Nursing Home Abuse

In a list of the best nursing homes in the US compiled by U.S. News and World Report from 2017, 11 Kansas City Nursing Homes made the cut. While this is great news for those looking for a place to house their loved ones, it is still important to pay attention to the home you choose for your family member and their conditions while they are there.

Nursing home abuse and neglect are two similar phenomena in these communities, but they also maintain key differences. Nursing home abuse is where the caregiver intends to harm the elderly person. However, the more common instance is nursing home neglect where the patient receives substandard care, or there is a breach of duty that causes harm to the patient.

Within the category of neglect, there are different subgroups of neglect relating to different conditions and care:

- Medical Neglect is the failure to attend adequately or prevent medical concerns of the resident.
- Neglect of Basic Needs is the failure to provide the resident with water, food, or a safe and clean environment.
- Neglect of Personal Hygiene is the failure to provide adequate assistance with cleaning, brushing teeth, or bathing.
- Social or Emotional Neglect is when staff members ignore residents, leave them alone, or are yelled at by an overstressed staff member.

In cases of neglect the warning signs can often go unnoticed by family members who don’t know what to look for. Here are some of the most common warning signs of neglect in nursing home facilities:

- Malnutrition as evidenced by bedsores or frequent infections
- Sudden weight loss, especially with residents who need assistance with meal times
- Bedsores or pressure ulcers which result from the staff not properly turning a resident
- Dehydration from a lack of water or access to it
- Withdrawn behavior or abnormal changes in behavior
- Alterations in appearance or personal hygiene

Presence of hazards within the nursing home, such as slippery floors, bad lighting, unsafe wheelchairs or walkers, as well as unsafe furniture

It is easy to feel uncertain about trusting others with the safety and well being of your loved ones, however it is important to remember that there are steps you can take to help prevent nursing home abuse and neglect. According to research, residents who are often visited by friends, family, or loved ones are least likely to suffer from nursing home facility abuse or neglect. When they do visit, it is crucial that they pay attention to observing the facility for possible evidence of neglect, changes in health, and emotional distress on the part of the resident.

If you suspect that your loved one’s nursing home may be responsible for nursing home neglect or abuse, it is important to reach out to a personal injury lawyer to see if you have a case. These attorneys will be able to investigate the situation thoroughly and seek the settlement you deserve.