

Elder abuse epidemic: Bedsores can result in painful infections and early death

Written by Australian Business

September 12, 2013 /24-7PressRelease/ -- **Elder abuse epidemic: Bedsores can result in painful infections and early death**

It's a tragic occurrence that should never happen in South Carolina, or anywhere in the United States, yet nursing home abuse is more prevalent than most people would think. But unless you have a loved one who has been abused or neglected by nursing home staff, you probably wouldn't realize the problem is as widespread as it actually is. Sadly, the National Center on Elder Abuse reports that about 90 percent of nursing homes in the U.S. don't have adequate staff to provide the quality of care that our elderly loved ones deserve. This often results in far too many senior citizens being forced to endure deplorable conditions and treatment, which can make their final years miserable and even result in untimely death.

The common, preventable problem of bedsores and pressure wounds

One of the most common issues that face nursing home residents, and can result in painful and often deadly infections, is that of [bedsores](#) . These pressure wounds are most often caused by lying in one position for too long without being moved, according to the Mayo Clinic. The complications that make bedsores so dangerous include aggressive infections such as sepsis, cellulitis, bone and joint infections and even cancerous tumors that develop in chronic wounds.

In only one of numerous elder abuse cases that routinely pop up across the country, The Telegraph reported on a family that sued nursing home caregivers, alleging the facility failed to detect and treat their 84-year-old family member's bedsores and prevent the sepsis infection that caused her death.

One former nursing home employee told WKRG.com that she saw such abuse frequently during her career, including bedsores so severe she could see her patients' tailbones. She advised that the more frequently family members visited their loved ones, the less likely they were to be neglected or abused by nursing home staff.

Preventing elder abuse in nursing homes

In fact, HelpGuide.org says checking up on a loved one is one of the best ways to keep him or her from being mistreated, since nursing home staff will be more careful if they know they're

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being watched. Some signs of elder abuse or neglect include:-Unusual weight loss and apparent dehydration or malnutrition-Unsanitary living conditions including soiled bedding and clothing and not being bathed-Untreated bedsores and other physical problems such as bruises-Apparent tension or arguments between the patient and the caregiver-Changes in the patient's personality or behavior

According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, abused nursing home residents have a 300 percent higher chance of dying prematurely than those who are being treated well. Abused or neglected elders also have more health care problems and increased levels of psychological distress than healthy residents.

Unfortunately, reported incidents of elder abuse in nursing homes are increasing. Your loved ones don't deserve to live in conditions that result in physical and emotional pain. If you suspect an elder is a victim of [nursing home neglect](#) or abuse, or if your loved one has been injured or has passed away due to untreated pressure wounds, contact a personal injury attorney with experience in nursing home abuse. An experienced personal injury lawyer can help get you the compensation to cover the medical expenses, as well as to compensate for the pain your loved one has suffered and hold the nursing home accountable.

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