

Re nursing home security and funding

I have 3 sources of information, 2 of which are indirect. Because it happens that residents of 'assisted living/memory care facilities are particularly likely to have to transfer to nursing homes, I feel it's relevant.

First, by direct observation of an assisted living/memory care facility (which is not now treated as a nursing home, although memory care units involve persons who are unable to live independently because of 'mental' incapacity directly related to physical--brain--decline). My mother lived for a couple years at Atria Crossroads Place; when she entered the facility memory care unit it was well staffed and safe not only in being secure and locked, but having residents well-screened for appropriate behavior. Management subsequently changed and my mother experienced not only physical intrusions into her room--at one point her two grandchildren had to physically stand in her doorway to prevent another resident from forcibly entering--but also experienced an assault by a confused resident. This was consequent on decreased staffing, possible because of the hiring of casual employees 'as needed' rather than maintaining permanent staff; we were aware of the casual employee situation, but did not imagine that safety would decline so much. Fortunately, if I can use the word, Mom did not survive long after the change, having we think experienced a stroke which was unattended until too late. I am aware that mixed facilities like these are not counted as nursing homes, but for memory-care patients this seems to me to be inappropriate. And for economic reasons, such facilities are reluctant to refuse applicants who are not grossly disruptive.

Second, through a family member's employment and my own employment several years ago, I heard that the state moved even criminally insane persons who were judged in need of nursing-home-type care into ordinary nursing homes rather than being maintained in a separate facility. Any staff of nursing homes can relate cases where patients became assaultive; adding actual criminals to such facilities seems cruel to the other residents. Unless adequate security is demonstrated and monitored this seems a stupid thing to do.

Third, an example of what seems to me good practice at Elmwood assisted living in Bozrah, where a family member employed by the Census has found the building completely locked down in spite of the Census' requiring information on units presumably included as 'apartments', although the staff and management endeavored to provide information as 'landlord'. The issue there was a requirement by the management that proof of recent CoVid testing be provided; whether such a requirement could legally be made for nursing home visitors I don't know. The facility protected those people who were able to care for themselves independently as well as those who could not be expected to do; 'nursing homes' include people convalescing from operations and severe illnesses so I think it fair to compare the two kinds of facility.

Thank you for allowing me to express my opinion on my experiences.

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