IHCA Excellence Awards – Big Changes to Our Awards Program for 2017!

IHCA has revamped our Annual Awards Program—now the IHCA Excellence Awards—and we hope you’ll like what we’ve done! The IHCA Excellence Awards recognize the outstanding work going on in long term care centers around Illinois every day. For more about the program, please visit www.ihca.com/awards.

Staff & Specialty Awards—Changes for 2017

- The IHCA Staff & Specialty Awards will now be handled separately from the LTCNA Nursing Awards.
- The nomination period for the Staff & Specialty Awards will be earlier in the year. Nominations are now being accepted!! Deadline to submit is Friday, April 14, 2017.
- They will no longer be presented during the Annual Convention & Expo. Starting this year, winners of the IHCA Staff & Specialty Awards will be announced during National Nursing Home Week (May 14-20, 2017) and each award will be presented to the winner at their facility by a member of the IHCA staff and/or Board of Directors. Note: The LTCNA Nursing Awards will continue to be presented during Ovations at the Annual IHCA Convention & Expo.
- Each member center office that submits a nomination(s) must designate ONE contact for all of their nominations.
- Some of the Rules & Procedures have changed, so please read them carefully before submitting your nominations.
  - A photo of each nominee is no longer required for IHCA Staff & Specialty Award Nominees.
  - A letter of recommendation is no longer required for most categories. For those categories that do not require it, you may still submit one if you choose, but no more than two (2) will be accepted. Please read the instructions on the nomination form carefully.

Ready to Submit Your Nominations?
Click here to submit your nominations online.
Click here to download the printable nomination forms.

Nominations must be submitted by Friday, April 14, 2017.

Long Term Care Centers—NEW AWARD for 2017!!
New for 2017, IHCA will be offering an award specifically for our centers. The criteria will be based entirely on the care provided at the center. In addition to key data about the center, questions will focus on qualifiable information about the
Cyber Security Failure: One Little Click is All it Takes

“It’s just an innocent, blue, highlighted, underlined sentence in an email asking you to click. What’s the harm in just one little click?” asked Dennis Stufft, president/CEO of Prelude Services, in his blog post for Provider online. “That little, half-second click is it all it takes…”

In a world where technology is all around us, cyber security is a major issue for everyone—including long term care centers. According to Stufft, health care organizations are predicted to be one of the top targets for cyber security threats this year. Historically, he added, health care has been near the top of the list, but this year it has moved to the front of the line. In fact, security breaches involving more than 500 records have increased 300 percent in the last three years.

In January, CMS released a Survey & Certification memo addressing this important issue (click here to view it). In the memo, CMS made recommendations for providers and suppliers regarding the best practices for mitigating cyber attacks. These recommendations included having facility leadership review current policies and procedures to ensure that adequate plans are in place in the event of an attack, as well as retraining staff to include the use of non-electronic methods in some areas, like written discharge instructions and the paper MAR process.

“But why should you be worried?” Stufft asked. “All of your security protection was put into place to avoid any attacks. Unfortunately, your internet-filtering device fails to block the threat because it does not automatically update the list of known malicious web sites. Your intrusion detection system has been logging a higher than normal amount of external attempts to access the network. No one in your IT department has looked at the reports for a few days…”

Stufft noted in his post that hackers are constantly coming up with new ways to attack our networks and our systems. Employees have access to health information every day through the electronic devices in your centers. It is vital that you and your IT department are confident in the protections you have in place to protect this information. It only takes one little click.

Once an attack occurs, the real trouble begins. Stufft explained: “What about your organization? You will have to report the incident to the Department of Health and Human Services and notify all individuals involved. You will be required to send out a press release and post on our web site the details of the incident if more than 500 records were breached. Millions of dollars and valuable time will be spent to restore the records that have been stolen not to mention the impact on your reputation.”

In order to avoid these messes, please do all that you can do to protect your organization. The more layers of security, the more eyes you have on your network, the better. Make sure you have appropriate safeguards in place to protect your residents, your staff and your company overall.

To learn more, click here to read Stufft’s full article.

GAO Report: Cost Discouraging LTC Providers from Using EHRs

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently released a report regarding Electronic Health Records (EHR) in post-acute care settings. At present, post-acute providers have limited use of EHRs, which is what prompted the GAO to look into the issue in the first place.

According to the report, cost is the main reason adoption has been so slow in this setting, combined with the ability to exchange EHR information. Many facilities have limited resources to cover the initial implementation costs of an EHR system, and covering the costs of exchanging information and maintaining the system is even more difficult.
Additional barriers listed were varying implementation standards, finding post-acute relevant health information among exchanged data, workflow disruptions and technological difficulties. The report also noted that post-acute providers told the GAO “that a lack of staff expertise, coupled with high staff turnover, leads to a ‘constant need’ to train staff on the technology.”

