

SESSION GUIDE

Bullying Among Older Adults

Session Code: T103

Cheri Burcham, MA | University of Illinois Extension

Tessa Hobbs-Curley, MA, LCPC | University of Illinois Extension

Most people think of bullying as something done to children by other children. As the attention and focus on the social problem of bullying has become more prevalent in recent years, it is evident that bullying can be perpetrated and experienced by people of any age. Join us for this special session to learn to recognize and respond to bullying situations.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Define bullying behavior and identify the roles in a bullying situation.*
- *Identify and recognize potential bullying situations and ways to respond.*
- *Discuss strategies to create a culture of care in any environment.*

Quality That Pays: How Clinical Excellence Drives Reimbursement (Without Burning Out Your Team)

Session Code: T104

Sarah Becker, RN, RAC-CT, DNS-CT, QCP, RAC-CTA | Proactive LTC Consulting

Quality outcomes and reimbursement are often discussed as separate priorities—but in today's long term care environment, they are deeply connected. This session will break down how everyday clinical practices directly impact reimbursement, quality measures, Five-Star ratings, and Medicaid add-on programs.

Attendees will gain a practical understanding of where facilities unintentionally lose revenue due to workflow gaps, documentation breakdowns, and misaligned leadership oversight—and how to correct these issues without adding staff burden. This session focuses on leadership-level strategies that align clinical excellence with financial sustainability while supporting frontline teams.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain how routine clinical and documentation practices impact reimbursement, Quality Measures, and survey risk.*
- *Identify common operational and workflow gaps that negatively affect quality outcomes and financial performance.*
- *Apply practical leadership strategies that improve quality and reimbursement while supporting staff sustainability and avoiding burnout.*

Practical AI Tools to Support Individuals and Staff in ID/DD Services

Session Code: T105

Gerald Stanley, BS | KSM CPAs & Advisors

Professionals serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities face significant documentation, communication, and administrative demands, often while striving to provide the highest level of care and support. Artificial intelligence offers practical tools that can help reduce administrative burden, support staff, and allow more time to focus on the individuals they serve. This session will share real-world examples of how AI can assist with writing progress notes, summarizing documentation, improving team communication, and supporting daily operational tasks. Attendees will also learn best practices for using AI safely and responsibly, including important considerations related to HIPAA and protecting sensitive information.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify practical AI use cases that can support staff, reduce documentation burden, and improve operational efficiency in ID/DD service environments.*
- *Explain how AI tools can assist with progress notes, incident summaries, and team communication while supporting quality care and staff effectiveness.*
- *Recognize best practices for using AI safely and responsibly, including protecting sensitive information and understanding basic HIPAA considerations.*

Innovative Wellness Programs for Successful Aging

Session Code: T106

Linda Riccio, OT/L, FAOTA | TCM Consulting & Management

This session presents innovative wellness strategies to improve the well-being of older adults, especially those adjusting to medical conditions affecting their independence. Participants will explore a comprehensive definition of well-being, encompassing the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of this population. The session will present three effective programming strategies to help residents enhance their lifestyle, improve cognitive and physical fitness, and manage nutrition. Additionally, participants will discover three impactful wellness programs that empower older adults to age in place and foster a long-term, wellness-focused lifestyle. Professionals will leave with

actionable insights and practical steps to implement resident-centered wellness initiatives that promote successful aging in their communities.

Preventive health and lifestyle medicine are at the forefront of CMS and national MAHA (“Make America Healthy Again”) initiatives. Wellness programs directly advance these priorities—empowering older adults to age in place, supporting census stability, and enhancing resident and family satisfaction. For providers, implementing evidence-based wellness strategies is not only mission-driven but also a market differentiator—positioning communities as leaders in quality, sustainability, and whole-person care.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Define well-being specifically tailored to older adults who are experiencing functional declines and wish to age in place while maintaining their quality of life.*
- *Identify three essential programming strategies that enhance lifestyle, cognitive and physical fitness, and nutrition management, designed to meet the diverse needs of older adults.*
- *Highlight three innovative wellness programs that support aging in place and promote sustainable, wellness-oriented lifestyles for older adults.*

Leverage Live Data to Maintain a Culture of Care, Communication, and Compliance

Session Code: T107

Cheryl Scalzo, RN | Real Time Medical Systems

This session examines what it truly means for SNFs to achieve and sustain compliance in today’s highly regulated environment. Beyond CMS requirements, compliance includes aligning with internal protocols, clinical standards, and resident-centered care practices. As survey activity intensifies, SNFs must continuously monitor the effectiveness of their care strategies. The session will highlight how live data analytics can ease administrative and regulatory burdens by helping teams track resident status, identify risk, streamline communication, and prepare for surveys and reporting. Attendees will learn how to transform existing EHR data into actionable insights that support infection surveillance, risk mitigation, and the development of measurable, outcome-focused Process Improvement Plans.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify residents experiencing high risk changes that may result in rehospitalization and develop clinical standards for timely intervention through collaboration, communication, and compliance.*
- *Discuss how to leverage post-acute data analytics to streamline process improvement outcomes, survey compliance and auditing, to manage resident care in alignment with resident needs, coordinated clinical standards, and value-based care initiatives.*
- *Discuss key components of a successful, comprehensive Quality Assurance Process Improvement (QAPI) program that supports and maintains regulatory compliance.*

