



*Support Senate Bill S. 3604,  
The Improving Dementia Care Treatment for Older Adults Act;  
Help End the Rampant Misuse of Antipsychotics in Nursing Homes!*

What is the Issue?

- Antipsychotics are frequently used to “control the behaviors” of a person with dementia in place of good individualized care practices when there aren’t enough staff or well trained staff.
- 26% of all nursing home residents and nearly 40% of residents with dementia receive antipsychotic medications.
- Antipsychotic medications are not approved for the treatment of dementia.
- Antipsychotic drugs, when prescribed for elderly persons with dementia, can have serious medical complications, including: loss of independence, stroke, over-sedation, confusion, and falls.
- These drugs can be so dangerous that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued “Black Box” warnings stating that elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis treated with antipsychotic drugs are at an increased risk of death.

S. 3604 Would Help Address this Problem by:

- *Requiring Informed Consent Before Antipsychotics Can be Given to a Nursing Home Resident with Dementia:* Just Say Know! Far too often these medications are given to residents without explaining the risks or even getting consent from them or their representatives. Many residents or family members would never agree to such medications if they knew about the dangers. Nursing home residents and those acting on their behalf have the same basic right we all do to receive information and make decisions about their health care and treatment.
- *Educating Doctors and Other Prescribers:* Physicians and others who prescribe antipsychotics for nursing home residents with dementia may not be aware of high quality, effective ways to treat and care for someone with dementia. S. 3604 would create education programs to provide prescribers with information about the best treatments available, including non-drug interventions and appropriate medication use.

- *Requiring Nursing Homes to Review Monthly Reports about Antipsychotic Use Not Approved by the FDA:* Such reports would help nursing homes better track their antipsychotic utilization rate and target problems more quickly.
- *Authorizing a Study About Appropriate Prescribing in Hospitals and Other Settings:* To improve dementia care, the misuse of antipsychotics outside of nursing homes must also be addressed. Individuals with dementia who are admitted or readmitted to a nursing home from a hospital may have been placed on antipsychotics during their hospital stay. Others may have been prescribed antipsychotics while at home. S. 3604 calls for a study that would provide valuable data about antipsychotic utilization in hospitals, during transitions of care, and in other health settings. This information would tell us more about the extent and nature of the problem and help improve dementia care across care settings.

*The Consumer Voice URGES You to Support S. 3604, the Improving Dementia Care Treatment for Older Adults Act Today!*

*For more information on this issue,*

*Please visit <http://www.theconsumervoice.org/advocate/antipsychotic-drugs>*

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