

# WILENTZ

—ATTORNEYS AT LAW—

WILENTZ, GOLDMAN & SPITZER, P.A.

## New Jersey Nursing Home Abuse and Neglect Lawyers

Results achieved in prior matters are not meant to be a guarantee of success as the facts and legal circumstances vary from matter to matter.

Many of us have aging loved ones and family members who require care. While some take it upon themselves to provide for their needs, work demands and medical conditions require others to rely on nursing homes and assisted living facilities. There are a variety of care providers to choose from, based on your loved one's overall health and the level of services they require. Once they have entered a facility, it is important to continue to monitor the situation, both to ensure they are content and being cared for properly, and to prevent nursing home abuse or neglect from occurring.

At Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, P.A., we understand the devastating effects nursing home abuse can have on both the victim and their family members. In these types of situations, you may be wondering what to do or where to turn for help. Our experienced nursing home abuse attorneys are here to help make sure your loved one is protected, while advising you on how to hold negligent nursing home owners and employees responsible for the damages they have caused.

### Types of Nursing Home Abuse

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are more than 15,000 nursing homes scattered throughout the United States, providing services for more than one million residents and their families. As the demands of caring for our aging baby boomer population continue to increase, new assisted living and long term care homes continue to spring up in communities. While many facilities are staffed by caring, qualified doctors, nurses, and aids, others cut corners by hiring people who lack the required experience or skills and offer low wages, long shifts and heavy workloads. The result is an increase in the number of residents being abused or neglected.

There are numerous cases of abuse against the elderly reported each year in the U.S., while millions more go unreported. Nursing home abuse can take many forms, and the most common include the following:

- Physical abuse - may involve striking, pushing, or otherwise assaulting the patient
- Emotional abuse - such as calling names or using intimidation and threats
- Abandonment and neglect - includes failing to provide for the patient's personal needs
- Sexual abuse - involves unwanted advances and sexual contact
- Financial abuse - includes stealing money or credit card information
- Healthcare fraud and abuse - involves charging for services not rendered and overcharging for care provided

### Signs That Your Loved One Is Being Abused

Nursing home residents who are subject to abuse may be ashamed to share with their loved ones what is happening, or may be afraid to tell due to threats and intimidation. In some cases, the patient's physical or mental condition leaves them unaware that abuse is even occurring, or causes them to be confused and forget that it happened. It is important for family members and friends to be vigilant about the care their loved one receive, and to look out for signs of abuse, which may include the following:

- Bruises, cuts, and wounds

- Fractures and dislocations
- Bedsores and rashes
- Signs that restraints were used, such as marks on the wrist or ankles
- Sleep problems and complaints of nightmares and bad dreams
- Nutritional deficiencies and dehydration
- Depression, anxiety, and lack of interest in social activities
- Missing money or property
- Unauthorized bank charges
- Unexplained increases in monthly medical bills
- Medical conditions which are left untreated

## **What To Do If You Suspect Nursing Home Abuse**

The U.S. Administration on Aging (AOA) advocates for the health and welfare of older Americans while offering support for family members and caregivers through programs in the community. If you suspect nursing home abuse is occurring and your loved one is in immediate physical danger, you should call 911 immediately. If the danger is not immediate, there are several options you can pursue to protect your loved one:

- Speak with the nursing home staff nurse or floor supervisor
- Request a meeting with the home's administrators
- Contact local law enforcement
- Contact your local AOA office
- Contact Adult Protective Service in the county the nursing home is located in
- Contact our nursing home abuse attorneys

**To speak with an attorney about your legal options, please call: 732-352-9800.**