Measuring, Developing, and Sustaining Organizational Health

Session Code: T108

Thomas Annarella, LNHA | Jordan Healthcare Group

Kristin Thrun, LNHA | Jordan Healthcare Group

This informative session will feature a deep dive into the most critical measure of success: Organizational Health. Participants will learn the fundamentals of organizational health, how to measure and promote organizational health, and ways to enhance their leadership and facility health while improving resident outcomes and employee satisfaction. They will leave with fresh ideas about how they can make changes that will not only improve the health and satisfaction of their residents, but of their staff and overall organization as well.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the fundamentals of organizational health.*
- *Explain how to measure and promote organizational health inside their organization.*
- *Discuss ways to enhance leadership and facility health and improve resident outcomes/employee satisfaction.*

Medicaid Transfers & Penalties: Strategies to Prevent Financial Loss

Session Code: T109

Sara Saric | Saric Consulting, Inc

Steven Milburn, JD | Dent Coulson Elder Law, LLC

Join presenters Sara Saric and Steven Milburn for a practical, straightforward look at allowable and non-allowable asset transfers, how each impacts Medicaid eligibility, and the steps families and providers can take to plan ahead. This session will clarify common misconceptions, outline strategies to avoid or cover penalties, and help prevent unnecessary financial loss to long term care facilities by providing clarity and certainty in long term care eligibility decisions.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss allowable and non-allowable asset transfers and the Medicaid look-back period as defined in the DHS Policy Manual, and how both factors affect long term care eligibility.*
- *Discuss transfer mistakes made by families and facilities that lead to avoidable denials or delays, and proactive planning strategies to minimize penalty periods and protect facility reimbursement.*
- *Apply general best practices that support accurate, successful Notices of Decision and promote timely Medicaid payments, including key Provisional Eligibility considerations and the impact of untimely admissions on reimbursement.*

Developing an Organizational Culture that Enhances Person-Centered Practices

Session Code: T110

David Jaques, PhD, BCBA | Visions LLC

Presented by Visions LLC's David Jaques, this session will help participants to develop an organizational culture that is conducive to the promotion of person-centered practices. Attendees will learn how to evaluate organizational culture, as well as how to identify and describe seven factors or considerations that will assist in establishing their own organizational culture.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *The participant will be able to define and describe organizational culture*
- *The participant will be able to identify and describe factors that significantly contribute toward creating an culture that is conducive to the promotion of person centered practices.*
- *The participant will be able to identify and describe methods for evaluating organizational culture and its relationship to person centered practices.*

Beyond the Big One: Strengthening Continuity Through Everyday Emergencies

Session Code: T111

Jana Broughton, LNHA, BA, MA | Superior Health Quality Alliance

Reframing emergency preparedness for nursing homes by shifting the focus from rare, large scale disasters to the small, high frequency events that actually disrupt care, strain staff, and trigger regulatory scrutiny can help you and your staff in a number of ways. Through three real world case studies – small fire, plumbing failure, and elopement – participants will learn how these incidents expose gaps in communication, decision making, and workflows. The session emphasizes practical, operational readiness: building muscle memory, strengthening continuity planning, and using micro scenarios to improve resilience across all departments.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the importance of emergency preparedness for long term care centers.*
- *Explain how shifting focus from rare, large scale disasters to small, high frequency events can help staff.*
- *Discuss ways this shift in focus can expose gaps in communications, decision making, and workflows, and how it can help with operational readiness.*

The Management of Heart Failure in Older Adults

Session Code: T112

Jerry Bucholc, PharmD, BCGP | Omnicare

In this session, presenter Jerry Bucholc will go over what heart failure is, the signs and symptoms of heart failure, and treatment options for individuals experiencing heart failure.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain what heart failure is, its different types, and its risk factors.*
- *Identify signs and symptoms of heart failure and discuss appropriate monitoring.*
- *Recognize appropriate heart failure treatment options.*

AI in Long Term Care: Tools, Use Cases, and Best Practices

Session Code: T113

Gerald Stanley, BS | KSM CPAs & Advisors

Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing how long term care organizations operate, but many leaders are still unsure where to start or how to use it safely and effectively. This session moves beyond theory and focuses on practical, real-world use cases that administrators and staff can apply immediately.

Attendees will learn how AI can be used to improve marketing and census growth, automate routine documentation and communication, support staff efficiency, and strengthen operational decision making. The session will also cover recent advances in AI tools, how they are being used in long term care today, and best practices for safe and responsible implementation.

