Don’t Miss the IHCA Public Policy Forum!

Time is running out to register for IHCA’s 3rd Annual Public Policy Forum!! Sign up today before it’s too late!

IHCA 3rd Annual Public Policy Forum | Inn at 835, Springfield | 11:30 a.m.

This important event will provide key insight to what is certain to be one of the most important legislative sessions in recent history. Attendees will get updates on key long term care policy initiatives that will impact our profession.

Following the educational session, participants will be given the opportunity to lobby their elected in the Capitol on state legislative initiatives impacting long term care. That evening the Public Policy Forum will conclude with a legislative reception at the hotel. This reception typically sees great attendance by providers and legislators, making it a perfect opportunity to advocate for long term care in a relaxed setting. This is your opportunity to get up close and personal with officials who are involved in long term care.

Our keynote speaker for the day will be CMS Region V Medical Director, Dr. Furno. Help us pack the house to hear him speak and find out what the next steps will be for CMS. This is an important opportunity to show that we are ACTIVE and that we are a force to be reckoned with! We NEED your help and ask that every facility or company attempt to send someone. Plus, each person will receive 3-hours of CEs! Click here to view the brochure and register!

Required Training for Food Handlers in Illinois – Effective July 1

Effective July 1, 2016, all non-restaurant food handlers in Illinois, other than someone holding a food service sanitation manager certificate, must receive or obtain training in basic food handling principles within 30 days of employment. Only people who handle, prepare and dish up the food are considered food handlers and will need the required training.

All Illinois food handlers employed in nursing homes and long-term care facilities must renew their training every three years. This training is not transferable between individuals or employers. For more information concerning the Illinois Food Handler requirements, click here.

There are many options available for this training. You can ask your dietary consultant if their company provides this training or search for Illinois Food Handler Training online.
Dietary Supplements Putting Seniors at Drug Interaction Risk

Researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago recently published a study that showed many seniors (approximately one in six) are taking over-the-counter (OTC) medications or dietary supplements that could cause serious, potentially deadly, drug interactions. For the study, investigators interviewed more than 2,300 older adults (ages 62 to 85) in 2005 about their medication and supplement use. Then, in 2011 they interviewed 2,200 more older adults to compare the information.

According to the study, more than 15 percent of older Americans took possibly life-threatening combinations of prescription medications, OTC drugs and supplements in 2011, which was nearly double the 8.4 percent seen in 2005.

"Alongside the growing use of multiple medications, there is also a hidden, and increasing, risk of potentially deadly drug interactions in older adults," stated lead researcher Dr. Dima Qato, assistant professor of pharmacy systems at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Prevalent among these interactions were issues involving heart medications and dietary supplements such as omega-3 fish oil, which have grown in popularity over the past several years. Dr. Qato noted that to be on the safe side, patients should confer with their doctor and pharmacist before taking medications or supplements. A supplement could be safe and beneficial when used alone, she explained, but when mixed with other medications or supplements it could be dangerous.

"It's not enough to know the number of medications and supplements patients are taking," added Dr. Michael Steinman, who authored an accompanying journal editorial, "because it doesn't tell which are helping and which are hurting. We need to identify what the problems are and devise ways to help people avoid these problems." Steinman is a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco.

For example, according to the U.S. National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, St. John's wort, which is often taken for depression, can affect how other drugs, such as immunosuppressants, birth control pills, warfarin, digoxin and others, work for a patient. It is important for patients to discuss ALL of their medications with their physicians, and equally so for doctors to ask questions about what medications (including supplements) their patients are taking.

For more on this issue, click here to read the full article from HealthDay News.

FDA Outlines Standards for Anti-Abuse Generic Painkillers

Earlier this week, after a call by federal officials for generic drugmakers to develop painkillers that are harder to abuse, the Food and Drug Administration published draft guidelines outlining testing standards for this type of drug. This action is one in a series of measured promised by the new FDA Commissioner, Dr. Robert Califf. These guidelines, along with the promise of a new boxed warning, which is being added to around 175 immediate-release painkillers (both branded and generic) are small steps that the FDA hopes will make a big impact.

