

Thank you so much for your interest in issues regarding Independent Care Facilities during this time of continued restrictions caused by the Coronavirus. I understand that every situation is unique, but the newly implemented policies of the last eight months have caused enormous hardship for the residents of most elder care facilities.

My situation involves my mother who, in an advanced stage of dementia, is mute, incontinent, and totally immobile, restricted to a wheelchair and dependent upon another person for all ADLs including cueing to swallow and cough to clear her throat due to silent aspiration. She is on oxygen at night due to hypoxia, and suffers from sleep apnea and atrial fibrillation. In compliance with geriatric and PCP doctors' orders, my mother has private individual caregivers to assist her 24 hours a day. These caregivers are extremely difficult to find and to maintain. I was always able to fill in open shifts and cover for cancellations until the facility locked down due to COVID. Our facility generated a policy that made it impossible for any family member to fulfill any caregiver role such as the one that I previously held. Due to Covid-19, I lost three caregivers on my team who were either immune compromised or had to care for their own loved ones. The facility assigned one of their aides to fill in. This aide was totally unfamiliar with my mother, was a male aide and did not have the authority to care of certain medical issues my mother had at the time. Due to the facility's restrictions during the Covid-19 crisis, my mother suffered:

- Stage III coccyx wound which is now healing because I insisted on the Cleveland Clinic to care for the wound,
- Two hospitalizations for 10 days due to medication administration of incorrect thickening consistencies causing aspiration pneumonia,
- Severe fall requiring stitches around her eye, torn eye lid, and fractured knee cap
- Current UTI infection still not treated due to lack of phone call response from the facility

Even though we have absolutely terrific 24/7 caregivers, I believe that I am the most observant and vocal POA for my mother. I am a qualified caregiver and I feel that myself, and others like myself, should be allowed to care for our loved ones, especially during this COVID crisis.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
MF Dumm