

Quality Counts

Arizona Nursing Home Quality Initiative

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What's New

CMS SNF/LTC Open Door Forum

The next CMS Skilled Nursing Facility/ Long-Term Care (SNF/LTC) Open Door Forum is scheduled for Thursday, December 6.

For more information and to register to receive updates, please visit

[http://www.cms.hhs.gov/
OpenDoorForums/25_ODF_
SNFLTC.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/25_ODF_SNFLTC.asp).

Continuous Quality Improvement for the Future

A glimpse into the QIO program 9SoW

The September issue of *QIO News* recently revealed a glimpse into the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) program goals for the next three years. The 9th Scope of Work (9SoW)—currently in draft form—will focus on four overarching themes across the care continuum: beneficiary protection, care coordination of patient pathways, patient safety, and prevention.

Beneficiary protection tasks

For the beneficiary protection theme—a Congressional mandate—QIOs will continue to emphasize:

- Utilization review.
- Quality-of-care review.
- Alternative dispute resolution.
- Beneficiary appeals review.
- Potential anti-dumping case review.

Care coordination—patient pathways tasks

The 9SoW will also focus on patient pathways to help Medicare beneficiaries stay healthy as they navigate the many sites of care delivery, including hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, and

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Medicare Appeals: Provider Information

To view HSAG's new Medicare provider Web page that contains information about fee-for-service and Medicare Advantage benefits, visit <http://www.hsag.com/providers>.

The page contains information on:

- The beneficiary notices initiative (BNI).
- Managed care appeals and grievances.
- Sample notice forms (downloadable).
- The *Federal Register* BIPA regulation.

physician offices. This theme will focus on improving coordination across the continuum of care, and in particular, on seamless transitions from setting to setting. QIOs will also help providers reduce unnecessary rehospitalizations that both harm patients and drain the Medicare Trust Fund.

Upcoming Events

Educational Endeavors to Encourage Advancing Excellence

Presented by AHCA and Residents First, LLC

November 13 from 10 a.m. to noon (resident satisfaction)

December 11 from 10 a.m. to noon (pain management)

AHCA office (New Location!)

For registration information, call 602.265.5331 or e-mail residents_first@yahoo.com.

AzAHA Back Injury Prevention Seminar

November 13 from 1 to 3 p.m.

Christian Care Nursing Center

For registration information, visit <http://www.azaha.org>.

RUG Refinement: Positioning Your Facility for Clinical and Financial Success

November 28 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Glencroft Retirement Community

For registration information, visit <http://www.azaha.org>.

Caring for Yourself and Your Residents During the Holiday Season (*two dates*)

December 4 from 9 a.m. to noon (Mesa—Citadel Assisted Living Center)

December 6 from 9 a.m. to noon (Peoria—The Forum at Desert Harbor)

For registration information, visit <http://www.azhca.org> or call 602.265.5331.

Understanding the New UAR (*Sponsored by AHCA and AzAHA—two dates*)

December 5 from 9 to 11 a.m. (Phoenix—HSAG)

December 6 from 1 to 3 p.m. (Tucson—Pima County Medical Society)

For registration information, visit <http://www.azhca.org> or call 602.265.5331.

Care coordination—patient safety tasks

The patient safety theme will address major areas of patient harm. QIOs will further their current work in:

- Reducing avoidable pressure ulcers and the use of restraints in nursing homes.
- Improving surgical care.
- Reducing the incidence of drug-resistant staph infections in hospitals.
- Improving drug safety.

Care coordination—prevention tasks

With Medicare's added coverage for preventive services in recent years, an emphasis on prevention is needed to increase utilization of these services. QIO activities under this theme will help:

- Improve vaccination rates for flu and pneumonia.
- Reduce the incidence and progression of chronic kidney disease.
- Encourage the use of colorectal cancer screening and mammography.
- Support provider adoption of electronic health records.

The QIO 9SoW is projected to start in August 2008. More information on the 9SoW and associated topics will be provided as it becomes available.

Source: QIO News, September 2007

Inquiries at Investor-Owned Nursing Homes

The House Energy and Commerce Committee and the House Financial Services Committee announced recently that they would investigate business practices at nursing homes owned by private investment groups. The committees announced the investigations in response to concerns raised by the Service Employees International Union that private equity companies purchase nursing homes and reduce services to increase profit.

