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Nursing Home Administrators Licensing and Disciplinary Board  
Department of Financial and Professional Regulation  
Division of Professional Regulation  
Complaint Intake Unit  
100 West Randolph Street, Suite 9-300  
Chicago, IL 60601

To whom it may concern,

Based in Chicago, Gem Healthcare manages four Illinois nursing homes with troubled patient care records, Forest Hill Health and Rehab in East Moline, Galesburg Terrace in Galesburg, Regal Health and Rehab in Oak Lawn and Camelot Terrace in Streator. Over the last several years, these facilities managed by Gem Healthcare Management, Inc and its President Michael Lerner, have accumulated numerous patient care violations.

**While under the management of Gem Healthcare and Michael Lerner, residents of these homes have suffered sexual abuse, debilitating health issues and even death. While residents suffer these violations of care, Mr. Lerner continues to operate, at least his Galesburg facility, without full-time licensed administrators.** According to recent searches of the Division of Professional Regulation's License Lookup<sup>1</sup>, Theresa Sangster and Deborah Kipp, the administrator and assistant administrator of Galesburg Terrace, do not hold nursing home administrator licenses certified by the State of Illinois.

While Michael Lerner's Gem Healthcare, related companies and unlicensed administrators receive public Medicaid dollars from these facilities, frontline caregivers at these homes receive poverty wages. These low wages and poor management in turn contribute to troubling turnover rates at Gem homes. At Lerner's Galesburg Terrace facility, 68% of Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), the workers who provide the majority of direct care to residents, have been there less than one year and 77% have been there less than two years. Among the staff at Galesburg Terrace, there is just one full-time nursing assistant who has been caring for residents there for more than three years.

Mr. Lerner's continued failure to curb care violations at his nursing homes, retain staff and hire licensed administrators as required by the Nursing Home Care Act is cause for concern. What makes the situation at Gem Healthcare facilities even more shocking is that Michael Lerner is a licensed nursing home administrator in the State of Illinois and has received salary and management fees through Gem Healthcare for his management of these homes.

Each of these four homes have operated under their current licenses for at least ten years, with Regal Health and Rehab in Oak Lawn operating under its current license for over sixteen years. Michael Lerner has had time and opportunity to address the care and staffing violations at these facilities and has been unable or unwilling to do so after over a decade of this responsibility. Lerner's inability or unwillingness to address the conditions in his facilities and follow the regulations of the Nursing Home Care Act raise serious questions about Mr. Lerner's competency to hold a nursing home administrator license.

Under the Nursing Home Administrators Licensing and Disciplinary Act, the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation has the responsibility to review complaints about the competency of nursing home administrators.

**Because of Gem Healthcare's history of violations of the Nursing Home Care Act and Lerner's hiring of unlicensed administrators, we recommend the immediate review of Michael Lerner's license to operate as a nursing home administrator.**

A report examining Gem Healthcare's record of patient care has been included with this letter. Additional information regarding Gem Healthcare can be found at [www.lernernogem.com](http://www.lernernogem.com).

Sincerely,

Lisa Gude  
Vice-President and Nursing Home Division Director  
SEIU Healthcare Illinois & Indiana

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.idfpr.com/dpr/licenselookup/default.asp>