The FDA has already approved five brand-name opioid pain medications that are designed to discourage abuse, such as the current version of OxyContin, which is very difficult to crush making abusers less likely to be able to crush it up and snort it or dissolve the tablets to get high. However, these abuse-deterrent painkillers represent only a fraction of the market for opioid pain medications—a market that is dominated by low-cost generic drugs.

Generic drugs are able to move through the review process much quicker because they only need prove that their products are chemically equivalent to the brand name medications. These new guidelines will require generic drug manufacturers to perform additional studies showing that their products have the same anti-abuse properties as their brand-name counterparts.

For a number of years, the FDA has made only modest changes to this type of medication while emphasizing the need to keep the drugs accessible to patients with chronic pain. If the draft guidelines are finalized, it will be a big step. There not yet a timeline in place for updating the generic opioids currently available to the abuse-deterrent versions.

"We recognize that abuse-deterrent technology is still evolving and is only one piece of a much broader strategy to combat the problem of opioid abuse," Califf said in a printed statement. "But strongly encouraging innovation to increase access to generic forms of abuse-deterrent opioid medications is an important element in that strategy."
American Women Live Longer—But Face Years of Living With Disabilities

A new study by researchers at the University of Michigan shows that a long-standing pattern of elderly women in America having a lead on the number of years they can expect to live disability free after the age of 65 compared to American men has been reversed.

“Just a few decades ago, older women used to live more years than men without needing help taking care of themselves or managing basic household activities,” stated Vicki Freedman of the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, who was involved with the study. “But that does not appear to be the case anymore.”

The study, which drew on data from two large studies of disability trends among representative samples of Medicare enrollees in the U.S., used information from 1982, 2004 and 2011 to see how trends have changed. In that 30 year period, they saw that men’s active life expectancy increased by more than four years, while women’s increased by only 1.4 years. The data showed that men have been living longer and experiencing the onset of disability at later ages than previously noted. However, this wasn’t the case for older women, who saw smaller increases in life expectancy, as well as postponements in disability.

“Women are more likely than men to develop a number of debilitating conditions, including arthritis, depressive symptoms, fall-related fractures, and Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias that have implications for active life,” Freedman said. “Enhanced attention to these and other preventable causes of limitations among older women could extend active life and help offset impending long term care pressures related to population aging.”

To read the full story from Futurity.org, click here.

New Tool Determines if TB Treatment is Working in a Single Day

Tuberculosis is the second-most common cause of mortality from an infectious disease in the world. It is responsible for killing nearly three people every minute. Though it is generally a curable disease, it is often difficult to diagnose. M. tuberculosis grows very slowly, making traditional testing and determining if treatments are working also take a very long time.

A new method can detect whether a potential treatment is working as early as the day after it is given, where traditional approaches could take nearly a month to make that determination. Jeffrey Cirillo, a professor at Texas A&M’s Health Science Center has been focused on developing a rapid yet cost-effective test for tuberculosis and he and his colleagues have nearly perfected the technology. They are in the process of bringing the test to market.

“There have never been sensitive enough systems to measure the bacteria directly in animals,” Cirillo explained. “This is a completely new technology and has nearly limitless applications to microbiological research, particularly in animals, but it increases sensitivity in any experimental system.”

This new development is particularly important now that drug-resistant tuberculosis is present all over the world. Because the usual treatments are no longer effective, new treatments need to be developed. Cirillo believes that this new development will not only help determine if a treatment is working quickly, but that it could also help develop new treatments.

“The goal in TB research is complete eradication of the disease,” Cirillo stated. “We think this new technology is one tool to do just that.”

Click here to read the full article from Futurity.