The GAO report discussed several efforts by the Department of Health and Human Services to urge post-acute settings to use EHR systems, including financial awards and a federal funding initiative by CMS. However, the department has not yet measured the effectiveness of those efforts, and the GAO believes that they don’t have a plan to meet goal for the post-acute sector. They recommended that HHS evaluate their efforts and create a plan for achieving their goal.

“Without a comprehensive plan to address these issues,” the report reads, “HHS risks not achieving its goal of increasing EHR use and the electronic exchange of health information in post-acute care settings.”

For more information, click here to read the full article from McKnight’s. Click here to read the full GAO report.

**Care Coordination Models Could Reduce Rehospitalizations**

New care coordination models tested through CMS show promise in reducing rehospitalizations, according to a new study. The study evaluated the seven Enhanced Care and Coordination Provider (ECCP) models tested as part of CMS’ Initiative to Reduce Avoidable Hospitalizations among Nursing Facility Residents.

These models all involved nurses, medication management, end-of-life planning and tools to help cut down on hospitalizations among long-stay residents. Some of these models performed better than others, according to the research, particularly those that used RNs or nurse practitioners who provided consistent clinical care.

The evaluation estimated reductions of between 2.2 and 9.3 percent in the likelihood of an all-cause hospitalization among residents participating in an ECCP model in 2015, and a drop of 1.4 to 7.2 percentage points in probability of a potentially avoidable hospitalization. Additionally, that same year average per-resident Medicare costs dropped between $60 and $2,248 for all-cause hospitalizations, and $98 to $577 for potentially avoidable hospitalizations.

As CMS continues to push reducing avoidable rehospitalizations among nursing home residents, researchers said they will examine whether treating certain conditions at a facility can help.

Click here to read the full article from McKnight’s.

**Note to SNF Members in the Chicagoland Area: Learn about CMS’ Plans to Change MDS as part of the IMPACT ACT**

As CMS works toward implementing the IMPACT Act that requires changes to the MDS, CMS is hosting a Medicare Learning Network on the NEW RAND Standardized Patient Assessment to replace sections of the MDS. The MLN webinar is on Wednesday, March 29, 1:30-3 EST. The RAND team under contract to CMS will be working with Skilled Nursing Centers in 14 Metropolitan areas this Fall to test NEW sections for the MDS.

If you are in the greater Chicago metropolitan area, we encourage you to participate in the webinar to see if you can help!

To register for the MLN, visit MLN Connects Event Registration.

For more information, email impactsignup@abtassoc.com

**March is Poison Control Month in Illinois**

Each year, the Illinois Poison Center (IPC) organizes Illinois Poison Prevention Month. This observation was created in order to serve as a reminder of the substantial harm poisoning can cause to the young and old alike. Almost any substance, from medications and vitamins to plants and beauty products can have the potential to be toxic if used incorrectly. Last year, the IPC managed nearly 79,000 cases regarding...
potentially harmful substances. These most frequently included:

- Analgesics (painkillers): 11,427 cases;
- Sedative hypnotics/antipsychotics: 7,406 cases;
- Cleaning substances: 5,735 cases;
- Cosmetics/personal care products: 5,713 cases;
- Antidepressants: 4,897 cases;
- Antihistamines: 3,959 cases;
- Alcohols: 3,947 cases;
- Cardiovascular drugs: 3,530 cases;
- Foreign bodies/toys: 2,810 cases; and
- Topical preparations: 2,430 cases.

IPC experts managed 90 percent of poison exposure calls at the site of exposure by offering treatment advice over the phone—eliminating the need for a referral to a health care facility. It is estimated that in doing so they prevented 30,000 emergency department visits last year. Education is key to reducing poisoning cases in Illinois.

"While children, young adults and the elderly are some of the most at-risk populations for poisoning, it is crucial that we raise awareness among all Illinoisans," says Michael Wahl, M.D., medical director, IPC. "In Illinois, more people are hospitalized for poisoning than for injuries from firearms and motor vehicle collisions combined. It can happen to anyone, and that's why poison prevention education is vital to the public's safety."

To find out more, click here to read the full article from the Journal Gazette & Times Courier or visit www.illinoispoisoncenter.org.