Participants will leave with clear examples, practical strategies, and actionable steps they can implement right away.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify practical AI use cases in long term care that can improve operations, marketing, and/or staff efficiency.*
- *Demonstrate how AI tools can automate documentation, communication, and routine administrative tasks.*
- *Develop a basic implementation approach for safely and effectively introducing AI into daily workflows within a long term care organization.*

IDPH & CMS Survey & Enforcement Tips

Session Code: T114

Neville Bilimoria, JD | Duane Morris LLP

IDPH and CMS surveys can be daunting but also confusing. Government notices can be difficult to understand and follow. Plus, the notices from IDPH are always changing. Stay on top of survey trends to allow you to master the survey and enforcement process by joining Duane Morris's Neville Bilimoria for this informative presentation.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the basics about survey enforcement.*
- *Discuss how to legally defend your facility in the face of the onslaught of surveys.*
- *Explain effective strategies to combat difficult and troubling survey findings.*

Surviving to Thriving: Promoting Healthy Aging in Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Session Code: T115

Danielle Hughes, PT, DPT | DD Homes Network

Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities are living longer than ever before, creating new opportunities and challenges for promoting health and independence for an optimized quality of life. This session will explore the unique physical and functional age-related changes experienced by adults with ID/DD and examine evidence-based strategies to support healthy aging. Participants will gain practical approaches to identifying common risks, preventing secondary conditions, and promoting mobility to help individuals not only live longer, but thrive across their lifespan.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss physical and functional age-related changes experienced by adults with ID/DD.*
- *Discuss ways to support healthy aging in ID/DD.*
- *Discuss how to identify common risks, prevent secondary conditions, and promote mobility in ID/DD residents.*

Breaking the Silence: Combating Social Isolation in Nursing Homes

Session Code: T116

Denise Spihlman, LCSW, PRSD, CDP | Outcome Services of Illinois

Loneliness does not always mean being alone. In long term care facilities, social isolation is a growing concern for residents. While residents are surrounded by staff, other residents and visitors, we are seeing individuals who are staying in their rooms, not interacting with others, and disengaging

from daily life. This session will explore the causes and consequences of isolation, including taking a look at barriers related to cognitive decline, mobility, and psychosocial factors.

We will look at hidden signs of isolation and talk about our role as social services professionals, and other long term care center staff, to combat this. We will explore ways to spark connections, strengthen relationships, and create an atmosphere where residents feel seen, heard, valued, and respected. Let's talk about making lasting differences in the lives of our residents.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain social isolation in long term care facilities and the potential consequences for residents.*
- *Discuss how to identify hidden signs of isolation and how staff can work to combat it.*
- *Discuss ways staff can make connections with residents and create a positive atmosphere to help residents feel seen and valued.*

How Nursing and Therapy Shape Outcomes Through Collaboration

Session Code: T117

Michelle Stork, MA, CCC-SLP, RAC-CT, RAC-CTA, QCP | Elevate Therapy Consulting Group

Liz Barlow, RN, CRRN, RAC-CT, DNS-CT, QCP | Elevate Therapy Consulting Group

The Minimum Data Set (MDS) serves as the foundation for PDPM reimbursement, the SNF Quality Reporting Program (QRP) measures, and public reporting through Care Compare. CMS continues to identify interdisciplinary documentation gaps as a primary source of MDS inaccuracies. This presentation outlines how nursing, PT, OT, and SLP each contribute discipline-specific data that drives MDS accuracy, particularly within Section GG functional coding. Presenters will highlight common breakdowns in interdisciplinary communication and demonstrate best practices for improving MDS integrity, audit readiness, and compliance with CMS quality and survey expectations.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain how interdisciplinary documentation affects PDPM reimbursement accuracy and CMS audits.*
- *Identify discipline-specific contributions to Section GG Functional Abilities and Goals, impacting the SNF QRP Discharge Function Score.*
- *Implement interdisciplinary strategies to improve MDS accuracy, support the SNF QRP Compliance Threshold, and reduce survey risk related to F-Tag 641 (Accuracy of Assessments).*

Emotional Intelligence: Navigating Your Own Emotions and Those of Others

Session Code: T118

Thomas Annarella, LNHA | Jordan Healthcare Group

Kristin Thrun, LNHA | Jordan Healthcare Group

Join presenters Kristin Thrun and Tom Annarella for this informative session about emotional intelligence and the impact it has on leading diverse teams. The session will start with an introspective look at different leadership styles and emotional intelligence levels, and will conclude with leadership strategies on how to recognize and promote positive emotional intelligence within teams to enhance organizational health.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is important.*
- *Discuss how emotional intelligence impacts leadership.*
- *Discuss strategies on how to recognize and promote positive emotional intelligence within teams.*

You've Received an Employee Charge from the EEOC or the Department of Human Rights – Now What?

Session Code: T119

Jennifer Long, JD | Duane Morris LLP

No matter how hard you try to treat your employees fairly, it is inevitable that not all employees will always agree. Employees file more than 60,000 charges of employment discrimination annually with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) alone. Failing to represent your facility well when responding to a charge filed with the EEOC or the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) can have serious consequences – both financial and otherwise. Find out what agency investigators will be looking for and how to best position yourself to obtain a dismissal. Even then, what should you expect after a dismissal or probable cause order is entered? Learn the steps of an EEOC and IDHR investigation, what the EEOC and IDHR processes entail, and what steps your facility can take – both preemptively and after receiving a charge – to respond to the employee's allegations and defend your facility's actions.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain what to expect and how to prepare for an EEOC or other agency investigation of an employee's charge of discrimination.*
- *Discuss strategies for effectively handling the employer's response to a charge of discrimination or other employee claim before a governmental agency.*
- *Identify areas where employment policies, procedures, and training can be improved.*

