Help Us Fight Devastating Cuts – Sign the Don’t Cut Medicaid Petition!

Stop Illinois' Medicaid Cuts to Seniors -- Sign the petition today!

Medicaid providers are slated to take a 12.6 percent funding cut for the remaining two months of the FY15. These cuts are devastating to our seniors around the state. This isn't just about cutting funding to the state budget—it's about providing quality care for our residents. These are real lives we're talking about. Our seniors have paid taxes all their lives; worked to raise families; and have helped to build our state. And now the state wants to cut their funding by upwards of $50 MILLION!

And this is only for the next two months...not to mention what they may want to cut in the 2016 fiscal year budget, which the governor has said could be an additional $230 MILLION!

Signing this petition will send a clear message to our elected officials that we care about our seniors and to Stop the Cuts to Medicaid. To read more about these cuts, click here.

New Drug Delivery System Could Help Manage Parkinson's Symptoms

Nearly a million people in the U.S. are living with Parkinson's disease—a chronic and progressive movement disorder—with nearly 60,000 new cases diagnosed each year. Parkinson's involves the malfunction and death of vital neurons in the brain. Some of these neurons are responsible for producing dopamine, which sends messages to the part of the brain that controls movement and coordination. As they die, the levels of dopamine being produced decreases, leading to the inability to control movement normally.

There is no known cause for the disease and no cure currently exists, but there are treatment options to help manage the symptoms for those who have been diagnosed. Primary signs of Parkinson's disease include the following:

- tremor of the hands, arms, legs, jaw and face
- bradykinesia or slowness of movement
- rigidity or stiffness of the limbs and trunk
- postural instability or impaired balance and coordination

Another major obstacle for individuals who suffer from Parkinson's disease is the difficulty with absorbing medications because of erratic muscles that control digestion. Medical researchers believe they have found a new treatment that could effectively combat this problem and could significantly enhance management of the disease in long term care facilities.
At present, Levodopa (L-DOPA), a drug that controls motor deficits in the early stages of the disease, is considered the go-to treatment. However, researchers at the Kentucky Neuroscience Institute at University of Kentucky have developed a new delivery system for the medication—a specially developed gel called CLES (Duopa®) that is transmitted directly to the small intestine using a portable infusion pump. John Slevin, M.D., professor of neurology and vice chair of research for the institute claims that patients with advanced Parkinson’s that have been treated with the new method have shown marked improvement in symptom fluctuations. CLES was approved by the FDA earlier this year and could be in widespread use before the end of the year. Click here for more information.

**Bone-Building Drug Strengthened Hips and Spines of Frail Women in Recent Study**

A recent study regarding the osteoporosis drug Reclast showed some interesting results, according to a recent article in HealthDay News. Weakened bones and osteoporosis are common among American women, affecting nearly 2 million elderly women in long term care facilities and putting them at risk for broken bones and hip fractures.

The study done by Dr. Susan Greenspan from the University of Pittsburgh and her colleagues involved more than 180 women with osteoporosis, ages 65 and older. They were each given calcium and vitamin D supplements and either a single infusion of Reclast or a placebo. (*Researchers noted that some of these seniors suffered from mental impairment, immobility and other medical conditions.)

Researchers tested the participants for bone density after one year and again after two years, measuring at their hip and spine. They also tracked any adverse events or falls. They found that those given the Reclast saw increased bone density at the hip over time, while those who were given the placebo saw a decrease in bone density. Additionally, the women treated with the drug saw much better bone density increases (3 percent at one year and 4.5 percent at two years) versus the women who were given the placebo (1.1 percent at one year and 0.7 percent at two years).

Greenspan’s group did not, however, see a significant difference in the number of fractures, heart problems, or deaths among the two groups as a result of the drug. Greenspan is hopeful that the U.S. National Institutes of Health (who funded the trial study) will also fund a larger study to see if Reclast will actually reduce the number of fractures.

