



Nursing Home and Assisted Living Neglect

Nearly 17,000 nursing homes across the country care for approximately 1.6 million residents. Families need to remain vigilant when their loved ones are residing in elder care facilities.

Common injuries from reported neglect include: bed sores; broken limbs from falls; dehydration; malnutrition; infections and illness or death from medication errors.

BED SORES ARE PREVENTABLE

Bed sores occur when constant pressure cuts off circulation to hips, buttocks and heels resulting in damaged skin. Wheelchair bound and bedridden residents are especially susceptible since they are unable to change positions without assistance. Proper monitoring and changing their position on a set schedule should prevent bed sores from ever developing or progressing.

A first stage bed sore begins as a persistent area of irritated skin that may itch or hurt and feel warm, spongy or firm to touch. At this stage, bed sores are easily resolved when the pressure is relieved by changing position.

A bedsore can progress to stage two if the pressure to the affected area is not relieved, becoming an open sore that resembles a blister or abrasion. The surrounding area may show a red or purple color along with signs of infection. At this stage, immediate medical care is needed.

IMPROPER USE OF BED RAILS LEAD TO INJURIES

Bed rails should be used for residents who are high risk, such as those who suffer from dementia or Alzheimer's, and who are unable to control their body movements.

High risk residents should be frequently monitored, have scheduled toileting, mats placed next to their bed, and the bed kept in a low position with wheels locked.

PATIENTS ACCIDENTALLY DROPPED

Elderly or disabled residents who need to be transferred from bed to wheelchair, or wheelchair to shower chair are sometimes dropped, resulting in broken hips, ribs or limbs. Nursing home neglect law requires that licensed health care facilities have training programs and safety procedures to minimize the risk of staff dropping a patient while moving them or restricting their movements.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Nursing home and assisted living facilities and their employees are responsible for their residents' safety. Many facilities, though, are owned by large corporations, which are difficult to identify. Some staff members may have been supplied by outside agencies, who may have failed to conduct background checks or falsified their qualifications. Experienced nursing home abuse attorneys can advise you regarding New York or New Jersey nursing home neglect law for identifying all responsible parties and their liability.

WHAT TO DO

Should nursing home or assisted living abuse be suspected, a family member needs to visit the facility and examine the resident's room and area where the injury occurred. Copies of all records need to be requested and the resident should be examined by a physician immediately. Victims or their families should immediately contact nursing home abuse attorneys.

If you suspect that a loved one or family member has been a victim of nursing home abuse or neglect, you should contact a qualified nursing home neglect lawyer immediately.

For a free consultation please contact:

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