



THE VOICE

The e-newsletter of National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

June 18, 2019

OIG Investigation Reveals Failure to Report Abuse: Consumer Voice Calls for Comprehensive CMS Action

A new report from the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General (OIG) shows a disturbingly high level of potential abuse and neglect in skilled nursing facilities, and failures at every level of the system designed to protect vulnerable nursing home residents. The report, [Incidents of Potential Abuse and Neglect at Skilled Nursing Facilities Were Not Always Reported and Investigated](#), found that 1 in 5 high-risk hospital emergency room Medicare claims for treatment in 2016 were the result of potential abuse or neglect of residents in a skilled nursing facility. Equally disturbing, nursing homes failed to report the majority - 84% - of these claims to state survey agencies as required by federal law and regulation, and state survey agencies failed to report 67 of 69 claims - 97% - to local law enforcement as required. In turn, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) did not track these incidents.

Consumer Voice calls on CMS to use its authority to hold nursing homes, the state survey agencies, and itself accountable for doing the job the public entrusts - and pays them - to carry out. There is much more that CMS can and should do to address not just reporting, but also detecting,

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investigating and preventing abuse and neglect. Protective measures include:

- Ensuring that people with certain criminal convictions are not hired to work in nursing homes
- Requiring surveyors themselves to report potential abuse/neglect to law enforcement when conducting a survey
- Mandating adequate staffing levels so front-line staff are not stretched so thin that it becomes impossible to provide quality care

For more details about Consumer Voice's response to the report, [click here](#).

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New Resources and Materials Available in the Consumer Voice Store

New materials are available in the [Consumer Voice Store](#):

- "[I Stand for Quality](#)" buttons - check out the new design for Residents' Rights Month 2019
- Pocket guides - Consumer Voice's easy-to-use new guides - [Put a Stop to Poor Care](#) and [Involving Residents and Families in Obtaining Person-Centered Care](#)
- Popsockets - [New Ombudsman popsockets](#) for your phone! (And our popular [CARE Matters popsockets](#))
- Plus, see our [quick product list](#) for even more useful products!

Remember, Consumer Voice members receive 10% off store purchases. (Email info@theconsumervoice.org for the discount code.) [Join or renew your membership here](#).

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Calendar of Events

Wednesday, June 19: [Using Technology to Recruit, Train, and Keep Volunteers in the Loop](#), 3:00pm ET, NORC webinar

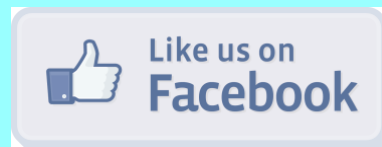
Wednesday, June 19: [When the Guardian is an Abuser](#), 2:00pm ET, Webinar from National Center on Law & Elder Rights

Thursday, June 27: [Palliative Care in the Continuum of Care](#), 2:30pm ET, Webinar from Quality Insights Quality Innovation Network

October: [Residents' Rights Month](#)

November 3-6, 2019: [Consumer Voice Annual Conference](#), Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, Virginia

Join the conversation and follow us on social media!



Last Week's Most Popular Post:

Friday, June 14:

[Ohio State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Beverley Laubert was quoted in an article from ABC6 in Ohio about the recent list of under-performing nursing homes released to the public for the first time by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.](#)

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Observed June 15

On June 11, 2019, the fifth World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) global summit took place in Washington, D.C., celebrating the 15 year anniversary of WEAAD. The theme of this year's summit was Lifting Up Voices, with the goal of lifting up the voices of survivors, empowering and protecting elders from abuse and financial exploitation. Leaders in aging and elder abuse prevention techniques came together from around the country to share what they are doing to prevent elder abuse. The summit focused on topics including:

- Technology's Role in Protecting Against Abuse Later in Life
- The Role of Media in Elder Financial Exploitation
- The FINRA Rule: One Year Later
- Suspicious Activity Reports on Elder Financial Exploitation
- Newly Expanded Records Request Form

For more information on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, [click here](#).

Consumer Voice and the National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) have many available resources on elder abuse. Visit the [Consumer Voice](#) and [NORC](#) websites for materials on abuse, neglect, exploitation and misappropriation of property.