FDA Outlines Standards for Anti-Abuse Generic Painkillers

Early last week the Food and Drug Administration announced a proposed ban on most powdered medical gloves, saying that they “pose an unreasonable and substantial risk” to health care workers and their patients. The ban includes...
powdered surgeons’ gloves, powdered patient examination gloves and absorbable powder for lubricating surgeons’ gloves. The FDA noted that while the use of these gloves is decreasing, the risk of potential injury or illness is still there and cannot be corrected through new or updated labeling.

“This ban is about protecting patients and health care professionals from a danger they might not even be aware of,” said Jeffrey Shuren, M.D., director of FDA’s Center for Devices and Radiological Health in a press release last Monday. “We take bans very seriously and only take this action when we feel it’s necessary to protect the public health.”

The glove powder used on natural rubber latex gloves can carry proteins that may cause respiratory allergic reactions. Additionally, powdered synthetic gloves are associated with a long list of potentially serious adverse events, including severe airway inflammation, wound inflammation and post-surgical adhesions.

If finalized, the ban would remove most powdered gloves from the market entirely. However, it is unlikely that the ban would negatively impact medical practices or facilities, since non-powdered glove options are widely available, according to the FDA. The proposed rule is available online at www.regulations.gov for public comment for 90 days.

April 2016 Observances

April 4-10, 2016 is National Public Health Week: For the past two decades, the first week of April has been declared National Public Health Week (NPHW). Communities across the country may use this observance as a time to recognize the contributions of public health, as well as highlight issues that are important to improving our nation’s health. This year’s theme is “Healthiest Nation 2030.” Click here to view the brochure. Visit www.apha.org for more information.

April 10-16 is National Volunteer Week: Volunteers are a vital commodity that can help long term care centers run more smoothly, and bring peace and joy to residents and staff. To honor your center’s volunteers, as well as inspire and encourage members of your community to volunteer their time and attention, celebrate National Volunteer Week! Visit www.handsonnetwork.org for more information.

April is National Occupational Therapy Month: Organized by The Fund to Promote Awareness of Occupational Therapy, this month long observance celebrates the importance of the excellent care provided by occupational therapists. Celebrate your therapy staff next month and show them how much they mean to you and your residents! Click here for more.

April is National Cancer Control Month: In remembrance of those who have lost their lives to cancer and in support of Americans fighting this awful disease, this month of observance is meant to bring awareness to cancer and to inspire people to recommit to progressing the fight for effective cancer control.

AHCA/NCAL Information

AHCA Award Nominations
The 2016 AHCA/NCAL Awards Program is now open. To submit a nomination for one of the AHCA awards listed below, please click here. Once there, you may access the individual nomination forms that must be submitted in order for your nomination to be accepted. Mailed hard copy and fax nominations will not be accepted. Nominations are due May 23, 2016.

- Volunteers of the Year (VOY Group, Young Adult, Adult)
- ID/DD Hero of the Year
- Not For Profit Program of the Year
- NEW this year, the Not For Profit Trustee Award

NCAL Award Nominations
Click here to submit an application for NCAL’s 2016 awards program for an outstanding assisted living nurse or administrator. Perhaps your community created the best National Assisted Living Week® programming based on Nourishing Life: Mind Body Spirit theme last year…then give the awards program a try. Or maybe there is an unlicensed caregiver or someone in the dietary, housekeeping, or maintenance departments that goes above and beyond the call of duty? If you answered yes, then check out NCAL’s 2016 Awards Program.
AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative – Progress Snapshot

Last May, AHCA expanded the Quality Initiative with the goal of further improving the care provided in our long term care centers and the lives of our residents. Just last month, AHCA announced that SNF members had already accomplished on the goals of the initiative by lowering antipsychotic usage by nearly 30 percent nationwide. Additionally, AHCA/NCAL members have also made progress in other areas of the initiative, such as staff stability, customer satisfaction and hospital readmissions. Click here to view the progress snapshot put together by AHCA.

