

REGULATION

Kentucky governor orders nursing home reforms

Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear has ordered state officials to immediately implement a series of recommendations for improving the way nursing home abuse is investigated and reported in the state.

The recommendations came in a report from the governor's Cabinet for Health and Family Services on nursing home investigation processes for reporting incidents of elder abuse or neglect.

Beshear said in a Sept. 17 statement that he had ordered the department to prepare a series of recommendations after articles published in the Lexington Herald-Leader questioned the effectiveness of the current processes.

The report resulted in 20 recommendations that Beshear said must be effectively implemented.

In his statement, he said the changes are an "important part" of ensuring the safety and well-being of Kentuckians in nursing homes and assisted-living facilities.

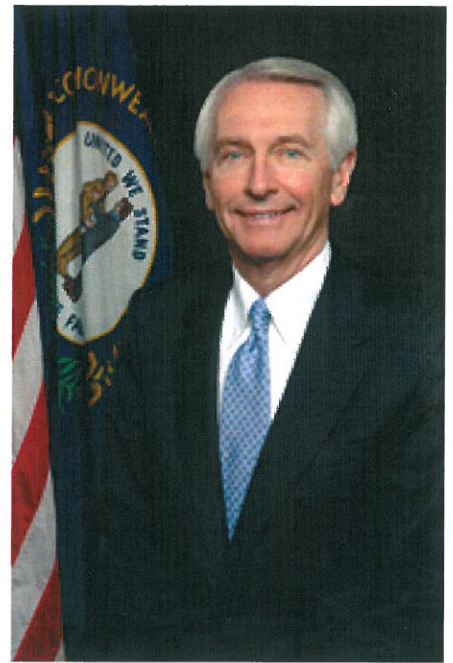
"This review will be an essential document to guide the many groups that have an interest in maintaining safe nursing homes, and to ensure that proper procedures and accountability are maintained when investigations are required for suspected cases of neglect or abuse," Beshear told the media.

According to the report, an extensive review of state agencies revealed several key areas where policy changes could improve the process of reporting and investigating abuse or neglect.

The recommendations include improving agency notifications of suspected adult abuse and neglect as well as establishing joint investigative teams to allow for more efficient information sharing.

They also suggest increased training for both long-term-care investigators in the Office of the Inspector General and for law enforcement agencies and prosecutors who specialize in elder-abuse and -neglect issues.

Among other things, the report also recommends amending licensure



Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear

regulations to require in-service training on abuse and neglect for all staff of long-term-care facilities.

A copy of the report, which includes supporting documents from contributing agencies, can be viewed at <https://healthalerts-edit.ky.gov/Documents/Protection%20of%20Nursing%20Home%20Residents%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>. **WJ**

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