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New Staff Training Video on Intimacy and Aging

The National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners has released a new staff training video - Intimacy and Aging: Issues and Answers for Long Term Care and Home Care. The topic of sexuality and intimacy is rarely discussed, and very little training is provided on the topic. The video presentation is designed to educate families, front-line staff, health care professionals, state agency staff, association staff, care givers, management

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Last Week's Most Popular Tweet:

Wednesday, June 12:

[The Revision of Requirements for Long-Term Care Facilities: Arbitration Agreements has left OMB and could be released at any time.](#)

Long-Term Care Resources & News

- [Generations of Membership: Conversations with LGBTQ Elders](#), New York Times, June 18, 2019

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company staff and educators who work in all aspects of health care where elder care is provided or supported. This educational resource attempts to dispel myths about intimacy and aging as well as addresses concerns that staff may have related to sexual expression as it relates to health problems, LGBT concerns, and dementia. For more information about the video and to order, [click here](#).

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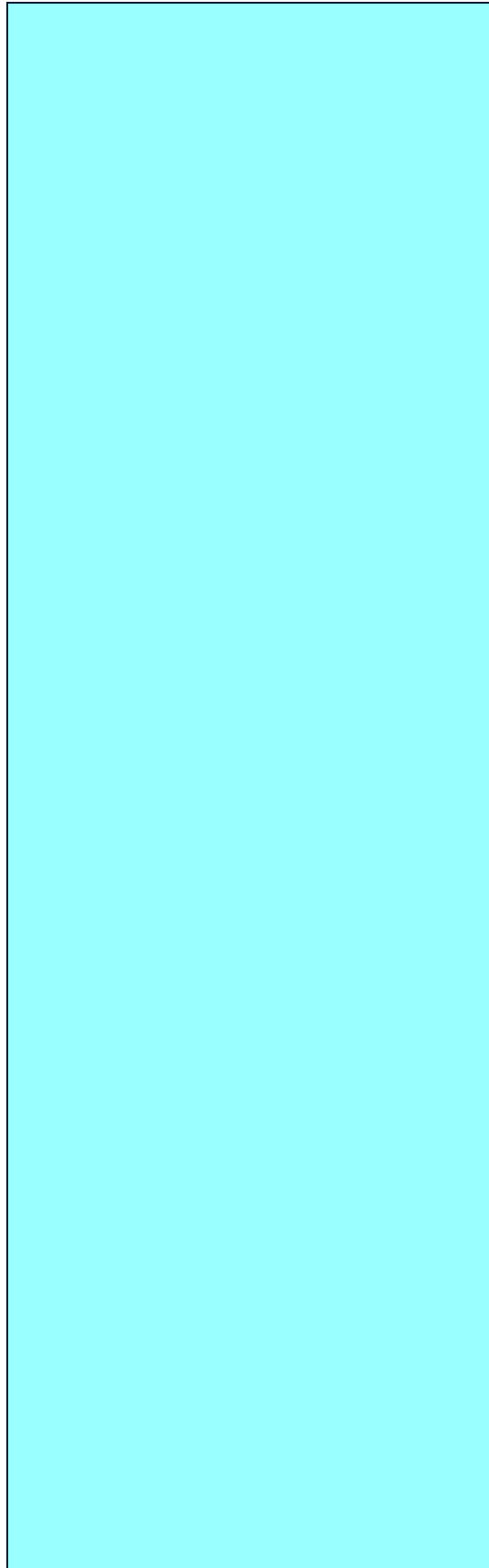
Materials Available from NORC's Trauma-Informed Care Webinar

Materials are available from NORC's recent webinar - Trauma-Informed Care: Nursing Home Responsibilities and Ombudsman Program Advocacy. Ensuring that residents who are trauma survivors receive culturally competent, trauma-informed care is one of several new federal requirements which will go into effect when Phase 3 of the revised federal nursing home regulations are implemented November 28, 2019. Attendees learned about trauma-informed care, the new federal requirement, how trauma-informed care relates to resident-centered care, and what this means for Ombudsman program advocacy and communication. Presenters included Nancy Kusmaul, Assistant Professor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, and Patricia Hunter, Washington State LTC Ombudsman. Access materials on [NORC's website](#).

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Social Security Error Puts 250,000 Medicare Beneficiaries' Coverage At Risk

Because of a "processing error" from the Social Security Administration (SSA), at least 250,000 Medicare beneficiaries may receive bills for premiums they already thought they had paid. In January, the SSA mistakenly neglected to deduct premiums from some seniors' Social Security checks and didn't pay the insurance plans. The error applies to private drug policies and Medicare



Consumer Voice is the 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. Consumer Voice's mission is to represent consumers at the national level for quality long-term care, services and supports.

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