

Research Firm Suggests No Correlation between Five-Star Ratings, Resident Satisfaction

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LANCASTER, PENN.—There is little or no correlation between a nursing home's Five-Star rating and its resident and family member satisfaction, according to a study by [Holleran](#), a national research firm specializing in stakeholder research within the nonprofit senior living sector.

In an analysis of data from more than 12,000 nursing home residents and family members across 32 states, Holleran found little to no association between the one ("much below average") through five ("much above average") ratings given by CMS and the resident and family member satisfaction ratings. Residents and family members from the highest CMS-rated facilities do not differ in their satisfaction levels from residents and family members in facilities rated "average" by the controversial CMS rating system.

"We did find some similarities between the one and two ratings given by CMS, but what the CMS rating system fails to do is accurately capture any clear differences between a two and a three, a three and a four, and so on," said Lisa Scott Lehman, Holleran's managing partner. "We found a number of outliers as well where a facility garnered extremely high satisfaction ratings, but was rated a one or two by CMS. There is obviously a disconnect somewhere."

Holleran's National Satisfaction Databases reflect resident and family member satisfaction across skilled nursing facilities primarily in the nonprofit sector of senior living. Each facility's satisfaction ratings were statistically compared to its respective Five-Star rating as given by CMS.

Nursing homes rated as below average by CMS are still garnering satisfaction ratings in the mid 80s, according to Holleran, which suggests these results show there are missing key elements in the Five-Star Rating system and that the very constituents served by the nursing homes report favorable satisfaction ratings.

"Given that the Holleran statistics largely represent nonprofit nursing homes and nursing homes that are part of a larger continuum of care, the results could indicate a nonprofit differentiating factor," Lehman added.

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