

Quality Counts

Arizona Nursing Home Quality Initiative

In This Issue

Upcoming Events	2
The Joint Commission's Perspective on Withholding Payment for Hospital Errors	3
AGS Spring Mental Health Conference	3
ADHS Awards Nursing Home Quality Improvement Grants	4
HSAG Nursing Home Team Contact Information	4

HSAG Recognizes NHQI Efforts

"Go for the Gold!" Recognition Program Recipients Announced

As part of an initiative to acknowledge nursing home quality improvement (NHQI) efforts throughout the state of Arizona, HSAG—the Arizona Medicare Quality Improvement Organization—developed the **2005–2008 NHQI "Go for the Gold!" Recognition Program**. Through this program, participants receive recognition for their quality improvement efforts from Q2 2004–Q2007. HSAG NHQI team members are proud to announce the Arizona nursing homes that achieved success by meeting specific program criteria.

NHQI Participant winners!

The following Arizona nursing homes received the **NHQI "Go for the Gold!" Certificate of Participation:**

- Beatitudes Campus
- Chula Vista Care Center
- Coronado Care Center
- Fountain View Village
- Hearthstone of Mesa
- Hearthstone of Sun City

(Continued on page 2)

What's New

Updated Medicare Provider Forms Available

Updated discharge forms for Medicare Health Plans (formerly known as Medicare Advantage Plans) are now available. Visit http://www.hsag.com/providers/medicare_advantage.asp for more information.

New Ways to Manage Health Data

Internet companies including Microsoft and Google are developing Web sites that combine personal health records (PHRs) with search engines and other services to make them more valuable. Although privacy advocates have increased warnings over online PHRs, some experts say the benefits offset the risks.

For more information on this topic, please visit <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/10/AR2008031001613.html>.

- Kachina Point Health Center
- North Mountain Medical & Rehabilitation Center
- Springdale Village Health Care
- The Peaks, A Senior Living Community
- The Pavillion Skilled Nursing Facility

Certificate-of-Participation recipients met the following criteria:

- Participated in three or more HSAG-sponsored NHQI learning sessions/teleconferences from Q2 2004–Q2 2007.

- Set annual targets (2006, 2007) on STAR for the four HSAG-focused quality measures (pressure ulcers, restraints, depression, and chronic-care pain).

NHQI Achiever winners!

The following Arizona nursing homes received the **NHQI “Go for the Gold!” Certificate of Achievement:**

- Cook Health Care
- Gardens Health Care
- Glencroft Care Center
- Good Shepherd Villa
- Heritage Health Care Center
- Life Care Center of North Glendale
- Life Care Center at South Mountain
- Prescott Samaritan Village
- Ridgecrest Healthcare
- Weyrich Health Care Center of Westminster Village

Certificate-of-Achievement recipients met the criteria listed above, as well as achieved a relative improvement rate of 50 percent or better in two of the four HSAG-focused quality measures from Q2 2004–Q2 2007.

NHQI Leader winner!

Posada Del Sol received the **NHQI “Go for the Gold!” Certificate of Leadership** (honorable mention). Posada Del Sol met the criteria listed above, as well as:

- Enrolled in the Nursing Home Improvement and Feedback Tool program and submitted process data for 50 percent of its monthly admissions in at least one of the four HSAG-focused quality measures.
- Achieved an excellent rating on its latest ADHS survey.

Please join HSAG in congratulating these nursing homes on their commitment to improve nursing home quality in Arizona!

More information about the NHQI “Go for the Gold!” Recognition Program will soon be available on HSAG’s Web site, <http://www.hsag.com>.

Upcoming Events

AANAC MDS/RAI Certification Course

Presented by: Rena Shepherd, AANAC Master Teacher

Administrator and Interdisciplinary Review

Wednesday, March 26, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Three-Day MDS/RAI Certification Course

March 27–29

Arizona Grand Senior Living Center

4602 N. 24th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016

Registration questions can be directed to CARES by calling 1.800.326.7176 or by e-mailing

support@clinicaladvisorsllc.com.

2008 AHCA Spring Leadership Conference

“Working Together to Achieve Success”

March 31–April 1

Prescott Conference Resort, Prescott, AZ

For registration information, please visit

<http://www.azhca.org/conference/Spring/spring08.php>.

