Happy National Nursing Home Week 2015!

Bring on the Fiesta!! From all of us at IHCA, we want to wish you a happy National Nursing Home Week!

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! This is a fantastic opportunity to pay tribute your wonderful residents, but it is also a great time to honor all of the hard work and dedication that your staff displays each and every day—and to have fun while doing it!! We value the work you do and the outstanding quality of care you provide for seniors around the state! Enjoy the rest of your week and if you have any photos or stories you would like to share (for future IHCA publications or use on social media) please contact Ashley Caldwell—acaldwell@ihca.com.

Uptick in Hospice Care Has Caused Increased Medicare Costs

Reuters recently reported an increase in Medicare costs for people dying in nursing homes. According to the article, the popularity of hospice care grew quite a bit between 2004 and 2009 and though hospice use was was associated with a reduction in aggressive end-of-life care, it was also tied to a net increase of nearly $7,000 in expenditures per decedent in the last year of life (according to the research team). Researchers believe this increase was due to the fact that many hospice patients are entering hospice programs earlier and remain in the programs for longer periods of time.

In 2004, the average hospice stay was 72 days; by the end of 2009 it was almost 93 days. Hospice care is intended to discourage aggressive end-of-life treatments and, as noted in the article, it was hoped that it would also save money. However, data from 2000 – 2012 showed a doubling of hospice usage and a huge increase of Medicare costs (they quintupled). The higher costs ranged from an average of $2,180 per death for people suffering from cancer to more than $8,500 for people suffering from dementia.

“You need to put the money where you gain the most out of it,” stated Dr. Pedro Gozalo of Brown University, who led the research team. "Most of hospice's value is at the end of life. But when you see a patient who has been in hospice for nine months or 12 months, that's not a good use of the hospice benefit. We are overspending on hospice care at the wrong time."

Dr. Amy Kelley of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mt. Sinai in New York City reviewed the paper written by the research team and has said that the study suggests a greater need for palliative care in nursing homes, with hospice care being called in closer to the end of life.

In addition, Jon Keyserling, senior vice president of health policy at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization said the new study shows, "that hospice patients in the nursing home experience fewer ICU days, fewer hospital transfers
and less feeding-tube use. All of these indicators may be associated with higher quality of care as well as greater alignment with patient preferences.”

Click here to read the full article.

**New High-Tech Lotion to Help Heal Diabetic Wounds**

Scientists at Northwestern University have developed a topical gene regulation technology that can speed the healing of ulcers in diabetic animals. According to a recent article from *Futurity.org* this technology could one day help diabetic patients heal stubborn and painful ulcers in their feet.

Type-2 diabetes, as well as the high costs associated with treating it, is on the rise in the U.S. Of the 27 million people suffering from type-2 diabetes in our country, more than 20 percent of them deal with chronic, non-healing skin wounds.

Amy S. Paller, scientist and dermatologist, teamed up with chemist Chad A. Mirkin to develop this special cream. They combined spherical nucleic acids (SNAs) with a common moisturizer to create a topical treatment that will knock down a gene known to interfere with wound healing.

“Finding a new way to effectively heal these resistant diabetic wounds is very exciting,” said Paller.

To test this new technology, researchers put SNAs into Aquaphor and applied it to the edges of wounds in diet-induced diabetic mice. They noted improved healing in the mice treated with SNAs vs. the control group after only four days. The wounds were healed in 12 days, but it took 18 days for the control group’s wounds to heal.

This study, according to Mirkin, shows the scope and potential impact of the SNA platform for treating conditions of the skin with a known genetic basis—the only platform found to do so thus far. Not only do researchers believe that this topical treatment could help heal wounds, but they are now also looking into it as a way to prevent the painful ulcers from happening in the first place.

For more information, click here to read the full article.

**Running Out of Money is a Legitimate Fear According to Recent Study**

Many elderly individuals, and their families, find themselves constantly worrying about running out of money. This nagging concern is a genuine and rather scary issue, according to a recent study by the University of Michigan. Researchers analyzed information from the university's ongoing national Health and Retirement Study and found that of the nearly 1,200 participants who died between 2010 and 2012, very few of them had assets left when they passed away.

Among individuals who were aged 85 years and older, 20 percent had no assets left other than their homes and 12 percent had no assets at all, only income from Social Security, retirement, pension, etc. And, for those between the ages of 50 and 64, their fate was no better—30 percent of them were without assets and 37 percent had only their homes.

According to the article on *Kaiser Health News*, financial experts have long cautioned that medical care for seniors is an expensive concern, partly because some care (like certain aspects of Alzheimer’s care) is not covered by insurance. In addition, even with Medicare coverage and private insurance, seniors still can face large out-of-pocket expenses for major illnesses.

