

My name is Carolyn DeLany-Reif and I am writing on behalf of my mother, Maureen DeLany, who is a resident on the Memory Care floor at Hawthorne Gardens Senior Living facility at 2828 SE Taylor St in Portland, OR. My mother moved into the Assisted Living at Hawthorne Gardens in November 2017. She has lived on the Memory Care Floor since March 2, 2019.

Until the Covid 19 restrictions I visited my mom in person at least 5 days a week and my brother and his wife visited at least once a week. Since Covid 19 I have FaceTimed daily and visited at her window several times a week. When allowed, I have visited her in person.

I take my mother to all doctor's appointments and shop for all of her essentials.

So, my experience with Hawthorne Gardens is firsthand!

There have been 3 different management teams since my mother first moved in. There have been staffing issues as long as she has lived there. The turnover rate is extreme. Morale is low and there is often a shortage of staff. I have spoken with caregivers who are exhausted because they had to work an extra shift because of short staffing.

There is no incentive to retain the best staff members and there is an obvious disconnect between senior management and the caregivers who are interacting with residents on a day-to-day basis.

I have witnessed care givers having to bring their children to work with them because there was nowhere else to take them.

As recently as last week, I have observed caregivers interacting with residents with a mask under their chin.

The lack of training, especially in dealing with dementia patients, is disturbing. It is really a crisis for both the caregivers and the residents. Without the proper training and PAY, the caregivers frequently burn out. The best ones quit because they need better pay. What often remains are the least capable caregivers and our dear ones suffer.

Last year, when I could be there in person, my mother's room was often filthy. Her toilet was dirty, the bathroom floor was sticky and gross, her living room rug was caked with food and dirt. It was never vacuumed. Her garbage often was overflowing with soiled adult diapers. Her laundry was overflowing. She often lacked toilet paper.

I was complaining on an almost daily basis. I was there. Imagine how bad it is for those residents who have no family members to regularly check on them.

Since the restrictions have been in place, there is no way to check on the cleaning, but there are other things I have been very troubled by. My mother has lost a significant amount of weight. I can tell when certain caregivers are there because her hair is combed and her clothes are changed. Other times she appears disheveled and messy. Her toenails and fingernails are a mess. Occasionally one caregiver will paint her nails, but otherwise she often looks like a homeless person.

There are indeed some people working at the facility who care deeply for the residents. Even the newest Executive Director has good intentions. There just seems to be a systemic problem with the industry that is a money grab by out of state corporations taking advantage of a vulnerable population. Correcting the staffing problems is just a start because much more needs to be done. If I could care for my mom at home, I would. My heart breaks for her.