A report last month in the *New York Times* said that private investment firms had bought thousands of nursing homes and often cut expenses and staff, sometimes below minimum legal requirements, to

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increase their profit. The article, which was cited by federal and state legislators as impetus for their investigations, described how investment groups used complicated corporate structures to avoid liability when residents suffered from neglect.

Representatives at various private equity firms said their companies intended to cooperate with all inquiries and that they were committed to maintaining high standards at their facilities.

The Congressional inquiries and hearings may lead to significant shifts within the nursing home industry.

“When Congress has examined nursing homes in the past, it’s led to fundamental changes,” said David Zimmerman, a professor at the University of Wisconsin and president of the Long Term Care Institute, a nonprofit group. “The government pays for a great deal of nursing home care. If they demand transparency on ownership and liability, they’ll get it. Private equity groups have reasons to be concerned.”

To view the article in its entirety, please visit http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/24/business/24retirement.html?_r=3&oref=slogin&oref=slogin&oref=slogin.

Source: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/24/business/24retirement.html?_r=3&oref=slogin&oref=slogin&oref=slogin

2007/2008 NH Immunization Toolkit on MedQIC

This toolkit offers specific information and education for nursing home providers, staff members, residents, and families on the benefits of immunization. These benefits include decreases in resident hospitalization, vulnerability to pneumonia, and staff illness.

The toolkit also offers providers comprehensive and timely information related to immunization, as well as sample guidelines and tools needed to run an effective and sustainable resident-and-staff immunization program.

For more information and to download samples and templates from the toolkit that you can edit for local use, visit <http://www.medqic.org/dcs/ContentServer?cid=1105558764854&pagename=Medqic%2FMQTools%2FToolTemplate&parentName=Topic&c=MQTools>.

An Arizona Nursing Home LEAPs Forward

In Glendale, Arizona, Glencroft Care Center has started using the LEAP program, and that has the staff excited. As recently as July of this year, Glencroft was experiencing certified nursing assistant (CNA) registry costs of \$28,000 per month. The center’s administration was perplexed by the staffing challenges because it had been practicing person-centered care for its residents and employees for well over five years. Recognizing the need to improve on CNA recruitment and retention, Toni Horton, MBA, NHA, the center’s administrator, implemented the LEAP program.

LEAP is a comprehensive workforce development program that empowers staff, increases retention, and promotes staff-resident relationships through a model of person-centered care. With a focus on CNA career development, LEAP is an acronym corresponding to the following program goals:

- Learn how to build strong relationships among nursing staff, residents, and families.
- Empower nursing staff and create structures for advancement.
- Achieve staff development and retention goals.
- Produce measurable outcomes.

LEAP benefits

Immediate benefits from Glencroft’s initial training program included improved communication between nurses and CNAs, overall empowerment of staff members, and increased nurse leadership skills. Additionally, conflict management and resolution skills were taught because nursing programs throughout the country do not offer courses on these topics.

Since implementing LEAP, Glencroft Care Center has experienced a significant reduction in registry costs.

CNA registry cost:

July 2007—\$32,000

August 2007—\$5,000

September 2007—\$500

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LPN registry cost:

July 2007—\$51,000

August 2007—\$27,000

September 2007—\$10,000

“I truly believe that there is an elevated culture-change process in our retirement community resulting from better leadership and staff member empowerment because of programs like LEAP,” said Horton. “Although registry reduction is a constant focus of attention in our profession, we can credit our recent accomplishments to the appeal of a career ladder and the potential for growth within the facility—all of which are components of LEAP.”

To learn more about the LEAP program, please visit http://www.matherlifeways.com/re_leap.asp or contact Toni Horton at 623.939.9475.

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign Update

The Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Quality Campaign—launched in September 2006—is reinvigorating efforts to improve the quality of care and quality of life for those living or recuperating in America's nursing homes.

The campaign monitors key indicators of nursing home care quality, promotes excellence in caregiving for nursing home residents, and acknowledges the critical role of nursing home staff in providing care.

To date, over 6,000 nursing homes nationwide are participating in the campaign, which represents almost 40 percent of all nursing homes in the country! In Arizona, 55 percent of nursing homes are participating. Thank you for all your hard work!

What's new

Implementation Guide to Reducing High-Risk Pressure Ulcers. This guide provides efficient, consistent, evidence-based approaches to address the prevention and minimization of pressure ulcers. To download the guide, visit http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/files/im/1_PressureUlcer_TAW_Guide.pdf.

Don't forget to register

Visit <http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org> today to register for the campaign.

HSAG Nursing Home Team Contact Information

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