

TESTIMONY OF RUTH ROSARIO
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Good morning, esteemed members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to share my experiences with you. My name is Ruth Rosario and I work as a Certified Nurse Aide at ManorCare Bethlehem 2021. I've worked there for 3 years.

I'm glad to be here today to talk about what it has been like to work in a ManorCare facility, in particular since the Carlye Group took over in December.

My comments are based on my own experiences as well as talking with co-workers at Bethlehem and other ManorCare facilities in the Lehigh Valley. I came to work at the nursing home because I have a passion to take care of people. I like to make people happy, especially the residents who often have no other family of their own that come to see them. It makes my job especially hard when we don't have the staffing and supplies we need to take good care of residents. The only thing that keeps me here is my desire to make improvements and make residents' lives better.

Staffing is a big problem at my facility. We don't have enough aides to provide the best care for our residents. There are times when residents don't get changed when they should, don't get turned enough, or their food is served cold. And because we barely have time to do meet their basic needs, we certainly don't have enough staff to spend time talking to residents the way we should. It's sad because it goes from caregiving to assembly-line taking care of people, where we have to do the minimum and as fast as possible in order to get to all the residents. For my co-workers and me, it makes our job more stressful and less fulfilling. Management told us that we should only spend 15 minutes with each resident, and usually we don't even have that much time. This is devastating for the residents who then have nobody to talk to and have long waits when they need care.

At my facility, my estimate is that we are short staffed on average 3-4 times a week and at least 2-3 times per week we are not able to make a second pass during AM care before lunch. That means the residents could be lying or sitting in their own urine or feces for 3-4 hours before we can change them after lunch. On a daily basis, we basically are faced with the choice of leaving residents to wait in soiled clothes or serve them cold food. When we complain to management, they tell us we have until 3 PM to get our work done.

Getting the supplies we need to do our jobs has also been a problem since Carlye took over. We are short wipes and soap about three times a week. Soap and wipes are very important both for resident care and for workers. Some workers have spent their own money to get soap, but we shouldn't have to.

A caregiver at Easton was saying that management decided to stop providing the special soap that we use for the peri area. CNAs were told to use the regular disinfectant soap instead, but residents said it burned. The CNAs banded together to demand that management bring back the

peri area soap, and eventually they won and now the peri soap is back. But caregivers shouldn't be fighting to get supplies.

What has made things worse since Carlyle took over is management's reaction to when me and my co-workers decided we needed a union to make improvements at our facility.

Ever since we started talking to each other and meeting with union organizers, management has responded with harassment and intimidation which has affected morale at the facility.

There have been times when we have been active with leafleting and meetings and management has responded by loading up with staff because I think they figure that if we have enough staff we won't talk about the union. Unfortunately, it never lasts and we are back to where we were before. Unless of course there is a state inspection and then there are staff everywhere.

I also believe that management's union busting campaign is affecting patient care because they are pulling us off the floor for anti-union meetings. One example is from back in March when management met with employees one-on-one for up to 30 minutes to say bad things about the union. Management met with 20 to 30 nurse aides, all of who should have been caring for residents instead of listening to anti-union propaganda.

This is happening everywhere workers are trying to come together to make improvements. I heard from one worker in the Lehigh Valley who told me that there was a nearly 100 percent staff turnover since management started cracking down on union activity.

I wish I could come here this morning and tell you that ever since the buyout, Carlyle has made things better for workers and residents. Unfortunately, I cannot say that. Many workers that I know are so discouraged by the lack of adequate staff and anti-union atmosphere that they are looking for other jobs.

I'll be honest with you, I think about it all the time myself. But so far I'm staying because I believe that the only chance we have to make improvements is when we workers have a voice management respects our opinion about providing care.

I hope this Committee will do all it can to hold Carlyle and ManorCare accountable for the promises they made to provide quality care nearly one year ago.

Thank you.