

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 17, 2016

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS

BUDGET

HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Andrew M. Slavitt
Acting Administrator
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
US Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Slavitt:

It was recently brought to my attention that an Immediate Jeopardy citation that was issued to Olson Hall of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King this past March 2016 was not posted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Nursing Home Compare site until this November, a delay of eight months. In that interim time, the King facility received a five-star rating under the CMS Nursing Home Quality Rating System.

As you know, the CMS Five-Star Quality Rating System is intended to help consumers compare nursing homes and more easily identify those facilities that have met or exceeded CMS minimum quality standards. A five-star rating under the CMS program is considered a primary attestation of quality from a legitimate source. Thus, I am particularly alarmed that serious health and safety citations are not being accurately reported to, or timely captured by, the CMS database.

On September 21, 2016, the Wisconsin State Legislature approved an audit of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King to investigate allegations of mistreatment of residents and improper use, or non-use, of state and federal funds. Accounts of neglect, staffing shortages and crumbling facilities are alarming and should be captured by Nursing Home Compare to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the rating system.

I ask to be provided a detailed account as to why the March 2016 Immediate Jeopardy citation was not posted on Nursing Home Compare in a timely fashion and what action is being taken to ensure such error or delay does not occur again. Further, I request that CMS review the star rating of the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King to ensure that it is accurate based on all available data. Please direct your correspondence on this request to the attention of Sarah Anstaett in my Madison Senate office or via email sarah_anstaett@baldwin.senate.gov. Thank you in advance for your timely review and response.

Sincerely,



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

TB:sba