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**DISTRICT ATTORNEY JEFFREY ROSELL ANNOUNCES LAWSUIT AGAINST BROOKDALE  
NURSING HOME CHAIN**

Santa Cruz County District Attorney, Jeffrey Rosell announces that a lawsuit was filed against the nation's largest senior care provider, Brookdale. The statewide taskforce led by the Santa Cruz District Attorney's Office alleges that Brookdale ignored laws that protect patients' safety when they are discharged from a facility. The lawsuit also alleges that the company gave false information to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS); information which CMS uses to award "star ratings" to skilled nursing facilities so consumers can choose a quality facility.

Allegedly, Brookdale failed to properly notify its patients and families of transfers and discharges and failed to provide required timely notice to its patients, with a copy to the local ombudsmen. Brookdale also failed to properly prepare its patients for transfer or discharge. As a result, Brookdale endangered the health of its patients and left families scrambling to find other places to care for their loved ones.

The lawsuit also alleges that Brookdale lied to CMS and fraudulently increased its star rating in several categories to attract prospective patients and their families, including over-reporting its nursing staffing hours. By doing so, Brookdale was awarded undeserved four-and five-star ratings. Brookdale misrepresented the quality of its care to the public by reporting false information to CMS. In the lawsuit, the coalition argues that by engaging in these unfair business practices, Brookdale violated both the Unfair Competition Law and False Advertising Law.

"Protecting the elderly and disabled is one of the highest priorities for the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office." **said Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeffrey Rosell.** "This action will ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community are protected. Participating in this case is part of our ongoing efforts to hold skilled nursing facilities and their owners accountable."

The statewide taskforce includes the Attorney General and was founded in a joint effort by the Santa Cruz District Attorney's Office and the Kern County District Attorney's Office. The Santa Cruz District Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Affairs Unit has led the way for multiple statewide investigations involving Skilled Nursing Facilities.