**Aging Americans Staying Mobile by Using Canes, Walkers, Etc.**

According to a recent study, approximately 25 percent of American seniors use some sort of mobility aid—canes, walkers, etc. The use of these devices nearly doubled over a recent eight-year period, according to information from more than 7,500 Medicare beneficiaries. Investigators found that an estimated 8.5 million seniors use mobility devices, with canes being the top choice. Women are 20 to 30 percent more likely than men to use one of these devices and, nearly 10 percent of seniors use more than one mobility device.
Experts, like lead study author Nancy Gell, attribute this jump to a number of factors, including an aging population, recognition of the importance of staying mobile in old age, the use of these devices becoming more socially acceptable and more.

Click here to read the complete article for more information.

May 2015 Observances

May 22, 2015 is National Senior Health and Fitness Day®: “If You Keep Moving…You’ll Keep Improving!” is the theme for this year’s National Senior Health and Fitness Day. The goal of this national celebration (now in its 22nd year) is to bring awareness to how important it is for older Americans to stay healthy and fit! To host a local event, click here for more information.

May is National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month: This national observance was created to bring attention to the importance of bone health and osteoporosis. More than 50 million people in the United States have low bone mass and/or osteoporosis, which can lead to broken bones and other painful complications. For more information visit the National Osteoporosis Foundation website.

May is National Older Americans Month: Established in 1963, Older Americans Month has generally been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country. Every President since Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs, and other such activities. Click here for more.

AHCA/NCAL Information

Time is Running Out to Register for the 2015 AHCA/NCAL Congressional Briefing

The deadline to register is Tuesday, May 19, 2015! The Congressional Briefing, June 15-16, 2015, offers 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. Please note that you must register for Congressional Briefing before making your hotel reservation. Rooms are going fast so book now before it’s too late!!

New Quality Initiative Goals for 2015-2015 Announced Last Week

Last Thursday, AHCA announced the expansion of the Quality Initiative to further improve quality care in skilled nursing care centers. For the next three years, the Initiative will challenge member organizations to apply the nationally recognized Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework to achieve more ambitious targets in eight areas with a special focus on three priorities—organizational success; short-stay/post-acute care; and long term/dementia care.

These areas are aligned with CMS’s Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement (QAPI) program and federal mandates, such as the Five-Star Quality Rating program and the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation (IMPACT) Act.

Click here to read more about this expansion or visit the Quality Initiative web page for more information. AHCA will also be offering several webinars regarding the expansion. See below for more details.

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.
The third annual day for Not-for-Profit providers will be held on Tuesday, October 6. This constituency education program for NFP providers is packed with motivational and educational speakers, including CMS and HUD.

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!

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:

- **The NCAL Quality Initiative for Assisted Living 2015-2018**
  May 19, 2015 – 2:00 p.m. CDT

  May 28, 2015 – 1:30 p.m. CDT

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

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! – Raffle Winner!
And the winner is... Gina Alex!! Gina won the $200 valued gift certificate Shopper's Paradise package. Thank you to all who participated this month in the drawing and for supporting our PAC! Thank you as well to Petersen Health Care for your generous donation for the April raffle!

May Giveaway - Summer Garden Basket!
Summer is fast approaching and it's time to clean up your yard and start making home improvements! The May IHCA PAC raffle prize will be a "Garden Basket" full of gardening tools including a $200 Lowes gift card. One purchase of a $25 ticket will enter you to win!! The raffle opened today, May 4.
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. Post this flyer to advertise it to your staff! Click here for the entry form that you can fill out and return with your entry fee ($25/chance to win!). You can also contact Ashley Snively to buy a ticket or discuss sponsorship opportunities. 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

This month's raffle sponsorship was brought to you by RXPERTS Pharmacy. RXPERTS Pharmacy Chicago provides unparalleled pharmacy and clinical services to the entire spectrum of long term care facilities--including SNFs, ICFs, ALFs and more. Their patented technology allows them to print the resident's photo on the RX label, POS, MAR and other forms. RXPERTSLink, their secured web portal, provides many online tools that include: a pre-admission cost calculator, electronic invoices, medication and resident profiles and a variety of valuable reports. They offer extremely competitive pricing and outstanding customer service!

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
Time is Running Out to Submit Your 2015-2016 Maitland-Warner Scholarship Applications!
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!

Check Out Our Upcoming Education Opportunities!!
The 65th Annual IHCA Convention and Expo will be here before we know it and preparation is in full swing here at IHCA—but in the meantime we have some great offerings coming your way! Check out our Seminars page online for more information!

- Web Seminar: POLST is More Than a Form – It’s a Process
  May 21, 2015 – 10:30-11:30 a.m.

- IHCA/The Center’s ID/DD Symposium
  June 10, 2015 – Northfield Inn, Suites & Conference Center
One Month Left to Submit Your Nominations for the 2015 IHCA Annual Awards Program!!

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 check out the Convention and Expo General Information page 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.

IHCA Member Spotlight

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!