

Case Study: Chemical Restraint of Mrs. H

Mrs. H was 74 years old and lived with her husband. She had advanced Alzheimer's and did not know her address or phone number. Although a millionaire, Mrs. H believed she did not have any money.

Mrs. H was taken from her home by a cousin, who placed her at an assisted living facility with instructions not to allow Mrs. H any contact with her family or friends. The facility denied phone calls to Mrs. H for several months. The facility denied visitation for over a year.

1. Mrs. H was highly agitated, often stating that she wanted to leave the facility and often asking for her husband or daughter. Dr. L prescribed Risperdal and Seroquel to control behavior.
2. Mrs. H had increased agitation. Dr. R increased the dose of Seroquel for behavioral issues.
3. Mrs. H had increased agitation. At night, she would crawl from her room and try to escape the facility. Dr. R increased Seroquel to control behavior.
4. Mrs. H had increased agitation. She expressed fear of a male caregiver. During the day, staff would restrain her in a geri-chair with a spring=lpcl tray. Mrs. H would try to climb out of her geri-chair or slide under the tray. Dr. R increased the dose of Seroquel.
5. Mrs. H had increased agitation. She stated that a male caregiver hurt her and she was afraid he would kill her. Dr. R increased the dose of Seroquel.
6. Mrs. H had unexplained vaginal bleeding that required ambulance transport to the emergency room. She was so terrified that she had to be sedated for an exam. She was extremely fearful and agitated. Dr. J increased the dose of Seroquel.
7. The facility evicted Mrs. H shortly after the unexplained vaginal bleeding. She was rarely agitated at her new facility.

Mrs. H often refused to take her medications at the first facility. Staff crushed her meds, concealed them in pudding, and fed them to her on a spoon. She lost the ability to walk, became incontinent, and had several bouts of pneumonia.

In addition to antipsychotic meds Risperdal and Seroquel, Med Techs at the assisted living facility administered PRN anxiety medication Ativan and the narcotic pain killer Norco without physician oversight or specific orders. Med Techs had no medical training and were not licensed to administer medication. Most Med Techs lacked a high school education.