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Nursing home to shutter; 123 jobs gone

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CHAPEL HILL – A Chapel Hill nursing home that’s been the subject of a state investigation, lawsuits and arrests is closing its doors and laying off all 123 employees.

Being dismissed are nine certified registered nurses, 23 certified licensed practical nurses and 66 Level I certified nursing assistants, among other staff. The closing will be effective June 1.

Principle Long Term Care, based in Kinston, operates the facility and revealed the closing through a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, WARN, notification required by law. Principle operates multiple nursing homes across North Carolina.

[Glenn Potter](#), vice president of human resources for Principle, filed the closing and layoff notice but did not return a phone message for comment. An assistant said he would not be made available. A woman named [Bebe Hill](#), in a separate department of Principle LTC, acknowledged receiving questions by email, but did not provide answers and said representatives would not be made available for a phone interview.

Two years ago, an investigation by the N.C. State Bureau of Investigation led to a nurse being charged with second-degree murder. On June 7, 2010, the Medicaid Investigations Unit of the N.C. Attorney General’s Office arrested Britthaven registered nurse [Angela Almore](#), who at the time was 44 and lived at 724 Berwick Valley Lane in Cary, and charged her with second-degree murder in connection with the death of Britthaven resident [Rachel Holliday](#).

Almore also was charged with six counts of felony patient abuse for conduct related to her providing morphine to six other patients at Britthaven of Chapel Hill causing their hospitalization. Almore was arrested and placed under a \$500,000 secured bond. Her trial is scheduled for June 4.

When Britthaven closes, it will eliminate 28 percent of the state-authorized 471 nursing beds in Orange County. Every year, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services Division of Health Service Regulation allocates how many new medical beds may be added in various

geographical areas, and would consider the loss of 133 beds when looking at Orange County.

Perhaps Britthaven intends to move its business west into Wake County. A joint group of called Britthaven Inc. and Spruce LTC Group LLC has won a bid to build a 120-bed nursing facility in north Wake County, and filings with the Department of Health and Human Services show documents with the names of both Principle Long Term Care and Britthaven Inc. on them. In those documents it shows that Britthaven recorded \$35 million of net income for the year ending Sept. 30, 2010. That year, Britthaven recorded \$448 million in long-term care revenue.

Jason deBruyn covers the biopharmaceutical and health care industries. Follow him on Twitter @TriBizHealth or @jasondebruyn.