

DOJ Launches Targeted Elder Justice Task Forces

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On March 30, the Department of Justice (“DOJ”) announced the formal launch of 10 regional Elder Justice Task Forces designed to identify nursing homes and other long-term care (“LTC”) facilities that provide “grossly substandard care” to residents. Similar to DOJ’s previously launched Medicare Fraud Strike Force and Health Care Fraud Prevention & Enforcement Action Team (“HEAT”) initiative, the newly created Elder Justice Task Forces will focus on coordination and information sharing among federal, state and local enforcement agencies to combat suspected cases of physical abuse and financial fraud. Each task force will consist of representatives from the U.S. Attorneys’ Offices, state Medicaid Fraud Control Units, state and local prosecutors’ offices, the Department of Health and Human Services, state Adult Protective Services agencies, Long-Term Care Ombudsman programs and other law enforcement officials. Part of the larger DOJ Elder Justice Initiative, the task forces will have a national footprint with locations in the following districts: Northern District of California, Northern District of Georgia, District of Kansas, Western District of Kentucky, Northern District of Iowa, District of Maryland, Southern District of Ohio, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, Middle District of Tennessee and the Western District of Washington. The new Elder Justice Task Forces signal heightened interest and attention on the LTC industry, a move that comes on the heels of last summer’s Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ proposed rule to overhaul requirements for participation by LTC facilities in federal health care programs.

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