

Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

Failure To Use Proper Lifting Technique Results In Severe Injury To Stroke Patient In Nursing Home

Posted at 5:23 AM on August 30, 2010 by Jonathan Rosenfeld

I'm always amazed at how shortcuts taken by nursing home staff can result in horrific patient injury or death. Frequently, I see the shortcuts taken by staff as a reflection the facilities failure to train their staff and the facilities decision to cut staffing levels to a bare-bones minimum.



Perhaps the area where I most frequently see staff short-cuts resulting in patient injury occurs during patient transfers. By law, nursing home patients need to be evaluated if they require assistance for transfers from their beds to wheelchair and *vice versa*.

Patient evaluations are conducted to evaluate the level of assistance that are necessary for transfers, and will set forth the necessary requirements based on their mobility level and size. Patients with little or no muscle control or those patients who are heavier may require the assistance of one, two or sometimes three staff members to perform *safe transfers*.

Jonathan Rosenfeld represents victims of nursing home abuse and neglect throughout the country. For more information please visit Nursing Homes Abuse Blog (www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com), Bed Sore FAQ (www.bedsorefaq.com) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

I was disturbed (and apparently the jury hearing the case was as well), when I heard of a recent nursing home negligence trial involving a man who was transferred from his bed to a chair without proper staff assistance.

The incident occurred at [Brockton Embassy Rehabilitation and Health Center](#) in Massachusetts, when a nurses assistant (CNA) attempted to move the elderly man from his bed to a chair with the use of a Hoyer lift-- a device that helps lift and move patients from one area to another. When the CNA attempted to move the man-- by herself-- a piece of the lift struck the man in the eye. The eye injury was so severe that the man's entire eye had to be removed in a surgery at Tuft's Medical Center.

An investigation into the incident determined that the man was to be transferred via a two-person lift-- as opposed to a single nurse attempting to do so. As a result of the nurse's lapse in judgment, she was fired and the state suspended her nursing license for six months.

Apparently, the jury thought the CNA's judgment lapse in terms of failing to get another staff member to assist-- was egregious that they awarded the man's family \$400,000 despite the fact that the patient died 47 days after the initial injury-- from unrelated causes.

My take:

In situations such as this, I tend to put a substantial responsibility on the part of the facility itself-- as opposed to the individual employee. Too frequently, I see facilities that over-work their employees to the point where it simply isn't feasible for staff to request additional assistance without drastically impeding the daily operation of the facility. Is under-staffing to blame for many occurrences such as the above? You bet!

Related Nursing Homes Abuse Blog Entries:

[Safe Transfers](#)

[Nursing Home Waits 19 Hours To Provide Medical Treatment To Resident Who Fractured Her Hip During Sabina Lift Transfer](#)

Jonathan Rosenfeld represents victims of nursing home abuse and neglect throughout the country. For more information please visit Nursing Homes Abuse Blog (www.nursinghomesabuseblog.com), Bed Sore FAQ (www.bedsorefaq.com) or call Jonathan directly at (888) 424-5757.

[Nursing Home Staff Must Take Precautions While Moving & Transferring Disabled Patients To Minimize Risk Of Dropping](#)

[Faulty Handicapped Lift Blamed For Nursing Home Death](#)

Strellis & Field, Chartered

Chicago Office

444 N. Wells St., Ste 202
Chicago, IL 60610
Tel: 312.201.0000

Belleville Office

216 W. Washington Street
Belleville, IL 62226
Tel: 618.235.8701

Waterloo Office

115 East Mill Street
Waterloo, IL 62298
Tel: 618.939.3402