilities that may be responsible for the injury or condition, it is important to get the correct names and general dates of admission at health care facilities. The names of doctors who provided medical care can be helpful as well.

Gather Other Relevant documents: Healthcare Power of Attorney, wills, death certificates, pre-injury photographs, autopsy reports and nursing home inspection reports all can be helpful when meeting with an attorney. Bring them with.

There really is no such thing as providing a lawyer with too much information. An experienced nursing home lawyer will be able to sort through the materials and determine what information is relevant to your case. Further, a law office that regularly handles nursing home matters should be able to access much of the above information with the use of properly executed medical authorizations.

The bottom line is that you should not let your inability to access certain information delay from meeting your meeting with an attorney as soon as you are comfortable. Meeting with an attorney soon after you become aware of a loved one's bed sores will provide the best opportunity to secure information relevant to your case.