CMS Skilled Nursing Facility/Long-Term Care (SNF/LTC) Open Door Forum

Tuesday, April 15

For more information and to register, please visit

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

The Joint Commission's Perspective on Withholding Payment for Hospital Errors

Source: The Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Patient Safety, February 2008; Vol. 34, Number 2. Robert M. Wachter, MD; Nancy E. Foster; R. Adams Dudley, MD, MBA. http://psnet.ahrq.gov/public/Wacher_JQPS_2008.pdf. Accessed 3/11/08.

The devil is in the details

In an effort to promote patient safety in American hospitals and clinics, Medicare recently announced its intention to withhold additional payments for "serious preventable events."

Beginning in 2009, Medicare will withhold its usual additional payments associated with hospitalizations that included one of several potentially preventable adverse events, such as certain hospital-acquired

infections, pressure ulcers, and retained surgical objects. Several more events are being considered for the future. A new coding category, "present on admission" (POA), has been added to identify patients whose adverse events occurred before the index hospitalization.

Issues and challenges

A "not paying for errors" policy seems reasonable if evidence demonstrates that most of the adverse events can be prevented by widespread adoption of achievable practices, the events can be measured accurately, the events resulted in clinically significant patient harm, and POA determination is feasible. Many of these criteria are met for the events in Medicare's starter set, but there are concerns about each event.

Eight conditions for which CMS plans to withhold reimbursement

Hospital-acquired infections

1. Catheter-associated urinary tract infections
2. *Staphylococcus aureus* bloodstream infections
3. Surgical site infections

Other complications of care

4. Pressure ulcers
5. Objects left in during surgery
6. Air embolism
7. Blood-type incompatibility
8. Hospital injuries (including burns and falls)

Five conditions for which CMS is seeking more comment before adding them to the nonreimbursement list

Hospital-acquired infections

1. Ventilator-associated pneumonia
2. Vascular catheter-associated infections
3. *Clostridium difficile*-associated disease
4. Methicillin-resistant *staphylococcus aureus* infections

Other complications of care

5. Wrong-site surgery

AGS Spring Mental Health Conference

"If I Was Your Age, I Would Be Depressed Too . . . And Other Myths of Aging and Mental Health"

Join the Arizona Geriatrics Society (AGS) for its first Spring Geriatric Mental Health Conference, titled "If I Was Your Age, I Would Be Depressed Too . . . And Other Myths of Aging and Mental Health," on Tuesday, April 1.

The conference is designed to dispel prevalent myths regarding aging and mental health. The conference will focus on best practices to enhance health care for older adults with various geriatric mental health disorders, as well as address the educational needs of geriatric professionals from all disciplines.

Physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, pharmacists, social workers, long-term care and managed care providers, health care administrators, and professional community providers are invited to attend this important conference.

Join the AGS on Tuesday, April 1, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., at the Carl T. Hayden Veterans Administration Medical Center (Ambulatory Care Building Conference Center), 650 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix, AZ 85012.

For more information, please visit <http://www.arizonageriatrics.org/mc/page.do?sitePagelId=61943>.

(Continued on page 4)

Conclusion

Although the new Medicare policy will undoubtedly lead to instances of unfairness, gaming, and unforeseen consequences, it may be effective. This initial implementation should be considered a bold experiment, whose consequences are carefully monitored. Additional research will be needed to help identify preventable adverse events and evidence-based strategies to prevent them.

To read the entire article, please visit http://psnet.ahrq.gov/public/Wacher_JQPS_2008.pdf.

ADHS Awards Nursing Home Quality Improvement Grants

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) recently awarded grants to 14 Arizona nursing homes under Grant HR821043—Nursing Care Improvement. Eligible applicants included any nursing care institution that, in the past, received one or more deficiencies on its annual facility compliance and licensure survey conducted pursuant to ARS § 36-425.02, regardless of the actual date of the survey.

The Arizona nursing homes that were awarded a grant under HR821043 are:

- Arizona State Veteran Home
- Baptist Village—Cook Health Care Center

- Baptist Village—Sun Ridge Health Care Center
- Beatitudes Campus Health Care Center
- Christian Care Nursing Center
- Desert Highlands Care Center
- Glencroft Care Center
- Good Shepherd Villa
- La Loma Care Center
- Life Care Center of North Glendale
- Mountain View Manor
- Ridgecrest Health Care
- Royal Oaks Health Care Center
- Sierra Winds Lifecare Retirement Community

Congratulations to these 14 Arizona nursing homes on their grant awards!

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