Prevent First, Respond Later: Shifting Dementia Care from Crisis to Compassion

Session Code: T120

Samantha Butler, BCBA, LBA | Visions, LLC

Emily Kalamian, MS, BCBA | Visions, LLC

During this presentation, participants will learn to better understand why people living with dementia engage in crisis or escalating behaviors and the best ways to prevent them. Attendees will recognize how the individual's environment, daily routines, communication style, and unmet needs can influence behavior instead of reacting in the moment. The presentation will provide simple, compassionate strategies like adjusting the environment, offering choices, building rapport, and establishing predictable routines, to reduce stress, support comfort, and create positive care experiences.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the potential reasons why individuals might engage in crisis or escalating behaviors.*
- *Identify aspects of the individual's environment and how it can influence behavior.*
- *Implement compassionate strategies to create positive care experiences and reduce stress.*

Not All Heros Wear Capes!

Session Code: T121

Denise Spihlman, LCSW, PRSD, CDP | Outcome Services of Illinois

Greetings social services—AKA—superheros. Do you realize how much your super powers have grown? The amount of responsibilities you have taken on in recent years is out of this world. This is going to be a blitz of information about issues you are facing in social services. Grab your capes and come join me for this fantastic session.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss regulatory changes and interpretation of regulations impacting social services.*
- *Review areas that have been the focus in recent surveys: PASSRs, Advance Directives, Identified Offenders, Discharge Planning, Grievances, and Behavior Health Needs.*
- *Discuss the role of AI in social services.*

From Paper Logs to Predictive Control: The Benefits of Electronic Narcotics Tracking in Long Term Care

Session Code: T122

Mason Rothert | Mediprocity Inc

Michael Peppers, PharmD | Mediprocity, Inc

This session will explore the “why” behind online narcotics tracking – the regulatory trends driving it, the operational pressures that demand it, and the tools that empower leaders to protect both their

staff and their residents by replacing outdated habits with intelligent accountability designed specifically for long term care.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss how tracking narcotics using a "narc book" or on paper is leaving them vulnerable to regulatory scrutiny and diversion.*
- *Explain how electronic narcotic tracking can be implemented in their facility and best practices for evaluating what software and hardware to use.*
- *Discuss how tracking narcotics electronically can protect facility owners, operators, and nurses as well as LTC pharmacy owners and staff.*

From Healthcare to Health: Population-Based Cross-Continuum Programming

Session Code: T123

Molly Smith, OT | HealthPRO Heritage

This presentation explores strategies for shifting from a traditional healthcare model to a population-based health approach across the care continuum. Attendees will learn how to design and implement programs that proactively address the needs of diverse populations, improve outcomes, and promote overall well-being. By connecting care across settings—from acute care to senior living—organizations can enhance coordination, reduce hospitalizations, and create sustainable health improvements for the populations they serve.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the principles and benefits of population-based, cross-continuum health programming, including opportunities to improve overall well-being and community health.*
- *Discuss strategies to proactively manage population health and reduce hospitalizations and complications by strengthening care connections across healthcare settings.*
- *Discuss real-world examples of coordinated, cross-continuum programs in senior living and post-acute care to identify effective practices for improved outcomes.*

101 on Value-Based Care and Quality Measures for LTC Leaders

Session Code: T124

Colleen Toebe, MSN, CWCN, RAC-MTA, RAC-MT, DNS MT | Pathway Health

Organization data determines clinical, financial, regulatory, and public perception outcomes. Value-Based Care (VBC) is here and it's not going away! This session will provide keen insight to organization leaders on "what you need to know" and how to interpret their iQIES reports to set strategic direction and operational outcomes for success. Leaders will receive tools to guide them through VBC and QM processes as well as implementation strategies. This is a session that you don't want to miss!

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss VBC and QM processes impacting clinical, financial, and operational outcomes.*
- *Interpret and apply the iQIES reports for strategic planning and operational improvement.*
- *Discuss key leadership tools and strategies to enhance understanding of organizational data and overall impact in the health environment.*

Voices Matter: Assent in Everyday Practice

Session Code: T125

Emily Wright, MA, BCBA, LBA | Visions, LLC

Emily Kalaman, MS, BCBA | Visions LLC

Discover how truly centering a client's voice can transform person-centered planning. This engaging, hands-on workshop gives participants practical tools for recognizing and honoring each client's unique perspective—even when communication is complex or assent shifts. Together, we'll unpack the real-world barriers that get in the way, from staff assumptions to power dynamics and systemic constraints, and explore strategies that make client-driven planning not just possible, but powerful. Expect an interactive, thought-provoking session designed to strengthen your practice and elevate the voices that matter most!

