

Testimony of Catherine Kernodle
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My parents have been in their current memory care for almost four years now. The facility is small (approximately 50 residents) and seemed to best meet their needs until the current company took over in January of 2020. There were problems immediately, including a vastly incompetent executive director who lasted only ONE day. There have been constant turn arounds in the managerial staff (several executive directors and several memory care directors, with long periods of time when the position was unfilled). I could tell from the beginning that there was almost no coordination between the managerial staff and memory care. When the facility was locked down because of COVID, it became impossible to monitor the staffing situation, and I feared without any accountability things would go from bad to worse.

My parents both suffered from the COVID wave that hit the facility for the first time last summer. Both of them spent several days in the hospital and weeks in a rehab facility. In addition, my mom's condition worsened in rehab and she was sent to the hospital where the doctors were certain she would not live long. She surprised everyone by recovering enough to go back to rehab and eventually the memory care unit, where she is now in hospice care and steadily declining.

Because of my mom's hospice status, I have been allowed in to see my parents, and I visit them almost every day. The lack of enough well-trained staff is so obvious. When I arrive on my parents' floor, very often staff members are sitting in the television area, watching t.v. or their iPhones. I noticed a week ago that my dad was looking very shaggy and unkempt, and he was obviously not getting the twice-a-week shaves as specified in his care plan. He also badly needs a hair cut; nobody provides hair cutting services anymore, and when I asked what could possibly be done about it, I got several varying answers but the bottom line seemed to be that I would have to take him out of the facility and get it done somewhere myself.

I check the bathroom every time I come and have had to remind the staff to replenish toilet paper, paper towels and hand soap on at least three occasions. If even a simple checklist for basic supplies is not being kept, it makes me wonder what else is being neglected.

My mother is visited once a week by a hospice nurse, who always calls me to tell me how my mother is doing. Last week, she said staff complained to her that the kitchen staff were not consistently pureeing my mom's food as is now required for her condition and that they often have to scramble to find something on their own. The nurse also said that there were no records being kept of my mom's bowel movements and it was difficult to determine what might need to be done for the condition. I noticed that my mom was wearing the same outfit every day last week, so I am wondering about whether she is consistently getting bed baths.

Both the managerial and care staff are unable to give consistent good basic care because of understaffing and under training. The facility went over a year with no care plan meetings, and when I finally received such a meeting, the nurse, who I specifically wanted input from because of all my parents' medical problems, didn't attend; I was assured the nurse would call me to follow up on all my

medical questions, but no message was left for her to call me, and I had to call her myself several weeks later. I have had constant billing issues with late or nonexistent billing. My parents have long term care insurance and, to date, the correct paperwork for the insurance company to process their claims has not been submitted by this facility.

I belong to a Family Council group that has been very active in trying to bring problems to the attention of both corporate and the resident director. Their replies always indicate they are already doing what is required and they see no problems. A bill like SB714 is sorely needed to begin to address the problems caused by these large corporations taking over assisted living facilities with only profits in mind and no regard for the very real problems of these vulnerable older people. Please support this bill.

Thank you,
Catherine Kernodle