



News from the Senior Agenda Coalition of RI  
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### Immediate Jeopardy in Nursing Homes is Rising

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### We Have Tools to Use Now

The Senior Agenda Coalition of RI (SACRI) today expressed alarm over the dramatic increase in nursing homes being cited for Immediate Jeopardy (IJ) which went from 11 such citations in 2022 to 29 as of this October. Immediate Jeopardy means a situation in which the facility's noncompliance with one or more requirements of participation has caused, or is likely to cause, serious injury, harm, impairment, or death to a resident.

Immediate Jeopardy citations this year included instances of resident elopements from facilities – in one case the resident was found 13 miles away, 14 hours after leaving the facility. In another, nursing assistants were performing care for a number of residents with tracheostomies for which they are not licensed to do. In another, a resident was given the wrong medication resulting in them being hospitalized in critical condition. In other cases, residents were given the wrong medications at discharge. In some cases, residents were sexually assaulted. These instances are distressing and impact a wide swath of residents. “We recognize there are issues related to the adequacy of funding as the vast majority of long-term nursing home residents are paid for by the Medicaid program,” said SACRI Executive Director, Carol Anne Costa. “This along with the ongoing workforce crisis creates significant challenges in providing quality care to the many thousands of older adults and persons with disabilities living in our state’s nursing homes, she continued. This is why SACRI supported legislation to create a Nursing Home Workforce Standards Advisory Board as passed by the legislature but vetoed by Governor McKee. This is also why SACRI supports minimum staffing standards and specialized training for staff working with persons with Alzheimer’s and related dementias.”

The need to develop better models for caring for persons with both dementia and those with behavioral health and nursing needs is paramount. SACRI remains concerned about large out-of-state corporations taking over Rhode Island nursing homes who may put profits over providing quality care. And this is why our coalition supports fair and living wages for our direct care staff. As our state’s population grows older and more persons need long-term care services it is critical to maintain quality care, especially for those

who cannot always speak for themselves. Existing state law (RIGL 23-17-12.6) includes a provision to help to begin to address these deficiencies and other tools are available and within the grasp of our state's leaders.

In light of the increase in substandard nursing home care in our state, SACRI calls for the following actions:

- Department of Health Director, as authorized under state law (RIGL 23-17-12.6), to require nursing facilities with two or more citations of Immediate Jeopardy in a twelve month period, to appoint an independent quality assurance monitor to advise and assist the nursing facility's management to achieve compliance with federal and state regulations in order to prevent such incidents in the future.
- The Secretary of Health and Human Services to direct funds from the Civil Monetary Penalty Fund, or a portion of the approximately \$1.5Million programmed for health systems planning work, to engage a consultant to work with a Task Force of the Long-Term Care Coordinating Council to develop recommendations for caring for persons with behavioral health needs residing in nursing facilities and assisted living facilities.
- A general assembly override of the Nursing Home Workforce Standards Board legislation.

Please find a link to the [Pro Publica Nursing Home Inspection data for RI](#).

**About SACRI** – The Senior Agenda Coalition of RI is an independent and diverse coalition of agency and individual members. Our Mission is to mobilize people to implement an agenda that improves the quality of life of all older Rhode Islanders and adults with disabilities. We accomplish this through community organizing, public education advocacy and legislative action.



Visit our [website](#) for more information.

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