

LONG TERM CARE (LTC) E- NEWSLETTER – May 2012: Volume 10, Number 4

Welcome to the [LTC E-NEWSLETTER](#), a monthly electronic newsletter of the [Long Term Care Community Coalition](#). Note to Readers: To go directly to an article, click on its page number in the Table of Contents. Once you are at the article, click on any underlined text for a link to more information or to send a message in “Spotlight on Advocacy.”

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[Boston Globe Publishes National Database on Nursing Home Antipsychotic Drug Use](#)

The misuse of antipsychotic drugs in nursing homes is a widespread yet preventable problem affecting hundreds of thousands of residents across the United States, at a cost to taxpayers of hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars. As the U.S. Inspector General Daniel Levinson noted in his 2011 report, “Too many [nursing homes] fail to comply with federal regulations designed to prevent overmedication, giving nursing home patients antipsychotic drugs in ways that violate federal standards for unnecessary drug use.” The Inspector General concluded, “Government, taxpayers, nursing home residents, as well as their families and caregivers should be outraged – and seek solutions.”

The fight to stop inappropriate antipsychotic drug use is a major priority for LTCCC. Approximately 25% of nursing home residents are given antipsychotic drugs, despite black box warnings against using them on the elderly or people with dementia. Antipsychotics increase risk of heart attack, stroke and diabetes. Too often, especially in

nursing homes and other residential care settings, they are used as a form of chemical restraint, when there is insufficient staff to provide appropriate care.

On April 28, *The Boston Globe* published national data on antipsychotic drug use rates in nursing homes. These data are searchable by state and by individual nursing home and include information on a nursing home's nurse staffing and residents' Medicaid coverage. We believe it will be useful for individuals and policymakers who want to gain insights into the antipsychotic drug use rates in nursing homes in their communities.

[<http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/health-wellness/2012/04/28/database/j8FWvjNHMaP6uo7hQ0mrHO/story.html>]

Daily Activity Tied to Lower Alzheimer's Risk

[*The New York Times*](#) has reported on a study published in the April 24 issue of *Neurology* that looked at the relationship between physical activity and the development of Alzheimer's Disease. The study included "716 people, average age 82, without cognitive impairment. Each wore a wrist actigraph, a device that measures movement, for about 10 days to establish his or her usual level of daily physical activity. Over the next four years, 71 of them developed Alzheimer's."

The researchers found that those in the lowest 10 percent for physical activity were more than twice as likely to develop the disease as those in the highest 10 percent. The association held after controlling for age, sex, education, vascular diseases, depression and the frequency of social activities."

[For the NY Times Article: <http://t.co/3VSIjipP>. For the journal abstract: <http://www.neurology.org/content/78/17/1323.abstract>.]

Spotlight on Advocacy: Send a Message to Gov. Cuomo for Adult Home Residents

Advocates on behalf of New York's adult home residents recently reached a critical juncture in their fight for the right to gain freedom from institutional settings when the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit vacated a ruling that New York's practice of segregating thousands of people with mental illness in large adult homes constitutes discrimination. Please send a message to Governor Cuomo urging him to settle this case. You can send a free message on his contact page:

<http://www.governor.ny.gov/contact/GovernorContactForm.php>. Following is a sample message that you can use which highlights the issue. Please personalize if you can.

Dear Governor Cuomo,

I write to ask you to champion adult home residents with psychiatric diagnoses and their goal to live as full citizens in independent housing in our communities. As you know, the U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit, recently overturned a federal court order in *DAI v. Paterson*. I am disappointed in the court's decision, but I believe the time is at hand for these New Yorkers. They have waited too long to move out of what are *de facto* warehouses for many of them.

You have spoken out in your State of the State address for the rights of the disabled, and you affirm the Americans with Disabilities Act and the US Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision by pledging to deinstitutionalize the many New Yorkers trapped in segregated, restrictive settings. You have a long history of commitment to housing people with disabilities in the community. You also recognize it will cost New York State less to do so. Your bold leadership has shown you do not need a court to tell you to do the right thing.

Please ensure that the State of New York reaches a successful agreement with plaintiff's in the *DAI* case, and provide the funding, some of which you have already allocated for this year, so that adult home residents with mental illness in New York City can choose to lead fuller more productive lives in the community. Thank you!

We're on the Web!

www.ltccc.org: Our main website, with access to all of our issues, policy briefs and research.

www.assisted-living411.org: For information on assisted living, including consumer issues and policies.

www.nursinghome411.org: For information on developments in nursing home care, regulation and policy issues.

LTCCC Links of Interest

[View](#) the latest enforcement actions against nursing homes in New York State.

[Read](#) the latest edition of LTCCC's quarterly newsletter, The Monitor.

[Tools for Stakeholders & National Report on Increasing Transparency and Consumer Involvement in States' Uses of Nursing Home Civil Money Penalties](#) to Improve Care and Quality of Life.

LTCCC study: Government Monitoring & Oversight of Nursing Home Care in [Word](#) or [PDF](#).

Long term care information booklet in [Chinese](#) and [English](#) for Chinese consumers: What You Need to Know about Long Term Care.

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