Home Not-So-Sweet Home

May 27, 2008 By James Wortman

In February, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) reported the names of the nation's 131 poorest-performing nursing homes as part of its Special Focus Facility initiative. African-American seniors may be overrepresented in those homes since recent research shows that black nursing home residents are more likely than whites to be hospitalized due to substandard care—including dehydration, bedsores and poor nutrition.

While many of us would rather care for loved ones at home, it's not always possible or practical. For families looking for a quality nursing home, research is key. Visit the facility, talk to doctors and staff about resident-care procedures and get the home's Form 2567. The document describes the facility's state-inspection record—which evaluates quality of care, dietary services, pharmacy services, infection contro and other vital criteria.

To see how homes around you stack up, visit the CMS website, cms.hhs.gov, and search "nursing homes" or call its Baltimore headquarters at 877.267.2323.

For tips on evaluating a nursing home, go to longtermcareliving.com/assess.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/bad-nursing-homes-14656-8624