**Impact-Absorbent Flooring Significantly Cuts Injury**

Resident falls are a major area of concern in long term care and can lead to serious injury for seniors. Swedish researchers recently published a study that they say proves that impact-absorbing flooring can provide measurable benefit in preventing injuries from falls in long term care facilities. According to an article regarding the study, researchers performed their study in a Swedish nursing home from October 2011 to March 2014. During that time they observed and recorded falls in apartments, dining areas and other parts of the facility. Some of the flooring in the building was replaced with the impact-absorbent tiles so that they could compare how many falls took place on that type of flooring vs. conventional flooring.

In the 2.5 years while information was being gathered, more than 250 falls occurred on the conventional flooring while only 77 occurred on impact-absorbent flooring. Additionally, the absorbent tiles were found to reduce the force of impact by 65 to 85 percent, making them less injurious. Looking at these results, researchers have concluded that the impact-absorbing flooring could reduce injury rates by 59 percent over conventional flooring.

**May 2015 Observances**

**May 6 – 12, 2015 is National Nurses Week!!:** Nurses play a huge role in providing our residents with quality care. Show your appreciation and celebrate all of their hard work and dedication during National Nurses Week! Need ideas on how to show your nurses you care? Check out the American Nurses Association (ANA) website for planning tips.

**May 10 – 17, 2015 is National Nursing Home Week!!:** The time to Bring On the Fiesta! Is almost here!! Is your facility ready to celebrate? AHCA/NCAL has been organizing this week long celebration of long term care for more than 40 years to honor the quality care provided in long term care centers around the country, and to celebrate our profession with staff, residents, their families and our communities! Check out AHCA’s NNHW web page for more information!
May 10 – 16 is National Women’s Health Week: This national observance organized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office on Women’s Health was created to empower women to make their health a priority. The week also serves as a time to help women understand what steps they can take to improve their health. For more information, click here.

May is National Better Hearing and Speech Month: This annual event was created to raise awareness about communication disorders and to promote treatment and improve the quality of life for those who experience problems with speaking, understanding or hearing. Hearing loss affects many seniors and can lead to other health issues. Check out the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association’s website for more information.

AHCA/NCAL Information

Registration is Now Open for the 66th Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo!

They say things in Texas are bigger and better. ACHA/NCAL’s 66th Annual Convention & Expo is shaping up to be just that! Experience historic and beautiful San Antonio—the food, the landmarks and the fun of this Texas-sized destination, while you network, learn and enjoy yourself at this must-attend event.

Early Bird Registration ends July 17, so make your reservations today! Visit our official Convention & Expo website for event times, speakers and all the important information. Click here to register!

National Nursing Home Week 2015 is Almost Here!

National Nursing Home Week (NNHW) — May 10-16, 2015, nearly here! Each year as a profession, we celebrate our constant struggle to care for our nation’s seniors and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This year’s NNHW theme, “Bring on the Fiesta!” reflects the desire for social interaction and just plain having a good time. Families, residents, patients, and staff pull together to make special events happen and many care centers will take the opportunity to have an event dedicated to staff recognition.

Are you ready?! Visit the NNHW webpage for planning ideas and much more! And, don’t forget to check out the AHCA/NCAL online store for themed products, like buttons, banners, t-shirts and more that could help make your NNHW special!

Registration is Open for the 2015 AHCA/NCAL Congressional Briefing

Spring has sprung! Washington D.C. is alive with cherry blossoms and this is a great time of year to visit and find out all the latest news on the national front. The Congressional Briefing, June 15-16, 2015, offers you that and more with a unique opportunity to meet with your Members of Congress and talk about the health care issues that matter most to you.

You’ll also hear from great guest speakers like award-winning journalist Chris Wallace, enjoy valuable networking time with your peers and have the chance to earn 6.5 CEUs. The deadline to register is May 19, 2015. Please note that you must register for Congressional Briefing before making your hotel reservation. Rooms are going fast so book soon!