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Describe how centering the client's voice in person-centered planning is essential to achieving meaningful goals and improving quality of life.*
- *Explain how to identify the client's "voice," and how to respond to the removal of assent.*
- *Discuss practical tools and ways to reduce barriers to centering the client's voice in their own programs.*

Nourishing Profits: Malnutrition's Impact on Care and Reimbursement

Session Code: T126

Angela Gardener, MS, RDN, CSG, LDN | Nutrition that Works, LLC

This presentation will demonstrate how accurate identification and documentation of malnutrition can enhance resident care while supporting improved reimbursement opportunities. Unique insights include integrating nutrition-focused assessments with compliance strategies to maximize both clinical and financial outcomes. The session will highlight the critical role of the dietitian in a long term care setting to optimize resident outcomes.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain how proper documentation of malnutrition supports improved resident outcomes and enhances reimbursement opportunities for the facility.*
- *Accurately describe the critical role the dietitian plays as part of the healthcare team and in identifying residents who meet the criteria for malnutrition or at risk for malnutrition.*
- *Utilize the dietitian and nutrition-focused assessments with compliance strategies to maximize both clinical and financial outcomes.*

Alternatives to Sitting on the Other Side of the Nurse's Desk

Session Code: T127

Dee Mayfield, CDP, CADDCT | Mayfield Health Care Seminars

LIVING (for your seniors and yourselves) is ACTIVE. Sitting around is NOT living! NURSES lead the way in showing staff how to engage with elders who no longer show self-initiative to start an activity. Engaging elders is a time investment – a little time that can make a big difference of doing something meaningful and enjoyable – instead of mindlessly sitting and staring at people walking by. None of us would enjoy that either for any length of time. In this session bring a few ideas – and we'll develop a list together – to help staff "get up out of that chair" and engage with the residents. Are you ready to give it a try?

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain the importance of engaging seniors in activities, especially those who do not show self-initiative.*
- *Discuss how to thoughtfully engage with long term care residents.*
- *Discuss ways long term care staff can invest time and energy to help residents become involved and possible activities they can try.*

Alzheimer's Disease Communication

Session Code: W101

Tammy Harr, BSN, RN, IP, CMDCP, CDP | Blessing Hospital

Using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication for residents with dementia is highly important to their care. This session will discuss communication approaches to avoid adverse behaviors, reduce the use of psychotropic medications, reduce the use of restraints, reduce psychiatric hospitalizations, and increase quality of life in those residents with dementia via use of effective verbal and non-verbal communication.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the importance of appropriate verbal and non-verbal communications for residents with dementia.*
- *Explain how effective verbal communication can help avoid adverse behaviors, reduce the use of psychotropic medications, etc.*
- *Explain how communication skills can help avoid conflict, and improve quality of life for residents with dementia.*

Balancing Care and Cash: Practical Financial Literacy for Today's SNF Leadership

Session Code: W102

Julie Karafa, RAC-CT, CSPR, CRCR | Wipfli

This session will cover valuable information for today's SNFs. Participants will learn how three financial levers (Revenue Optimization, Cost Discipline, and Strategic Investment) can expand margins without compromising care. The presenter will also discuss risk vs. value and a review of a mini audit that produces immediate actionable wins.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Define key terms like Revenue Optimization, Cost Discipline, and Strategic Investment.*
- *Discuss tactics that move the needle now.*
- *Discuss risk vs. value in relation to revenue.*

Complex Needs, Compassionate Care: Supporting Individuals with IDD and Mental Health Considerations

Session Code: W103

Elana Sickman, MS | Illinois Crisis Prevention Network

The beauty of the human experience lies in its complexity. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) who also experience co-occurring mental health challenges often face dynamic needs that require collaborative, compassionate, and evidence-based support. This session will explore practical strategies for recognizing and addressing the unique behavioral and mental health needs of these individuals. Participants will learn to distinguish between behavioral presentation and psychiatric symptomology while gaining strategies to proactively reduce barriers within their settings and improve outcomes for the individuals they support. Emphasis will be placed on collaborative efforts, trauma-informed practices, and dignified, person-centered approaches.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Differentiate between behavioral presentation and psychiatric symptomology in individuals with co-occurring IDD and MI diagnoses, including recognizing areas of overlap that may influence assessment and support planning.*
- *Identify evidence-based and trauma-informed strategies to proactively reduce barriers and support meaningful outcomes.*
- *Apply collaborative and person-driven approaches that promote dignity, quality of life, and effective interdisciplinary support for individuals with co-occurring diagnoses.*

The Urgency of Determining Residents' Oral Health Status on Admission

Session Code: W104

Erin Rake, DDS | Aria Care Partners

Skilled nursing facilities have 48 hours to complete a Baseline Care Plan for new residents. Oral health must be part of that plan as well as subsequent comprehensive care plans. This session will illuminate the dental conditions frequently presented by residents on admission, focusing on resident dental health issues that merit increased attention and are significant regulatory and clinical concerns for SNFs. Real-life examples will be shared. Diagnostic observations, questions to ask the resident, and signals to watch that help determine oral health will also be covered.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss how to perform oral health assessments and develop care plans during resident admission.*
- *Explain the range and complexity of common dental issues in new SNF residents and how to identify them.*
- *Discuss how onsite dentistry supports consistent monitoring and management of residents' oral health profiles.*

Why Bother With Diagnosis Management? A primer for new SNF Leaders and MDS Coordinators/NACs

