

Investment in Comprehensive Background Checks Protects Senior Facilities

A recent unprecedented examination of the nursing home industry, conducted by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS,) surveyed hundreds of nursing homes around the country to find that 92 percent of them employed at least one worker with a criminal conviction. Perhaps even more disturbing is the fact that almost half of all nursing home facilities in the country employ five or more people with at least one conviction each.

In fact, one extreme example was found in one particular nursing home. Of the 164 employees at the facility, 34 of them—or over 20 percent—had a total of 102 convictions between them, for crimes ranging from property theft to DUI.



\$750,000-jury award for sexual assault of disabled man in Virginia facility for failure to conduct adequate background screening

\$100,000 fine for negligent death caused by unchecked employee

Massachusetts facility staff convicted of rape and assault— background checks conducted only in Massachusetts

The lack of proper background screening for assisted living facilities and nursing home staff continues to result in lawsuits, fines and tarnished images. Recent cases in California, Massachusetts and Virginia demonstrate the culpability of assisted living and nursing home facilities.

In the majority of states, assisted living facilities and nursing homes require checks for criminal records only inside the state where the facility is located. Convicted criminals from other jurisdictions can—and do—slip through the cracks. In some cases, they land generally low-paying nursing home jobs caring for the elderly, who are among the most vulnerable members of society.

In addition, some nursing homes conduct employment screening only on individuals who have direct care with patients. Many residents are compromised making them easy prey for criminals. It's crucial to safeguard your facility against all types of abuse: physical, emotional and financial. Good business practice calls for all nursing home applicants to undergo comprehensive background screening.

Although in most states conducting national background checks on assisted living and nursing home staff is optional, it's a step in the right direction toward protecting older Americans and protecting you from lawsuits, fines and bad publicity. Make an investment in comprehensive background screening to reduce your liability and elevate your reputation.

Strategic Screening Solutions for High-Performance HR Organizations

To learn more about how to protect your senior facility, please contact an Accutrace screening specialist.