

Making Elder Care Better Since 1975

Kansas Advocates
for
Better Care

Founded in 1975 as Kansans for Improvement of Nursing Homes by concerned citizens like you.

February 14, 2013

Chairman Weber and members of the House Social Services Budget Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2160 which would renew and extend the quality care assessment on skilled nursing facilities. I am Mitzi McFatrach, executive director of Kansas Advocates for Better Care (KABC). KABC is a not-for-profit organization, beholden to no commercial interests and is supported almost entirely by donations from citizens who support our mission of improving the quality of care in all long-term settings. KABC was among a handful of non-profit consumer advocacy groups which worked to win passage of the landmark Nursing Home Reform Act of 1987.

KABC would make the following recommendations to assure that elders receive quality care:

1) Improve care for elders and disabled adult residents. Direct funds to specific care that will improve actual care quality for elders.

- Provide adequate nurse and nurse aide care to avoid injury, illness and death of elders
- Dedicate Quality-Care Assessment funds to raise daily care minimum to 4 hrs.26 minutes
- Nursing Facilities have received just short of \$47 million dollars in enhanced rates from this assessment since 7/1/2010. There has been NO requirement for outcomes that improve the quality of care for elders. None of this money has been directed to improve quality care for elders.
- \$36.7 million to provide this level of care according to 2012 Legislative Post Audit report
- In FY 2014 KDADS projects \$26-29 million net gain to facilities from the assessment
- Illinois & Connecticut lawmakers designated funds from its provider assessment to achieve increased hours of care to elders provided by nurses & CNAs in nursing homes
- 27% of elders live in nursing facilities cited with actual harm or immediate jeopardy of a resident. There are 18,000 Kansans living in nursing facilities.

2) Direct use of \$4.2 million for dental care for Kansas elders

- 1/3 of nursing home residents lose all their natural teeth – 17% higher than for elders living at home. More than 1/3 suffer from untreated dental decay
- Untreated oral health issues result in illness, infection, malnutrition, dehydration, pain and suffering
- Infections result in higher rates of falls with accompanying injuries, higher rates of confusion, misdiagnosis of pain and treatment by inappropriate pharmaceuticals such as anti-psychotics
- Loss of teeth and loss of dentures results in poor nutrition, weight loss, increased risk for pressure sores

3) Provide consumers with equal voice on the Quality Care Assessment Advisory Panel – Equalize consumer representation to industry representation.

On behalf of Kansas Advocates for Better Care Members and Volunteers, Mitzi McFatrach

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