Session Code: W105

Colleen Toebe, MSN, CWCN, RAC-MTA, RAC-MT, DNS MT | Pathway Health

Certified coders and non-coders alike need to understand how ICD10-CM diagnosis codes and medical diagnosis sequencing are the keys to receiving appropriate reimbursement from all payers for the care you provide. Join us at this session for a lively discussion of best practices in identification, coding, and management of medical diagnoses, including a review of the pre-bill claim review process.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify opportunities for successful transition of diagnoses from the hospital to the SNF.*
- *Track the use of diagnoses from admission through billing.*
- *List three strategies for managing diagnoses that support accurate documentation and billing.*

Getting Back to the Heart of the Matter: A Conversation About Person-Directed Living - Resources and Concrete Ideas to Support Your Journey

Session Code: W106

Lee Moriarty, BS/CTRS | Illinois Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Angela Simmons, LNHA | Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs

COVID brought on many changes for long term care providers and many of these changes encouraged policies over people. Join us for a thought-provoking conversation to bring us all back to the heart of what we do – putting the resident in the center of long term care! The intent of this session is to bring like-minded people in the aging network together to learn how we can do better for those who call long term care home by understanding how what we do on a daily basis can create a life worth living in long term care.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain what person-directed living is.*
- *Discuss the importance of person-directed living and how it is beneficial to long term care residents.*
- *Discuss ways to incorporate person-directed living into your facility.*

Illinois Medicaid Unpacked: Legal, Regulatory & Staffing Insights

Session Code: W107

Ashley Snavelly | Illinois Health Care Association

Matt Werner | M. Werner Consulting

Greg Cox | C&G Consulting

This session will present a comprehensive look at the state of the state of Medicaid in Illinois. Presenters Ashley Snavelly and Matt Werner will discuss recent and pending statutory, regulatory, and legal changes to the Medicaid program and offer feedback on how best to maneuver the various obstacles interwoven into the Illinois Medicaid system. They will also give an overview of potential future changes to Medicaid in Illinois. Additionally, consultant Greg Cox will discuss the Illinois state budget and how this year's budget will affect long term care providers.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the Medicaid Program in Illinois and how it pertains to long term care.*
- *Describe recent changes and potential future changes to Medicaid in Illinois and the impact these changes could have on long term care centers.*
- *Discuss the Illinois State Budget and describe how long term care will be affected.*

Building Financial Strength for Those You Serve with IL ABLE Accounts - What Disability Service Providers Need to Know

Session Code: W108

Elizabeth Campos Hamilton | Illinois State Treasurer's Office/IL ABLE

Approximately 60 Illinois disability service providers and agencies have already helped the eligible individuals with disabilities they serve save more than \$24 million dollars in an IL ABLE Account – avoiding benefits spend-downs asset caps, and giving working individuals a savings account to build greater quality of life. If your agency serves as individuals' power of attorneys, guardians, or Social Security representative payees, learn how and when an entity can open and manage IL ABLE Accounts for their clients and how to do it correctly.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss ABLE basics and how an IL ABLE Account can help individuals save money and earnings while protect means-tested benefits.*
- *Describe the process that an organization or agency must follow to open new or correct an existing IL ABLE Account.*
- *Explain how to help the individuals they serve to build a stronger financial picture.*

From Framework to Fork: Mastering IDDSI Testing Methods

Session Code: W109

John Holahan, BS, MBA | SimplyThick LLC

Stop guessing and start testing! The International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI) has put tools in our hands to be sure that how the food is served is exactly what is expected! And, these tests are so fast and easy! In this session, we will learn the IDDSI Testing Methods – both in discussion and with real hands-on testing. Real modified food samples and thickened liquids will be in the room! We will run flow tests, fork pressure tests, spoon tilt tests, and more. You'll learn to catch common errors, solve texture problems, and build a testing routine that works in your facility.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Describe how to test foods using the IDDSI Test Methods for varying IDDSI diet levels.*
- *Explain the differences between a descriptive diet, such as IDDSI, and a prescriptive diet, such as the National Dysphagia Diet (NDD).*
- *Describe common problem-solving techniques that can be used when food and drinks preparation errors are found.*

Revitalize Your Restorative Nursing Program for Positive Outcomes, Compliance and Reimbursement!

Session Code: W110

Colleen Toebe, MSN, CWCN, RAC-MTA, RAC-MT, DNS MT | Pathway Health

A well-planned Restorative Nursing Program is essential! Providing a good assessment process, identification of person-centered goals, and consistent implementation is critical to provide a program to avoid resident decline and promote quality of care. Join us for this fast-paced, information-packed session that will provide user-friendly strategies for success!

