

Jonathan Rosenfeld's Nursing Homes Abuse Blog

Assisted Living Facilities Need To Re-Evaluate If They Are Capable Of Caring For Dementia Patients

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Many assisted living facilities and other nursing home alternative facilities have done very well financially-- playing into the stigma associated with nursing homes that many people hold. While nursing homes may receive a fair amount of bad press, they provide essential medical services for millions of patients.

The level of care offered at assisted living facilities simply is not intended to take the place of the skilled nursing care offered in nursing homes.

Unfortunately, I've seen too many assisted living facilities fail to accurately inform families about the limitations in care that they offer. In most cases, it is up to the assisted living facility to inform families about the type of care they can provide and to do an assessment of each patient's realistic care needs.

I feel strongly that assisted living facilities have an implicit duty to advise families if they can not care for their loved ones. By accepting and retaining a patient, the facility implies that they are capable of safely caring for the person.

Over the years, I've seen the line distinguishing patients who require skilled nursing care provided in a nursing home vs. non-skilled assistance provided at an assisted living facility get blurry-- very blurry especially with patients who are particularly reliant on facilities for most of their daily living needs.

Many dementia patients require extremely high levels of care, yet many assisted nursing facilities (alf's) insist that they are capable of caring for them.

The ability of assisted living facilities to care for an dementia patient will likely get called into question after 90-year-old man (with dementia) wandered from a

Sierra Oaks Assisted Living facility in Pennsylvania. Ten days after the man wandered from the facility, police located the man's body.

Could this have happened in a nursing home?

Of course. Unfortunately, nursing home patients wander from facilities fairly frequently. However, nursing homes are more likely to have staff in place and specialized equipment than assisted living facilities.

Situations, such as the wandering incident above, really should force families to re-evaluate the best living arrangements for their loved ones.

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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

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.