

Giving Residents a Voice World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) – June 15

Elder abuse is a public health crisis devastating nursing home residents and their loved ones nationwide. Each year, an estimated **5 million** older Americans experience **abuse, neglect, or exploitation**. Far too often – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic – these victims are silenced and ignored.

On WEAAD (June 15), The Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) is calling for action to protect residents’ rights to be free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

As coronavirus sweeps through facilities, residents are suffering in silence while cut off from their loved ones. In recent months, many states have [granted nursing home providers with immunity from litigation](#) while the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has reduced oversight and lifted reporting requirements.

LTCCC has been told of mounting numbers of disturbing reports of abuse and neglect, including staff-to-resident violence, financial exploitation, and inappropriate psychotropic drugging. Some incidents have been reported in media, including:

- A resident at a California facility whose leg was amputated after developing a colon infection from being left sitting in her own feces ([ABC10](#)).
- Nursing homes forcing residents to hand over their stimulus checks ([Associated Press](#)).

Unfortunately, most incidents of abuse and neglect occurring during COVID-19 may never be exposed. [A June 2019 report](#) by the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that nursing homes failed to report 84 percent of the sampled 7,831 potential abuse and neglect incidents to state survey agencies.

On WEAAD, LTCCC is calling for stronger enforcement of federal standards protecting residents from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Please join us in giving residents a voice by:

- Reporting suspected cases to appropriate agencies. Visit our [Abuse, Neglect, and Crime Reporting Center](#) to learn more.
- Advocating for [the restoration of residents’ rights to visitation and care](#).
- [Writing to legislators](#) about the urgent need to improve nursing home care via LTCCC’s Action Center.

Elder Abuse refers to intentional or negligent acts by a caregiver or trusted individual that cause harm to an older person.

Types of elder abuse include:

- Neglect or isolation
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional or psychological