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify key regulatory and best practice aspects for implementation of a Restorative Nursing Program for quality outcomes.*
- *Explain the documentation necessary to support the MDS 3.0 coding.*
- *Describe three successful leadership strategies for oversight of the Restorative Nursing Program.*

Understanding the Role of the Medical Director

Session Code: W111

Michelle Stuercke, RN, DNP, MSN, MPA, LNHA, QCP | TCM Consulting and Management

With the advent of the new regulations, the Medical Director has become an even more important member of your team. The Medical Director also has increased accountability and responsibility around the prescribing of antipsychotic medications as well as ensuring the facility processes are in place for optimal medical outcomes. This session will review the regulations addressing the Medical Director's role, as well as give practical solutions for engaging your Medical Director in facility outcomes.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the role of the Medical Director and how the Medical Director can help with the regulatory and clinical success of the facility*

- *Discuss the responsibility of the Medical Director in the facility psychotropic medication program, including physician oversight.*
- *List three ways the Medical Director can assist the facility in providing successful resident outcomes.*

ACT for Caregivers, Clinicians, and Everyone Else

Session Code: W113

Scott Sanders, BCBA, QMHP | Illinois Crisis Prevention Network

This presentation introduces attendees to concepts found within Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), which focuses on how acceptance and commitment to values can help manage stress and prevent burnout. Attendees will learn practical tools to foster resilience, enhance self-compassion, and build a calm, supportive environment for themselves and those in their care. This training equips attendees with ACT tools to enhance their emotional well-being and effectiveness in providing compassionate care.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss how stress and past experiences can affect how we perform at work.*
- *Discuss practical tools to manage emotions, stay calm, and act in more professional ways—even when it's hard.*
- *Promote safe, respectful workplace environments where the people around them benefit from the value-driven, emotionally healthy professional behavior.*

Re-Energizing the Activity Department: Engagement that Works

Session Code: W114

Linda Riccio, OT/L, FAOTA | TCM Consulting & Management

Today's Activity Departments face increasing demands—staff turnover, limited time and resources, rising behavioral needs, and a resident population with widely varying interests and abilities. Activity Directors are expected to meet regulatory requirements, support non-pharmacological approaches to behaviors, and still create meaningful days for residents ranging from those living with dementia to socially alert elders seeking purpose and choice.

This practical session provides real-world strategies, creative programming ideas, and time-management tools to help Activity Directors re-energize their departments. Participants will leave with adaptable approaches that support meaningful engagement, reduce responsive behaviors, and improve quality of life—without adding to daily workload.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Implement practical, person-centered activity strategies that meet the needs of residents with dementia, residents exhibiting responsive behaviors, and socially alert residents seeking meaningful engagement.*
- *Apply non-pharmacological approaches to reduce distress and support behavioral well-being through purposeful activity, routine, and environment.*
- *Utilize time-management and resource-efficient techniques to balance regulatory expectations with high-quality, meaningful programming.*

The Dementia Dance

Session Code: W115

Dee Mayfield, CDP, CADDCT | Mayfield Health Care Seminars

Did you ever dance with your feet on top of you mom's or dad's feet? The one leading does the dancing and the other person follows—moving to the music? Dancing works best with one leader and one follower. In dementia care, when we learn to follow the "movement" of the other person (the leader)... we build relationship, cooperation, and comfort. In this session we'll define various ways staff members "try to get their own way," why that doesn't work very well, and how staff can work with elders to create a more harmonious rhythm—more often—by being good followers.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain ways staff members try and fail to get their own way when caring for residents with dementia.*
- *Discuss ways staff can work with residents to create a more harmonious rhythm.*
- *Discuss why letting residents take the lead can lead to better outcomes.*

Documenting Success: How to Maintain Strong Record Keeping Every Step of the Way

Session Code: W116

Mollie Werwas, JD | Airdo Werwas, LLC

Effective incident investigations and proper record management are essential for all aging service facilities, to maintain compliance, mitigate liability, and protect residents. This session provides leaders in aging service facilities with essential tools for conducting effective incident investigations and maintaining proper records. Attendees will learn what documents are expected to be produced as part of investigations in today's technologically advanced era, as well as how to establish a culture at their facility that emphasizes documenting incidents systematically, preserving critical evidence, and managing records in compliance with regulatory standards.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss the essential components of any comprehensive incident investigation, including evidence preservation, documentation, and root cause analysis.*
- *Discuss trends that litigators are experiencing in the courthouse to understand the expectations for document retention and production following an incident.*
- *Discuss techniques for speaking with witnesses or care providers and gathering critical information to ensure investigations meet regulatory and legal standards, as well as strategies for translating investigation findings into actionable interventions th*

The Pitfalls of Billing: Protecting Your Margins in Today's Tight Environment

Session Code: W117

Jamie Nickle, BASc | TCM Consulting & Management

Michelle Stuercke, RN, MSN, DNP, MPH, LNHA, QCP | TCM Consulting & Management

Margins are tight—and every dollar uncollected is margin lost. In this practical session, we will break down the most common billing and AR pitfalls that quietly drain revenue. Participants will learn how to spot early warning signs, interpret Remittance Advices, strengthen follow-up workflows, and improve business office accuracy and oversight. Walk away with actionable strategies to boost cash flow, reduce write-offs, and move toward the 98–100% collection rates TCM partners consistently achieve.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify the most common billing and AR pitfalls that lead to revenue leakage and reduced operating margins in post-acute care organizations.*
- *Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their current business office processes using practical oversight tools, checkpoints, and performance indicators.*
- *Describe what “healthy” AR follow-up and workflow management looks like, including timelines, expectations, and documentation standards.*

Trauma-Informed Care and PTST Management in Long Term Care Settings

Session Code: W119

Jacob Fyda, MD, CMD | Bespoke Psychiatry

In long term care settings, clinical focus frequently centers on depression and dementia, often overlooking the profound impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma histories in older adults. However, typical medical environments, routine procedures, and institutional approaches can unintentionally retraumatize, trigger, or exacerbate symptoms for trauma survivors. This presentation bridges the gap between clinical understanding and frontline care, exploring the spectrum of "Big T" versus "little t" trauma, its differentiation from Complex PTSD (C-PTSD), and how chronic stress alters the nervous and immune systems to cause physical comorbidities.