**National Emerging Leadership Summit**

Interested in engaging with fellow emerging leaders in an unrivaled opportunity to strategize, advocate, connect and innovate the future of the health and aging services profession? If so, check out the National Emerging Leadership Summit in Washington, D.C. The summit is geared health care administrators who have typically been in the profession for less than ten years. It aims to increase, improve and support the health and aging services profession to attract talent and future leaders by giving a voice to the next generation of leaders.

The 2017 Summit is scheduled for June 20 - 22, 2017. There are only 30 spaces available. More information, including the application is available at: http://www.nelssummit.org/.

**March 2017 Observances**

**March 20 is World Oral Health Day:** Good oral hygiene habits, avoiding risk factors and having a regular dental check-up from early in life can help maintain optimal oral health into old age. World Oral Health Day is celebrated each year to highlight the importance of oral health for a healthy body. This year’s theme, *Live Mouth Smart*, encourages individuals to practice good oral hygiene to set themselves up for a healthy future. Visit http://worldoralhealthday.org/ for more information.

**March 28 is American Diabetes Association Alert Day:** American Diabetes Association Alert Day is a day to sound the alarm about the prevalence of type 2 diabetes in American adults by asking America to take the American Diabetes Association Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test. The free, anonymous risk test is available online or via a one-sided handout, and only takes a minute to complete. With questions such as "Do you have a family history of diabetes" and "Are you physically active," participants can learn if they're at risk for type 2 diabetes in 60 seconds. Click here for more information.

**March 30 is National Doctors’ Day:** Doctors’ Day has a long history in the U.S. It began as a statewide celebration in Georgia in 1933 and was officially established as a national observance in 1990 when President George Bush signed S.J.
RES. #366 designating March 30th as “National Doctors’ Day.” This March 30, be sure to recognize the physicians you work with for their hard work and the contributions they make to your centers! Visit www.doctorsday.org for more.

March is National Social Work Month: This year’s National Social Work Month theme is “Social Workers Stand Up!” Social workers stand up for millions of people every day. These include people who are experiencing devastating illnesses and mental health crises, our veterans, children, families and communities. Yet many people still misunderstand who social workers are and the invaluable contributions they bring to society. This month, be sure to take the opportunity to show your social work professionals how much you appreciate them! Visit www.naswdc.org for more information.

March is National Women’s History Month: The 2017 theme for National Women’s History Month is “Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business.” This theme honors women who have successfully challenged the role of women in both business and the paid labor force. Women have always worked, but often their work has been undervalued and unpaid. For more information, visit www.nwhp.org.

AHCA/NCAL Information

Registration is Now Open for the AHCA/NCAL Congressional Briefing
Join AHCA/NCAL in Washington, D.C. on June 5 & 6 as they take your concerns directly to the Hill.

- Hear the latest on what's happening in Washington
- Meet with your Members of Congress IN PERSON
- Network and share ideas with colleagues

You'll also enjoy terrific guest speakers. This year's keynote is Fox New Channel Anchor Bret Baier. Plus, many more special guests will drop by.

Check CB.ahcancal.org over the next several weeks to see updates on the events happening during the two jam-packed days of Congressional Briefing. No one ever goes home disappointed! The conference registration fee is complimentary to AHCA/NCAL Members and AHCA/NCAL Associate Business Members, and their spouses, and is accepted on a first-come basis.

Register now and make your hotel reservations. Rooms will fill up quickly!

Advanced Registration Deadline: May 8, 2017

AHCA Partners to Provide Blended Training Program for Nursing Assistants
AHCA is thrilled to announce a new blended program for training and certifying highly qualified nurse assistants. Using the acclaimed How To Be a Nurse Assistant curriculum, you can now train CNAs with a combination of online study and in-person clinicals without compromising any of the quality you have come to expect from AHCA.

To learn more about the program, visit CNAonline.ahca.org. To learn even more, check out AHCA’s free webinar:

CNA Solutions Using Technology to Solve Workforce Challenges | Thursday, April 6, 2017 | 2:00 PM- EST

The webinar will:

- Show you how you can use the blended learning approach to train your staff
- Give a demonstration of the course
- Explain its customizable features as well as the state specific components

You will also have the opportunity to ask questions and learn how you can take advantage of this new opportunity.
So You Think You Might Want to Run for the AHCA or NCAL Board: Everything You Want to Know but Are Afraid to Ask
American Health Care Association (AHCA) and National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) members in good standing may submit an application for the 2017-2018 elections for the AHCA Board of Governors and the NCAL Board of Directors. This webinar will explain the application, credentialing and campaign process. It is perfect for those interested in running this year or in future years.

Event Date: April 19, 2017 - 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (EST)
Click here to register.

