



GuideStar Eldercare
Embracing Our Past. Building The Future.®



The Growing Gap in Long-Term Care



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**The need for quality dementia care is growing.
Are your facilities ready to meet the challenge?**

Nearly half of all nursing home residents are living with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. The National Center for Health Statistics ([NCHS](#)) puts the percentage at 49.1, but there is reason to believe that the actual number could be much higher, perhaps as high as seventy percent.

Current trends suggest that the tide of dementia sufferers in long-term care is only beginning to rise. The [Alzheimer's Association](#) projects that 16 million Americans will be living with dementia by 2050.

Regulators have responded to these challenges with tighter and more targeted standards for care. Just this month, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [raised the thresholds](#) on all of their Quality Measure star ratings. Facilities will now need to elevate their standards of care across the board to maintain their current positions.

GuideStar Eldercare can help your facility bridge the gap in quality long-term care.

At GuideStar Eldercare, we make it our mission to enhance the quality of life for patients in long-term care. We partner with facilities like yours to offer cutting-edge dementia treatment backed by the best neurology and geriatric science available. Our clinicians take the time to understand the regulatory requirements LTC facilities operate under, and we provide actionable, effective plans of treatment that meet or exceed those rising standards.

Many dementia patients in long-term care are not receiving the treatment they need.

For LTC patients living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias (ADRD), the traditional approach has been to treat the behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) through psychiatric methods, often by prescribing [antipsychotic](#) or [anticonvulsant](#) drugs.

Beyond their attendant side effects, the risks of such drugs include increased tolerance, requiring larger doses over time. Patients taking these drugs can also develop a dependency on them, making adjusting dosages or changing medications more dangerous. However, the main issue with this type of psychiatric treatment for dementia is that it overlooks the root causes of BPSD by failing to factor in the patient's neurological condition.

Effective dementia care demands a neurology-forward approach.

At GuideStar Eldercare, our experience shows that up to 90% of long-term care residents who are considered "psychiatrically impaired" are dealing with conditions that are primarily neuro-medical, **not** primarily psychiatric. Thus, a care plan based only on psychiatry will miss the mark for a vast number of patients with dementia.

The missing piece of this puzzle is the patient's underlying neurology. Dementia is a degenerative disease of the brain. It causes disruption in the production and operation of the brain's neurotransmitters. This dysregulation in turn can lead to agitation, imbalance in executive function and emotional dysregulation as well.

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The Growing Gap in Long-Term Care *continued*

Prescribe the correct medications to treat the whole person.

For these reasons, GuideStar Eldercare recommends a clinical approach that prescribes medicines that can help modulate the patient's neurotransmitters directly, as opposed to medication that treats behavioral and psychiatric symptoms only.

Acetylcholinesterase inhibitors (such as Donepezil) and the NMDA receptor antagonist Memantine have both shown success in treating the severity and presentation of various symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Clinical study has also demonstrated that these two drugs have an even more beneficial effect when [taken together](#).

How does GuideStar Eldercare help improve quality of life for LTC patients with dementia?

As a leader in neurobehavioral services, GuideStar Eldercare partners with LTC facilities all around the country to raise their level of neuropsychiatric care for patients with dementia. We build interdisciplinary clinical teams to review each patient's case as well as their pharmacologic history. We provide actionable recommendations that lead to better outcomes, making frequent reassessments and adjustments where clinically indicated.

What are the benefits of neuro-forward care?

Our teams in the field have had the privilege to work with nursing homes and LTC facilities all across the country. We see across-the-board improvement on a number of key metrics, including:

- 68% decrease in antipsychotics
- 57% decrease in psychiatric hospitalizations
- 51% decrease in emergency department visits
- Contact GuideStar Eldercare today.

This improvement in patient quality of life comes with an added effect: improvement in overall Quality Measure scores. A number of facilities we have partnered with have seen their scores rise by a full star level.

Put our 20+ years of regulatory compliance experience to work for your facility and [reach out to GuideStar Eldercare today](#).

888-837-5440
info@guidestareldercare.com

GUIDESTAR ELDERCARE
One Professional Center
2100 N Main Street,
Suite 304, Crown Point, IN 46307

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