

Good day, I am Vanessa Mandich, Licensed Administrator with Woodlands Senior Living. I have been the administrator for the Memory care in the Lewiston location for 4 years. I have been with the organization for 5 years. I have only been in Maine for 6 years. My community in Lewiston, is a non-medical 72 bed locked neighborhood for seniors with a diagnosis of Demetia. The residents I serve are deemed incompetent and have a POA or Guardian. While I am one licensed community, we have two neighborhoods. One side is for higher functioning individuals who are no longer safe at home alone. As their disease progresses, we can transition them to the other neighborhood where they are still with like others but needing more assistance to complete their ADL's. We partner with home health, rehabilitation, palliative care and hospice when appropriate to support residents. We are privileged to care for these individuals and this work is a calling and it is important meaningful work.

I am Opposing to these new rules. I have great concern for not only my residents, but my organization, and my staff. Without funding guaranteed, there is no way these changes can take place without negatively affecting the great care being delivered now. I schedule at or above current ratios of 1/12, 1/18, and 1/30 to make sure resident needs are met. We have worked hard to hire a great team that I am proud of. It takes skill and knowledge to provide services to seniors with dementia and today there is limited beds, what if facilities close because of the new regulations – then what? We have a low unemployment rate and it is hard finding workers, particularly those who truly care. We already are in a place with staffing that costs and increasing staffing ratios will potentially make hiring impossible. I want to ask the committee to please NOT pass these rules as they are drafted and revised today. I ask you to please require the Department to work with providers of all settings, talk with those we serve, the residents and their families that love them. Develop a collaborative set of regulations that are created with factual and first hand meaningful information that is best and sustainable. Thank you for your time today to hear from me as I am advocating for 72 seniors with dementia, their families who love them, and my 40 staff members who strive everyday to make a meaningful difference to those we are privileged to care for.

Thank you,

Vanessa Mandich