

Today my family and I come to you to share what we believe would help DHS to keep our elderly safe in long term memory care facilities in Oregon.

Safety

DHS must conduct on-site inspections to ensure that all entrances and exits (including doors and gates) have secured locks and cameras monitoring movements both inside and outside the facility. All facilities also must provide each resident with a working GPS tracking device that doesn't require cell phone towers, perhaps by satellite or wifi. In the case when a resident does in fact go missing and they are not found, a reasonable search of the facility of fifteen minutes should take place. If still not found, the facility must call 911 and notify family members immediately.

Oversight

DHS must provide annual onsite inspections ensuring that doctor's orders and resident's nursing care plans are followed. When deficiencies are found, such as medications being missed or protocols for diet & fall risk aren't being followed, DHS inspectors must return on site to ensure corrective actions have been made.

Training

All staff must complete in-person, certified dementia training and pass a test before working onsite along with recertification via testing every 2 years. The Alzheimer's Association currently provides a certified training curriculum. This could work like the successful and widely adopted CPR training curriculum overseen by the American Heart Association.

Staffing

Memory care facilities must have a licensed administrator and licensed nurses on site to perform intake assessments and individualized nursing care plans for all residents at admission. If there are vacancies to any of these key positions, all new intakes & admissions must be paused until positions are filled with temporary licensed workers. Certified Nursing Assistant staffing ratios would also need to be in line with recent federal requirements.

Certification

DHS needs to provide incentives for memory care facilities to pursue nationally recognized certification. The Joint Commission (or JHACO) has established rigorous standards that memory care facilities must pass in order to gain certification. These

certified facilities are audited at regular intervals to ensure the highest standards are met or exceeded.

Enforcement

DHS must provide oversight & accountability and timely follow up when memory care facilities are out of compliance with DHS rules and regulations. These facilities are profit driven so compliance should be enforced with stiff fines and penalties. DHS should also pause new admissions until deficiencies and violations are corrected.

We would like to thank the Committee for hearing our family's recommendations to improve the safety and security for our seniors in long term care so that our loved ones at the end of their lives are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.