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**To:** [DH, LTCRegs](#)  
**Subject:** [External] Nursing Home Regulations  
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Regarding a recent Bucks County Courier Times article pertaining to changes in nursing homes:

About 9 years ago, my father spent 3 years in Richboro Nursing and Rehab. Center and my mother is now living in the same facility and has been there approximately 3 years. Due to alzheimers, it was necessary for me to visit my father almost every day to be sure he was being taken care of; however, my mother is in good shape mentally, can speak up for herself so I don't need to be there on a daily basis. After my father's death, I became a volunteer ombudsman, stayed in that position for 5 years and resigned from the position approximately two years ago.

The proposed changes being considered are definitely heading in the right direction. As a family member and a former ombudsman at two facilities, I have seen the problems within long-term care facilities. Staffing is always an issue in which case residents suffer as well as some dedicated staff members who have to pick up the slack when there are "call outs" or other staff members do not carry their fair share of the load. This is not the exception, but the rule.

Working in a long-term care facility is not an easy job. Staff continually deal with difficult residents, must lift heavy people, sometimes doing this alone because there is no one available to lend a hand if one is needed. As an outcome, residents wait a long time to be changed, have beds changed, get showered or have their other needs met. It's always a waiting game and one that residents, after a while, seem to accept. They should not have to accept this type of care nor should family members or the State of PA.

I applaud the state for seeing what I and many others have been seeing for a very long time. An increase in the number of care hours for each resident as well as an increase in salary for workers should certainly enhance the level of care our most vulnerable members of society deserve. There is no reason why all facilities can't be the best. All it takes is some oversight and guidance from the state. After all, state dollars are being funneled into many of these facilities and there must be accountability. Which brings me to a final thought. Once a year is not enough for the state Medicare/Medicaid program or the Dept. of Health to survey and monitor these homes. Facilities usually have a pretty good idea when this will take place and try to prepare for it so it is not really a "spot check".

Thank you for taking an interest in the welfare of these elderly residents who are solely reliant on the people who have been hired to care for them. I encourage you to push as hard as you can to make these changes happen. 4.1 hours of direct care is not unreasonable, and let's make sure well-trained, compassionate people are hired for these jobs and are paid a decent wage. This is not a position most people would want to do. We need good dedicated people in these facilities.

Thank you,

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