

For Immediate Release
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Nursing Home Residents at Risk as CMS Prioritizes Industry Lobbyists over Residents

June 15, 2018 –Released in conjunction with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, new reports from advocates for nursing home residents show how residents’ health and safety has become increasingly imperiled under the current leadership of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Although a recent federal study found that a third of short-term residents suffered harm, CMS has, since January 2017, began to eliminate, delay, and dramatically reduce enforcement of key regulations that protect residents—and all such actions can be linked to requests by industry lobbyists.

Justice in Aging, the Center for Medicare Advocacy, the Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform, and the Long Term Care Community Coalition have been tracking and documenting requests by nursing home lobbyists, and the subsequent actions taken by CMS to comply with those requests. Access the tracker and a series of short issue briefs [here](#).

“Residents’ health and quality of life must be the priority,” said Eric Carlson, a directing attorney at Justice in Aging. “The federal government must do its part to push for improvements and deter bad actors.”

“Every resident is entitled to quality of care and quality of life,” said Toby Edelman, Senior Policy Attorney at the Center for Medicare Advocacy. “However, the current administration’s efforts to roll back resident protections risk the health and safety of all residents.”

"The health and safety of nursing home residents is of utmost importance. Rather than reducing enforcement of regulations, the focus must be on protecting vulnerable nursing home residents, " said Lori Smetanka, Executive Director of the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care.

“Fundamental indicators of quality and dignity in nursing homes point to the need for more – not less – accountability for resident safety,” said Richard Mollot, LTCCC’s executive director.

Justice in Aging is a national non-profit legal advocacy organization that fights senior poverty through law. Since 1972 we’ve worked for access to affordable health care and economic security for older adults with limited resources, focusing especially on populations that have traditionally lacked legal protection such as women, people of color, LGBT individuals, and people with limited English proficiency. Through targeted advocacy, litigation, and the trainings and resources we provide to local advocates, we ensure access to the social safety net programs that poor seniors depend on, including Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). For more information, visit our website at justiceinaging.org.

The Center for Medicare Advocacy (<http://www.medicareadvocacy.org>) is a national, nonprofit, non-partisan law organization that works to advance access to comprehensive Medicare coverage and quality health care for older people and people with disabilities through legal analysis, education, and advocacy.

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care is a national non-profit organization and leading national voice representing consumers in issues related to long-term care, helping to ensure that consumers are empowered to advocate for themselves. We are a primary source of information and tools for consumers, families, caregivers, advocates and ombudsmen to help ensure quality care for the individual. The Consumer Voice envisions a world in which all consumers of long-term care, services and supports are treated with respect and dignity and have a wide range of affordable, quality options across all settings.

The Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving quality of care, quality of life and dignity for elderly and disabled people in nursing homes, assisted living and other residential settings. LTCCC focuses on systemic advocacy, researching national and state policies, laws and regulations in order to identify relevant issues and develop meaningful recommendations to improve quality, efficiency and accountability. In addition to providing a