

future, the health risks imposed upon them will only get worse.

Because of the seriousness of the problem, the significant health and fatality risks to the elderly, and the inconsistent and often ineffectual state inspection process, Congress must act to further protect the millions of seniors in nursing homes and long-term care facilities from foodborne illnesses. **The answer is to make certain that food service managers who run the day-to-day operations are adequately trained and certified for safe food handling. Congressional action is needed now to enact legislation to fill this void in the HHS regulations to raise the standards of care for seniors by requiring nursing home and other long-term care facilities receiving Federal funds to require the director of food services, if not a full-time qualified dietitian, to at least be certified by the Certifying Board for Dietary Managers of the Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals.** This is not a burden to the industry as a facility can train an existing foodservice employee at a nominal cost. Risks of foodborne illness among residents in nursing homes can be minimized through low cost, high impact training and certification. We owe it to our parents and to America's elderly.

¹J. L. Smith, "Foodborne Illness in the Elderly", Department of Microbial Food Safety, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, note in Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, U.S. Food and Drug Administration publication, "Seniors and Food Safety", May 1999.

²"Protecting Residents from Foodborne Illnesses", Jamie Stamey, RD, LDN, CFSP, *Nursing Homes* magazine, December 17, 2006.

³Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Authors Douglas Archer, Ph.D., deputy director of FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, and William C. Levine, M.D., Joanne F. Smart, M.D., Nancy H. Bean, Ph.D., and Robert V. Tauxe, M.D., all of the national Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Ga.

⁴Department of Health and Human Services, [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov), "About Nursing Home Inspections".