This session will outline effective management strategies, combining common pharmacological treatments—such as SSRIs, SNRIs, and Prazosin for trauma-related nightmares—with supportive non-pharmacological interventions. Attendees will also gain practical insights into navigating CMS F699 regulations, which mandate that long term care facilities deliver culturally competent, trauma-informed care to successfully eliminate or mitigate re-traumatization triggers.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Discuss Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma histories in older adults.*
- *Discuss the spectrum of "Big T" versus "little t" trauma, its differentiation from Complex PTSD (C-PTSD), and how chronic stress alters the nervous and immune systems to cause physical comorbidities.*
- *Discuss effective management strategies, including pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions and how to navigate CMS F699 regulations.*

Hospice Foundations & Ethical Conflicts in End-of-Life Care

Session Code: W120

Yelena Zatulovsky, DBE, LCAT, MA, MT-BC, CCLS, HPMT, HEC-C | AccentCare

This session will be divided into two sections: (1) understanding the federal hospice benefit and (2) exploring ethically fraught conflicts and challenging case scenarios.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain recognize what hospice care is and recognize common misconceptions about hospice.*
- *Discuss how patients are deemed eligible and they qualify for the hospice benefit.*
- *Identify common ethical dilemmas in end-of-life care.*

Understanding Deb's Law: Illinois' End of Life Options for Terminally Ill Patients Act & Considerations for Drafting an Agency Policy

Session Code: W121

Ellen Byrne, MPP | Illinois Hospice & Palliative Care Organization

The passage of Illinois Senate Bill 1950, signed into law on December 12, 2025, made Illinois the first Midwestern state to legalize medical aid in dying (MAID). This presentation examines key provisions of the law, including eligibility criteria, attending physician responsibilities, and conscience protections for both individual clinicians and healthcare entities. This session will have two main parts: (1) understanding the details of Illinois' new MAID law and (2) helping administrators conceptualize the various considerations for drafting agency policies. The purpose of this session is not to suggest a position, but rather to provide a comprehensive view in relation to the new law, which goes into effect in September of 2026.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Describe the key components of the Illinois End of Life Options Act, including eligibility criteria, required safeguards, and clinician roles.*
- *Identify the responsibilities and limitations of healthcare organizations and their staff under Illinois MAID legislation.*
- *Identify the operational and compliance considerations agency administrators must address in preparing for Deb's Law to become effective.*

Risk Management and Regulatory Response Reimagined: Preparing Illinois Nursing Homes for 2026 and Beyond

Session Code: W122

Mollie Werwas, JD | Airdo Werwas, LLC

Administrators face heightened oversight from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), evolving CMS enforcement under 42 C.F.R. §483, and increasing litigation exposure under the Illinois Nursing Home Care Act (210 ILCS 45). This session will discuss practical strategies to proactively manage risk related to documentation, incident reporting, staffing compliance, vendor oversight, and communications with residents and their families. Using real-world scenarios pulled from IDPH surveys and complaints, participants will learn how risk management relates to regulatory compliance and litigation exposure. The session highlights tools administrators can implement to reduce the potential for citations and enhance resident safety while maintaining resident-centered care.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Identify risk management trends impacting Illinois nursing homes, including IDPH enforcement priorities and CMS survey focus areas.*
- *Apply administrator-driven strategies to improve documentation, incident response, staffing compliance, and communication.*
- *Discuss proactive ways to strengthen risk awareness, improve survey readiness, and reduce liability exposure under Illinois law.*

Quality Measures and Claims...the Tip of the Iceberg

Session Code: W125

Michelle Stuercke, RN, DNP, MSN, MPH, LNHA, QCP | TCM Consulting and Management

Falls are a frequent challenge for individuals living in long term care. In September of 2025 the Office of the Inspector General released a report stating the nursing homes were underreporting falls on the MDS. In October of 2025 CMS updated the RAI manual to include expanded clarification of falls, fall with injury, and pathological fractures. Then, CMS sent a notice that starting in 2026 claims regarding psychotropic medications will be used to determine the long term psychotropic rates. This session

will highlight the information from both the OIG report as well as the MDS changes and discuss how facilities need to ensure systems for accurate MDS fall and psychotropic medication coding and the documentation needed to support the coding.

At the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- *Explain the regulations and definitions regarding falls, coding on the MDS and definitions.*
- *Discuss the CMS memo regarding psychotropic medications and quality measures.*
- *Discuss practical tools for the Interdisciplinary team to ensure compliance and positive outcomes with the fall and psychotropic measures.*