Presenters:
Len Russ, CEO, Bayberry/CPR Associates
Katherine Preede, Senior Director, Membership and Business Development, AHCA/NCAL
Patricia Georgio, President/CEO, Evergreen Estates

Upcoming Webinars:
SNF RUG Utilization Trends – Finding Your Center in the PUF Data | March 16, 2017 | 2:00 p.m. EDT
New Emergency Preparedness Requirements – Part II in the Webinar Series | April 27, 2017 | 2:00 p.m. EDT

IHCA PAC Information

2017 IHCA PAC Events
The IHCA and CDDACS PAC have a number of fundraising events every year to promote our political efforts and raise dollars. Please mark your calendar for the following 2017 IHCA PAC events:

Southern Illinois Golf Outing – April 21 – Sign Up Today!
IHCA's 3rd Annual Southern Illinois Golf Outing will be held at Stonewolf Golf Course in Fairview Heights, IL (near St. Louis). Last year's outing had 34 participants and took place on a beautiful spring day in Southern Illinois. The 2017 outing will be at the same venue, and prices include greens fees, golf, lunch, drinks and a reception after the outing. $100/$375 per foursome. Click here to view the registration form for more information. Thank you to ONR for once again being a title sponsor for this event!

IHCA PAC Annual Baseball Outing - July 21
An event that quickly became a crowd favorite, 2017 marks the 5th annual IHCA PAC baseball outing at Wrigley Field in Chicago. Per tradition, we will be hosting our event at one of the famous Wrigley Rooftops, 3619 Sheffield Ave., for a contest between the World Champion Chicago Cubs and perennial favorite St. Louis Cardinals. Pricing is all inclusive. $250/per person.

Fall Golf Outing - September 11
For the flagship IHCA PAC event, we return once again to beautiful WeaverRidge in Peoria for our fall golf outing. Consistently ranked one of the best courses in the Midwest, this is a round of golf not to be missed. Pricing includes greens fees, golf, lunch and drinks. $150 per person/$575 per foursome.

Oksnevad 5K - September 12
The fastest growing IHCA PAC event, the Oksnevad 5K returns for its fifth year in 2017. For the third time, we will be running on the Peoria Riverwalk. Pricing includes registration, runner's goody bag and a sponsor t-shirt. $30 per person.

Please contact Kristin DiCenso at kdicenso@ihca.com or Matt Hartman mhartman@ihca.com to register or sponsor any of these events.

IHCA Association Information

LTCNA's 20th Annual Resources for Success – March 29 & 30, 2017
Attendees: Have you signed up yet?! Don't miss out as we celebrate the 20th Annual Resources for Success! We have some great topics and speakers lined up. Topics include: How to Implement an Effective Orientation Program for New Hires; Restorative Nursing; Hot Topic Roundtable Discussion;
Legislative Update; Communication and TeamSTEPPS; and, Maintaining a Work/Life Balance.

We’re mixing things up a bit this year, so the expo will be held on Day One and the conference will end by noon on Day Two. Geri, LTCNA’s simulation mannequin will be in the expo again this year, so make sure to stop by and say hello. The Just For You Reception is scheduled at the end of the first day and will provide food, drinks, massages and a few surprises. We hope to see you there. For more information, visit www.ihca.com/resources-nursing-conf.

Exhibitors: The Resources for Success Expo will be here before you know it! Act now to reserve your booth space at the expo to gain face-to-face access to some of the major decision makers in long term care centers from around the state—Nurses, DONs and even some administrators will be in attendance for this special event.

Click here to view the expo prospectus.

If you have questions about your booth reservation, please contact Kelli Showalter, Expo Manager.

Simulation Education for Nurses! Now Offering A La Carte Sessions!
LTCNA is now offering a la carte competency training sessions with their simulation mannequin, Geri Manikin! Get your nurses the training they need right in your center! The cost will be dependent on the amount of time spent in the center. Charter Memberships are also still available for centers. The fee for the membership is $2,000 and the center will receive 24 hours (4 6-hour days) of simulation time over the course of the year. For more information contact Debbie Jackson at djackson@ihca.com or 800-252-8988.

IHCA Member Spotlight
Calling IHCA Members – We Want to Feature Your Company Here!!!
Are you looking for a way to reach our members? Well, this is a great way to do just that! Our Member Spotlight gives our members a space to let us know what their company (or facility) is all about! (And to brag a little too if you want to!) Your Company Information could be seen here in an issue later this year!!

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?

Ready to sign up for a member spotlight?! Contact Ashley Caldwell! Email acaldwell@ihca.com or give her a call today!