

SENIOR CARE POLICY BRIEFING



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NEWSFLASH

- On July 31, the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released a final rule](#) which includes a 4.2% net increase in Medicare Part A payments to skilled nursing facilities.
 - ⇒ The final rule revises enforcement policies to impose more consistent civil monetary penalties for health and safety violations in nursing homes. Previously, CMS could not impose per-day and per-instance penalties for the same deficiency. The new rule allows both types of penalties to be used simultaneously. The goal is to ensure facilities promptly address issues and maintain long-term compliance.
 - ⇒ To no surprise, the [nursing home industry has stated its disgust](#) with the notion of being held financially accountable for failing to keep residents safe.

Note: [LTCCC publishes detailed information](#) on fines and payment denials received by nursing homes in the past three years. This tool can help you assess the extent to which nursing homes are held accountable for substandard care.

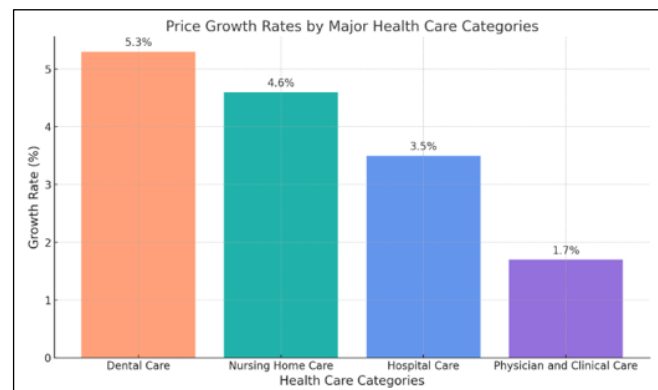
LTC BY THE NUMBERS

While nursing home industry lobbyists continue to claim that the industry suffers with “razor-thin” margins and doesn’t receive enough money to hire more staff or provide better services, the actual financial results of nursing home companies tell a very different story.

- The nation’s largest nursing home operator, [The Ensign Group, announced “another record quarter.”](#)
 - ⇒ The [company continues its buying spree](#), bringing its portfolio to 315 healthcare operations.
 - ⇒ Ensign’s [all-time high stock closing price](#) was \$146.01 on July 29, 2024. (See LTCCC’s [previous briefing](#) for more on The Ensign Group.)
- [LTC Properties, Inc.](#), a real estate investment trust that primarily invests in seniors housing and health care properties, reported positive financial performance for the second quarter of 2024. While revenues increased year over year due, expenses decreased.

GET THE FACTS

- In the post-pandemic world, nursing homes have seen a [return to serious citations](#), especially those categorized as Immediate Jeopardy (IJ), indicating severe risks to residents. Specific risks such as choking, burns, and elopements continue to be significant concerns.
- [AARP’s recent poll](#) finds that 94% of potential voters support the Biden Administration’s minimum staffing rule for nursing homes.



[Altarum](#) reported that nursing home care prices increased by 4.6% year over year, one of the fastest growing categories in healthcare.