The 2015 IHCA Annual Report is Available Online!

Check out the [2015 Annual Report](#), now available online! As a member driven association, IHCA consistently works to provide its membership with information and support they need to help their businesses run smoothly. The Annual Report contains a complete look at the hard work and growth that has occurred in the association throughout the past year. It includes information about IHCA, IHCA PAC, LTCNA, The Center and more! Last year was a busy year for your association, so be sure to see what we were up to by browsing the annual report today!

To access the 2015 report, as well as reports from previous years, click [here](#).

Recent Study Shows Too Few Older Adults Tell Doctors About Memory Loss

Researchers believe that memory loss is often a difficult subject for older adults because of the fears associated with dementia. For a recent study, researchers looked at data on more than 10,000 people and the results showed that many older adults will avoid discussing memory problems with their doctors. In fact, in 2011 only one in four adults, ages 45 and older, chose to discuss memory problems with their health care provider during a routine checkup. The results also showed that the likelihood that an individual would bring up these issues at a doctor’s visit declined the older the patient got.

Routine doctor visits are often missed opportunities to have key conversations about memory problems. Experts believe that the stigma surrounding dementia can keep older adults from opening that dialogue. Dementia and memory loss are common problems in today’s world, and many know what the signs are having seen them in someone they know.

“This reality leads to denial and avoidance, both on the part of the patient and the physician,” stated Dr. Gisele Wolf-Klein, the director of geriatric education and Northwell Health in New Hyde Park, NY. ""As long as we don't mention it, maybe it's just normal aging."

Discussing memory problems with a medical professional is important. Once it is out in the open, patients can discuss the problems with their doctors and family members and begin to plan for their future health and well-being. Additionally, if the memory loss is related to early Alzheimer’s disease the symptoms may be handled for a time with medications and other therapies now available.

“Although it is difficult for individuals to assess whether their own subtle memory loss is 'normal' or not,” explained Dr. Bruce Polsky, chair of the department of medicine at Winthrop-University Hospital in Mineola, NY, “open discussion with their physician and, in some cases, testing may result in answers that could potentially lead to treatment and improved functioning.”
Researchers Identify 52 Gene Variants Related to Macular Degeneration Risk

Macular degeneration is one of the leading causes of blindness among older people worldwide—affecting more than 15 percent of people ages 65 and older. Of the estimated 150 million people who suffer from macular degeneration around the world, more than 10 million of them reside in the United States. This disease affects more Americans than glaucoma and cataracts combined, and though there are some treatments there is presently no way to cure or prevent it.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) can have several symptoms at the onset, including blurry/fuzzy vision and the strange sense that straight edges (i.e. door frames, windowsills, etc.) are curved. It can eventually lead to a total loss of central vision.

A recent study, which analyzed more than 24 million genetic variants, across the genomes of more than 43,000 unrelated individuals, has identified 52 genetic variants that have a role in AMD. These variants could offer clues about the onset of the disease and eventually allow for better treatments and possibly even a cure. Researchers are hopeful that some day they will be able to not only predict who will develop AMD, but also what treatments will work for those who get it.

“We think of these variants as potential targets for new drug development, or biomarkers that could identify people who are at very high risk, so we could potentially intervene early, even before the disease becomes apparent,” stated Lindsay A. Farrer, chief of the biomedical genetics section at Boston University School of Medicine (MED). “That’s the hope.”

To find out more, click here for the full article from Futurity.org.

Anticholinergics May Not Be the Best Choice for Rehab Patients with Dementia

Recent research from Penn State University shows that anticholinergics (medications that block neurotransmitters) may not be the best choice for rehabilitation patients following an acute hospital stay who are suffering from delirium. This type of drug can be prescribed for a number of different reasons/symptoms, including incontinence, depression and insomnia.

For the study, researchers observed nearly 100 patients for 30 days (or until they were released), starting the day they began rehab. Each individual had both delirium and dementia and was 65 years old or older. Researchers assessed their cognitive and physical functioning each day to see how medication effected their abilities. Of those studied, 25 percent of the patients were on medications with moderate or severe anticholinergic effect, 15 percent were not taking any anticholinergic medications and the remaining 60 percent were taking medications with mild anticholinergic effects.

"In this study, people on anticholinergic medications had worse attention and physical function, and a longer stay (at the rehab facility) by four days, when compared to patients not on these medications," explained Ann Kolanowski, professor of nursing at Penn State.

Researchers noted that for people with dementia, deterioration of physical functioning is a huge risk factor for permanent institutionalization. The goal for post-acute care is to optimize function and for those suffering from dementia, appropriate use of anticholinergic medication may assist in achieving rehabilitation goals.

Click here to read the full article.

Scientists Have Developed New Drug—Like Morphine Without the Addiction

Scientists at Tulane University School of Medicine are testing a new painkiller that is as strong as morphine, but isn’t likely to be as addictive or have as many side effects. By comparing several engineered variants of the neurochemical endomorphin (found naturally in the body) to actual morphine they have been able to measure their effectiveness and side effects.

Opium-based drugs like morphine can be highly addictive, can cause motor impairment and potentially fatal respiratory depression and can lead to patients building up a tolerance over time, which can then lead to higher risk of abuse or overdose. Simply put, though they are the leading treatments for severe and chronic pain, they can also be dangerous.

The tests (using lab rats) revealed that the new endomorphin painkiller gave longer relief without substantially slowing breathing and no significant impairment of motor coordination. It also seems to be less addictive.
“[The] side effects were absent or reduced with the new drug,” said lead investigator James Zadina, a professor of medicine, pharmacology and neuroscience at Tulane University School of Medicine. “It’s unprecedented for a peptide to deliver such powerful pain relief with so few side effects.”

To find out more, click here to read the complete article on Futurity.org.