NCAL’s Art for the Ages 2015 Online Art Exhibit is Now Open for Public Viewing

Skip the museums. The 2014 submissions for NCAL’s Art for the Ages project are now available for viewing through NCAL’s online art exhibit for the public. Last winter, NCAL member communities submitted more than 150 images of resident art and craft work for display. The display includes many talented artist-residents from across the country and celebrates the therapeutic benefits that come from arts and crafts. Check out the online gallery today!

May Webinars

AHCA/NCAL offers webinars on a variety of important topics. May webinars include:

- Current “Best Practice for Dysphagia and Nutrition”
  May 13, 2015 – 2:00 pm EDT
So You Think You Might Want to Run for the AHCA or NCAL Board: Everything You Want to Know But Are Afraid to Ask
May 14, 2015 – 3:00 pm EDT

IHCA PAC Information

Don't Miss Out on Our Southern Illinois Golf Outing!!!!

Sign up today!! Friday, June 5, you can enjoy a round of golf on Stonewolf’s Jack Nicklaus signature course. That means the man, the legend himself; Jack Nicklaus took an active hand in the total design and construction of this magnificent golf course. Cost is $100 per golfer, which includes lunch, 18 holes of golf, awards and prizes, on course beverages and as always a great opportunity to network with your fellow IHCA members. Reserve your spot today by filling out the registration form and return to Ashley Snavely.

A big thanks to ONR and Wipfli for their generous support of the event. For additional sponsorship opportunities, please contact Ashley Snavely or Matt Hartman.

IHCA PAC Associate & Individual Member Monthly Giveaway Promotion

The IHCA PAC has made a conscious effort to expand the role of the associate and vendor community in PAC activities in 2015 and beyond. We understand that not everyone is able to participate as a sponsor at the large event level, but now we are offering an alternative opportunity to get your name out in front of our facility members and help the IHCA PAC at the same time.

Each month an IHCA Member donates a prize to the IHCA PAC to be raffled off. The IHCA PAC Newsletter for that month will do a feature on the donating member, and offer members the opportunity to purchase chances to win the prize, usually in the $25 - 50 range. As the monthly giveaway sponsor, you would be the featured Member in the PAC Newsletter for that month, as well as receiving mention in the weekly IHCA News Brief and in this publication. The giveaway culminates with a grand prize drawing at the 65th Annual Convention and Expo in September in Peoria, with the grand prize still TBD. All past prize donors will be honored in materials promoting that event as well.

If you have an item or service that you would like to donate to this fun cause, and raise a little awareness for your company at the same time, get in touch with Matt Hartman or Ashley Snavely right away!

April Giveaway - Shoppers Paradise on the Prairie!

The April IHCA PAC raffle prize will be a $200 valued gift certificate package, donated by Petersen Health Care (thank you Petersen!!). The package includes choice of room type at County Inn & Suites, Hampton Inn & Suites or Wingate by Wyndam in Peoria, a $50 Shoppes at Grand Prairie gift card, hot expanded breakfast buffet, complimentary shuttle service and a special shopping tote bag with coupons and bottled water. The Raffle opened April 1. This would be a great package to use during convention!

Here's how it works: You pay $25 per chance to win! Enter as many times as you want for a better chance. Keep in mind that each monthly drawing you participate in will also place your name in the Grand Prize Drawing at the 65th Annual Convention and Expo in September. Print off this flyer to advertise it to your staff! Click here to fill out the entry form and return it with your entry fee ($25/chance to win!). All proceeds will go to the IHCA PAC.

Please make checks out to IHCA PAC and send your payment along with your entry form to:
IHCA PAC -- Monthly Giveaway
Illinois Health Care Association
1029 South Fourth Street
Springfield IL 62703-2224
**Summer Baseball Game**
This summer, IHCA will again be hosting a Cardinals vs. Cubs baseball fundraising event. After the very cold but successful event last year, IHCA PAC is offering another opportunity to take in a game featuring baseball's best rivalry, do some networking with other long term care professionals, and get out of the office! A day at the ballpark offers the chance to connect with other long term care professionals and conduct business in a relaxed atmosphere. The game will be held Wednesday, July 8 in Chicago, with a scheduled game time of 7:00pm (Doors open at 6:15). We will be utilizing a center field rooftop with great amenities and no blocked view!! Your purchase price of $200 guarantees you a seat and a variety of drink and meal options. We hope you'll take advantage of the opportunity to support the association and enjoy a ballgame!

