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LONG-TERM TASK FORCE PUSHING TO LOWER INVESTIGATIONS OF NURSING HOMES

Yesterday, I was stunned to read an article in McKnight's Long-Term Care News that a task force has been put together by the American Medical Director's Association in an attempt to lower the investigative process in nursing homes.

The group claims a lack of adequate funding and that accountability does not necessarily equate to punishment. This task force also found that team morale in nursing homes is negatively impacted by the state survey process. The task force wants the regulators to highlight high performers, which is certainly not the government's job.

The task force is made up of doctors and includes one doctor who was placed on probation in California for giving a colleague use of his prescription pad (pre-signed by him) so that his friend who did not hold a narcotics license could order narcotics for his patients. Another member is doctor who was found guilty of elder abuse by a jury in a civil case. As well, a doctor who was a founding member of the CA Medical Directors Association eventually was sent to prison for misconduct caring for nursing home patients, falsely billing Medicare for services not rendered and his on-going drug addiction.

The article made no mention of this task force trying to improve quality of care for our most vulnerable citizens. Its recommendations are obviously self-serving and beneficial to the nursing home industry.

Cause for alarm? I would say so.

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