

Take a Moment to Acknowledge World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

June 15th is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. According to the [Administration for Community Living \(ACL\)](#), about five million—one in ten—older adults are abused, neglected, or exploited every year. Elder abuse can take many forms and may even be committed by those who are paid by publically-funded programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid, to ensure the health and safety of their patients. Sadly, elder abuse is all too often a daily occurrence for some older adults in nursing homes.

In a [2014 report](#), the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that a third of all Medicare beneficiaries experienced harm within just 15.5 days of entering a nursing home. The report determined that 59 percent of the harm could have been prevented. Similarly, [LTCCC's](#) recent analysis of data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) demonstrates that [250,000 nursing home residents](#) are still being given antipsychotic drugs. Too often these drugs are administered as a form of chemical restraint. Unfortunately, at the same time, [CMS data](#) also indicate that most health violations are identified as having caused “no harm” to the resident, despite what physical or emotional pain the resident might have experienced.

These reports provide just a small window into what too many nursing home residents across the country are experiencing every day, as inadequate staffing, regulatory rollbacks, and lack of enforcement continue to drive down resident care and quality of life.

More can be done to combat elder abuse, but CMS must first begin meaningfully enforcing the nursing home Requirements of Participation, which provide the standards of care that nursing homes must follow. Greater enforcement of the nursing home standards of care, as [Members of Congress](#) and [State Attorneys General](#) have shown support for this year, would be a worthy first step to decreasing nursing home abuse.

Every nursing home resident has the right to be free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and the misappropriation of their property. For more information about your rights as a nursing home resident or the rights of a loved one, please see our resources below.

- **Resident Rights.** LTCCC's [homepage](#) has consumer-friendly fact sheets and issue alerts on the rights of nursing home residents. LTCCC's fact sheet on nursing home abuse, neglect, and exploitation can be accessed here: <http://nursinghome411.org/fact-sheet-requirements-for-nursing-homes-to-protect-residents-from-abuse-neglect-exploitation/>.
- **Elder Justice Newsletter.** For more information on “no harm” deficiencies and examples, please read our monthly newsletter, Elder Justice: What “No Harm” Really Means for Residents. See <http://nursinghome411.org/news-reports/elder-justice/>.
- **Speak Out.** Our organizations strongly encourage you to contact your elected representatives about World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Please visit <https://secure.everyaction.com/uiJtSU2240OzAnPAj5ECw2> to send a quick message now!