February 2016 Observances

**Tomorrow is National Wear Red Day®:** Heart Disease is the #1 cause of death for women in the U.S. Each year, Wear Red Day (organized by the American Heart Association) brings attention to this issue. Show your support by wearing red tomorrow! Click here for more.

**February 14-21 is National Alzheimer’s and Dementia Staff Education Week:** Having direct care staff that are properly trained in dealing with residents with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia is important. This weeklong celebration pays homage to these dedicated long term care professionals and the work that they do. Click here to download the toolkit.

**February 14-20 is National Cardiac Rehabilitation Week:** This week pays tribute to the cardiovascular professionals and the work that they do to reduce the potentially devastating effects of heart disease. Visit www.aacvpr.org for more.

AHCA/NCAL Information

**Register Today for the 2016 AHCA/NCAL Independent Owner (IO) Leadership Conference**
The AHCA/NCAL IO Leadership Conference—March 16-18, 2016—promises to be better than ever with all the networking opportunities you love and educational sessions you need in an energizing and engaging atmosphere you can’t get anywhere else. The town hall format allows you to discuss all the important issues with your peers as well as a slew of top-notch speakers. **First time registrants save an extra $150!** Earn up to 11.5 CEUs and enjoy the beauty of sunny San Diego at the stunning Manchester Grand Hyatt. Click here to learn more, see the complete agenda, and register today! **Deadline to Register is February 17, 2016.**

**Provider Magazine to Host Twitter Chat**
By the time the sun sets today, another 8,000 baby boomers will have celebrated their 65th birthday. Nearly one in seven of these individuals are already poor (or barely above the poverty line); nearly 3 million of them will have dementia or Alzheimer’s disease by the time they’re 85; they’ll make up nearly three-quarters of new HIV cases in the next few years.

So why is it that so little time and space has been given to the problems (and rewards) of an aging population?

**Provider Magazine and the Bipartisan Policy Center are proud to announce the next #ProviderChats on Tuesday, February 23, 1-2 p.m. EST to discuss the Politics of Aging, 2016.** Panel of experts to include: Clif Porter, senior vice president for government relations at the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living; Don Redfoot, Dementia Action Alliance; and Katherine Hayes is the director of health policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center. Click here for more information.

**Health Inspection Survey Score Now Available in LTC Trend Tracker**
AHCAs can now find their Health Inspection Survey Score in LTC Trend Tracker. Survey Score is the basis of your five star rating, and it includes both health and complaint inspection data. You can find your survey score in the CASPER Combined Report in the LTC Trend Tracker System. Click here to see your data.

IHCA Association Information

**Did You Receive Your 2016 IHCA Membership Directory & Buyers’ Guide?!**
You should have received (or be receiving soon) your 2016 directory in the mail. If you have not received a directory, or if you need additional copies, please contact Ashley Caldwell at acaldwell@ihca.com. You may also access the electronic version of the directory by clicking here.
The Prospectus for the 66th Annual IHCA Expo is Now Online!
Want to be a part of one of the best attended long term care events in Illinois? IHCA’s 66th Annual Convention and Expo (September 12 – 15, 2016) will be here before you know it! The best locations go fast, so now is the time to reserve your booth space. **Click here to view the prospectus.** All space is reserved on a first come, first served basis. In order to ensure the best selection for your booth(s), please complete and return the application, Attention: Kelli Showalter, as soon as possible.

**Save the Date for the IHCA Public Policy Forum!**
IHCA’s 3rd Annual Public Policy Forum will be held on March 16, 1 – 4 p.m. Attendees will be informed by IHCA staff of the latest legislative issues including, LTC Medicaid Applications, Managed Care, nursing home cameras and the budget, as well as the status of state and federal regulations. After the forum you can put your knowledge to good use and lobby your state legislators on current issues long term care faces. The day will end at the Legislative Reception, held at the Double Tree this year, where you can continue your conversations with legislators and fellow members. More information on the forum is coming soon! Until then, please don’t hesitate to contact Matt Hartman if you have any questions.

IHCA’s New Development Director Wants to Meet You!!
Kristin DiCenso, IHCA’s new Development Director, wants to meet you! If you would like her to visit your facility, want to learn more about how to make the most of your membership or discover how to get more involved with IHCA, please email Kristin at kdicenso@ihca.com or call 217-527-3609.

Do You Have Any Photos You Would Like to Share?
IHCA is always looking for photos from our members to use in association publications. Do you have any photos that depict life in your facility that you would like to share? If so, contact Ashley Caldwell.

**IHCA Member Spotlight**

**IHCA Associate Member – RXPERTS Pharmacy**
RXPERTS Pharmacy is Chicago's premier LTC pharmacy, providing pharmacy and clinical services to SNFs, ICFs, ALFs, and other facilities. Their patented technology allows them to print the resident's photo on the RX label, POS, MAR and many other forms. They offer a wide array of customizable services that their customers can choose from, including a variety of eMAR programs and remote dispensing systems.

RXPERTSLink, their secure web portal, provides many online tools that include: a pre-admission cost calculator, electronic invoices, medication and resident profiles, and a full portfolio of reports, all accessible from the convenience of your laptop, PC, or iPad.

Their knowledgeable staff is available 24/7/365; RXPERTS offers extremely competitive pricing, and unparalleled pharmacy services.

Visit [www.rxpertspharmacy.com](http://www.rxpertspharmacy.com) for more information, or call Michael Waxman (847.797.3787) or Zack Ruben (847.209.1212) to schedule a facility visit.

**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.

Illinois Health Care Association | info@ihca.com | www.ihca.com
1029 S. Fourth Street
Springfield, IL 62703
(800) 252-8988 | (217) 528-6455 | Fax: (217) 528-0452

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