

## Health and Human Services

I checked the Medicare ratings for the Adult Care Center on Tuesday and saw that it was back down to a 1 star overall rating, after a few months at 2 stars this winter.

Of the three subcategories, the health inspections are rated at a 1 star, down from 2 stars and reflecting the last Survey, staffing stayed at 4 stars, and quality measures stayed at 2 stars. Short and long term measures are both at 2 stars. To share a few of these measures, short term or rehab patients at the ACC first receive anti-psychotic medication at a rate three times that of the state average. 48% of them got a pneumonia vaccine as compared to the national average of 81%. The ACC's long term patients have twice the rate of hospitalization as the state average and almost twice as many falls and pressure ulcers, symptoms of depression, lost too much weight and twice as many got a hypnotic or antianxiety medication. That's what happens when top level county management looks the other way and lets a "consultant" mismanage the facility, so that attitude goes all the way down through the workforce and the nursing staff doesn't follow procedures and lets patients go hungry, bang their legs and feet against the bed, skips skin checks, and so on.

As a new member of the Adult Care Center's Family Council, I hear a lot of stories about the experiences of the residents, families and staff at the nursing home. The facility is now almost full. I heard about how the residents are routinely put in their chairs in the hall lined up with their trays so that staff can turn off the heaters in their rooms. I hear how on weekends and evenings, there isn't enough staff to feed all the 29 patients on the ward, with one nurse, a CNA and a domestic aide. There isn't enough staff to supervise residents who are self-harming or wandering and to still perform basic care for the others. I heard about patients with bruises and wounds under their clothing which go unobserved and untreated. They don't get bathed. I hear that nurses are instructed to chart in a way that won't trigger any sentinel event alarms when the patients have fallen, have new wounds, have a change in condition or don't get their medications. I hear that most head injuries are treated in house, not sent to the hospital for diagnostic imaging. I hear the Director of Nursing stays in her office and summons people to come to her over the loudspeaker. I hear that there are few activities during the week and none on the weekend, when residents are put to bed at dinnertime. That's what a one star facility is like.

This is what has resulted from the previous legislature's attempt to privatize what was a 5 star facility in 2018, and the tax payers are still paying about the same price for vastly inferior management and conditions there. In the words of Pope Francis, "We throw away the elderly, behind which are attitudes of hidden euthanasia. They aren't needed and what isn't needed gets thrown away. What doesn't produce is discarded." Well, I'm doing whatever I can do to advocate for those residents, year after year, but it's up to you legislators to use the power that you have to restore the ACC. Please don't let this go on.