

"Government, taxpayers, nursing home residents as well as their families and caregivers should be outraged and seek solutions," says Daniel R. Levinson, Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, in announcing the result of a DHHS audit which found that nearly one in seven elderly nursing home residents, almost all of them with dementia, are given powerful atypical antipsychotic drugs even though the medicines increase the risk of death and are not approved for such treatments. The [New York Times](#) reported on May 10 that DHHS found the offending drugs included Risperdal, Zyprexa, Seroquel, Abilify and Geodon. The Inspector General stated that despite the fact these drugs are "potentially lethal" to many of the patients getting them, "some drug manufacturers illegally marketed their medicines for these uses "putting profits before safety.'

The same day the [Huffington Post](#) reported that in 2007 nearly 270,000 nursing home residents suffering dementia received powerful drugs meant for treating serious mental illnesses like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Huffington also noted that "the IG found that for one in five residents, nursing homes dispensed these drugs in a way that violated the government's standards for their use – for example, the prescribed dose was too high or residents were on medication for too long.'