

New Government Investigation Again Focuses on Nursing Homes' Abuse of Patients with Antipsychotic Drugs

A separate study finds antipsychotic drug prescriptions for seniors with dementia increased early in the COVID pandemic, did not return to pre-pandemic levels.

WASHINGTON, DC, US , February 16, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The federal government is again investigating nursing homes for evidence that elderly residents are being [falsely reported](#) as having schizophrenia so they can be sedated with powerful antipsychotic drugs.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) flagged specific nursing homes for their high number of residents reported as having schizophrenia.



Elderly nursing home residents are being falsely reported as having schizophrenia so they can be sedated with powerful antipsychotic drugs.

Antipsychotic drugs are especially dangerous to the elderly with dementia. The FDA has required a black box warning in the prescribing information for the drugs, disclosing an increased risk of death for these patients.

A previous investigation into antipsychotic use in nursing homes by CMS brought pressure to bear on the facilities, resulting in the percentage of long-term nursing home residents on antipsychotics dropping from 24% in 2011 to under 16% in 2017. But the numbers have since soared. A report in November by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Inspector General [disclosed](#) that from 2015 through 2019, the number of nursing home residents reported as having schizophrenia nearly tripled (194%).

In 2019, the false reporting was concentrated in 99 nursing homes, in which 20% or more of the residents were reported as having schizophrenia. These are the type of facilities the CMS has

now targeted for scrutiny.

“No nursing home resident should be improperly diagnosed with schizophrenia or given an inappropriate antipsychotic,” said HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra.

Taking all classes of psychiatric drugs into account, the HHS report found that eight in ten nursing home residents were prescribed some type of psychiatric drug each year from 2011 to 2019. Critics call this rampant drugging “chemical straightjackets.” The report found that nursing homes with stretched staffing had higher use of psychotropic drugs, suggesting the drugs were used to subdue patients to ease the workload of overworked staff.



The FDA says antipsychotic drugs are especially dangerous to the elderly with dementia, increasing their risk of death.

In a separate study, researchers examined health data from six countries – the U.S., France, Germany, Italy, South Korea, and the U.K. – and found that the rate of prescribing antipsychotic drugs for seniors with dementia “increased in the initial months of the COVID pandemic in the six countries studied and [did not decrease](#) to pre-pandemic levels after the acute phase of the pandemic had ended.” Staff shortages may again be the reason.

“

No nursing home resident should be improperly diagnosed with schizophrenia or given an inappropriate antipsychotic.”

*U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services Secretary
Xavier Becerra*

Nursing homes care for some of the most vulnerable people in the country. The new scrutiny by the CMS into the prescribing of antipsychotics to the elderly is a welcome step towards ensuring quality care in a safe

environment for them.

WARNING: Anyone wishing to discontinue or change the dose of a psychiatric drug is cautioned to do so only under the supervision of a physician because of potentially dangerous withdrawal symptoms.

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights was co-founded in 1969 by members of the Church of Scientology and the late psychiatrist and humanitarian Thomas Szasz, M.D., recognized by

many academics as modern psychiatry's most authoritative critic, to eradicate abuses and restore human rights and dignity to the field of mental health. CCHR has been instrumental in obtaining 228 laws against psychiatric abuses and violations of human rights worldwide.

The CCHR National Affairs Office in Washington, DC, has advocated for mental health rights and protections at the state and federal level. The CCHR traveling exhibit, which has toured 441 major cities worldwide and educated over 800,000 people on the history to the present day of abusive and racist psychiatric practices, has been displayed at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, and at other locations.



Anne Goedeke
Citizens Commission on Human Rights, National Affairs Office
+1 202-349-9267
[email us here](#)
Visit us on social media:
[Facebook](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/617278853>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2023 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.