

Quality Counts

Arizona Nursing Home Quality Initiative

In This Issue

Nursing Home Resources	2
HSAG Nursing Home Team Contact Information	2

New Provider Newsletter to Bring Settings Together

Publication to cover all settings of care—debuting late summer

Nursing homes around the country have spent the last three years working on the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) quality improvement initiatives related to restraint reduction, pressure ulcer and pain management, employee and resident satisfaction, and CNA turnover rate improvement. Arizona nursing homes were successful in providing better care and improving publicly reported measures for their residents by implementing evidence-based, best-practice strategies and working diligently to obtain positive outcomes. HSAG commends and applauds Arizona nursing homes for their hard work in improving health care quality.

Moving forward, CMS and its partners will incorporate lessons learned from the past three years into future change efforts. Recently, many health care experts have effectively argued that quality improvement cannot be sustained in a siloed environment, and that multi-disciplined approaches are now a necessary ingredient to achieve desired quality outcomes.

CMS projects during the next three years will still include a focus on nursing homes, but there will also be specific projects that cross multiple settings of care. To that end, HSAG is announcing that it will no longer produce this *Quality Counts* newsletter and will begin

(Continued on page 2)

Don't Forget!

CMS Open Door Forum

Please continue to check the link below for monthly CMS Open Door Forum calls.

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/25_ODF_SNFLTC.asp

CMS Announces New System to Rate Nursing Home Quality

CMS recently announced its plans to launch a ground-breaking ranking system of America's nursing homes, giving each a "star" rating. CMS is requesting comments on the system designed to provide patients and their families an easy-to-understand assessment of nursing home quality, making meaningful distinctions between high-performing and low-performing nursing homes.

For more information and to read the entire press release, please visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp.

producing one newsletter for all provider settings—physician offices, nursing homes, hospitals, and home health agencies—in late summer.

By creating one provider newsletter, all settings of care will have access to cross-setting information that will assist them in working together to improve health care quality in Arizona. This is another step toward a collaborative approach to improve patient safety and publicly reported measures for Medicare beneficiaries.

Since this is the last issue, HSAG would like to take this opportunity to thank Arizona nursing homes for reading *Quality Counts*.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at jbestic@azqio.sdps.org or at 602.745.6205 if you have any questions.

Regards,

Joe Bestic, NHA, BA,
HSAG Director, Nursing Home

Nursing Home Resources

Don't forget about all of the great resources out there to help you with your quality improvement efforts. Below are just a few:

- Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>
- Aging Services of Arizona (formerly the Arizona Association of Homes and Housing for the Aging)
<http://www.azaha.org>
- Arizona Health Care Association
<http://www.azhca.org>
- MedQIC—the Medicare Quality Improvement Community
<http://www.medqic.org>

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Visit HSAG's Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI) Web site at <http://nhqi.hsag.com>.

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