Tickets to the game are now available! Interested parties can contact Matt Hartman or via telephone at 217-528-6455.

**IHCA Association Information**

**Nominations for the 2015 IHCA Annual Awards Program are Now Being Accepted!!**
Nominations are now being accepted for the 2015 IHCA Awards. Do you have an outstanding staff member or volunteer who you feel deserves to be recognized? Do you have a facility program, communication piece or media plan that worthy of an award? Submit your nominations today!

Winners will be announced during the 65th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo, September 14 – 17, 2015. If you are ready to submit your nominations, click here for online forms, or here for printable forms, or keep reading to find out more about our Annual Awards Program!

Nominations must be submitted by Friday, June 19, 2015 to be considered. If you have any questions please contact Ashley Caldwell at acaldwell@ihca.com or call the IHCA office at (217) 528-6455 or 800-252-8988. Nursing award questions should be directed to Debbie Jackson at djackson@ihca.com.

**The Spring/Summer 2015 Issue of LTC Today Magazine is Headed Your Way!**
The latest issue of our association magazine is hot off the presses and heading your way. If you haven’t already received your copy, you should be getting it soon. If you did not receive a printed copy, and would like one, or would like additional copies, please contact Ashley Caldwell, communications manager. Additionally, a digital issue of the magazine is also available. You can view it in our online archives by clicking here.

If you have any questions, or have a topic you would like to see covered in this publication (or any other IHCA publication) please let us know.

**Applications for the 2015-2016 Maitland-Warner Scholarship are Now Being Accepted!**
Each year, the John W. Maitland, Jr. – Joseph F. Warner Long Term Care Nurses Scholarship Fund awards scholarships to individuals seeking to pursue nursing degrees and employment in long term care in Illinois. The fund was created to honor Senator John W. Maitland, Jr., and Joseph F. Warner, two champions of long term care in Illinois. Since its inception, the fund has awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships to nursing students all over the state (click here to view map of past winners).

Click here for more information and to access the application forms (both online forms and printable). Applications must be submitted to IHCA by June 1, 2015!

**IHCA Member Spotlight**

**IHCA Facility Member – Hancock County Senior Services**
Hancock County Senior Services joined IHCA earlier this year. Their 22 unit Supportive Living Facility, Hickory Grove, offers seniors an affordable and comfortable housing option. Providing quality and personalized care for the seniors who reside in the facility is a top priority for the entire staff, regardless of their position or responsibilities.
Hickory Grove provides two types of private apartments—each with private bath, kitchenette and 24-hour emergency and security assistance in order to fit their residents’ particular wants and needs. They offer a wide range of services, including three meals a day, housekeeping, laundry, medication reminders, activities and other opportunities for social interaction. They offer all of this and more in an attractive, home-like setting.

The facility plays an active role in the local community in Carthage, IL, as well as the long term care profession and now in IHCA.

“Quality of life and maintaining dignity has always been important to me,” stated Leia Morrison, manager of the Hancock County Senior Services campus. “Here at Hickory Grove, we foster and encourage this through a variety of activities and services. We also believe that everyone needs a purpose; tenants of Hickory Grove remain active in their communities through volunteering locally and participating in national events. I am proud to be the campus manager and to provide advocacy to our seniors. Their vitality and love for life make everyday a joy to be here.”

**Interested in Seeing Your Company or Facility Featured in Our IHCA Member Spotlight?**

IHCA is proud of our diverse membership and all of your successes and accomplishments. Has your company recently celebrated a milestone? Accomplished a goal? Undergone a major change? Do you have positive stories or news to share? Would you just like to get your name out there among your fellow IHCA members? If you would like to see your company or facility recognized in Members Only--Associate Members, Facilities, Corporations alike--contact acaldwell@ihca.com.

We look forward to hearing from you!