AHCA/NCAL Invites You to Take Part in the 2016 State of Seniors Housing Report

All senior living providers are invited to help support the State of Seniors Housing report as it conducts its annual research on the profession. The deadline for completion of the 2016 State of Seniors Housing survey has been extended to Monday, April 18. Please download the Excel file to complete the survey.

The State of Seniors Housing is a collaborative research project supported by NCAL, along with the American Seniors Housing Association, National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care, Argentum, LeadingAge. The report summarizes data collected among independent living communities, assisted living communities, nursing facilities and continuing care retirement communities. The report contains all pertinent financial and performance measures including: resident turnover and length of stay, annual financial results per occupied unit, staffing ratios and labor costs, other key cost items, key financial performance indicators and more. A must-have resource for owners, operators, lenders, investors and other professionals interested in the market-rate seniors housing business.

Completed surveys should be submitted to Colleen Blumenthal of HealthTrust, colleen.blumenthal@healthtrust.com by close of business on April 18. Questions about the survey should also be directed to Blumenthal at (941) 363-7502 or via email.

National Nursing Home Week 2016

NNHW will be here before we know it. Specialty products are now available for purchase with this year’s theme/logo. The theme for 2016, It’s a Small World with a Big Heart, tips its hat toward community fair culture, so prepare to have a week filled with fun May 8-14! To purchase NNHW specialty products including posters, balloons, t-shirts, buttons, and more, shop online or call 800-321-0343.

Members are encouraged to place orders early for best product selection (color, size, and available quantities). NNHW items are very popular and will sell out. Ask about their t-shirt discounts when ordering. Again, please do wait until the last minute, you don't want to be disappointed!

Congressional Briefing

Save the Date for May 23-24!! Please join us in our nation’s capital to help lobby for long term care issues with the Illinois’ Congressional Delegation. The headquartered hotel will be the Renaissance Washington. Click here to register. It’s a great opportunity to hear what's happening on the Hill and meet with your Representatives. It's one that you don't want to miss!

Upcoming Webinars

- A Common Sense Approach to Diabetes Management in Post-Acute and Long Term Care
  April 5, 2016 – 1:00 p.m. CDT
- Understanding Long-Term Care Finance Reform Proposals
  April 13, 2016 – 1:30 p.m. CDT
- So You Think You Might Want to Run for the AHCA or NCAL Board: Everything You Want to Know But Are Afraid to Ask
  April 14, 2016 – 1:30 p.m. CDT
IHCA PAC Information

Save the Date for the IHCA PAC Southern Illinois Golf Outing!!

IHCA PAC brought back the Southern Illinois Golf Outing last year—and it was a hit! Be sure to join us at the beautiful Stonewolf Golf Club in Fairview Heights, IL on Friday, June 17, 2016! Enjoy some fun in the sun with your fellow IHCA members, contribute to the PAC and see how you measure up on Stonewolf's special Jack Nicklaus Signature course.

Southern Illinois Golf Outing
Stonewolf Golf Club, Fairview Heights, IL
Noon - Lunch
1:00 p.m. - Shotgun Start

$100.00 per individual
$375.00 per foursome

Sponsorships still available! Click here to view the brochure for more information.

IHCA Association Information

Become an IHCA Exhibitor—Gain Access to Long Term Care Decision Makers!!

Are you looking for a way to touch base with long term care professionals? Exhibiting at one of our expos is a great way to do just that!! In addition to our Annual Expo in September (click here to view the prospectus, or visit our Exhibitor Information page for more information), we also offer several smaller, more intimate expos at events like the upcoming Resources for Success nursing conference (click here for the prospectus) and our ID/DD Symposium in June. All space for our expos is reserved on a first come, first served basis. If you have any questions, please contact Kelli Showalter.

Joins Us for One of IHCA/NAHCA's Transforming Your Work Force into a CareForce Web Seminars
For IHCA Members Only

IHCA and the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA) are partnering to bring frontline development to Illinois. The long term care system is plagued with a variety of challenges. Chief among them is the need for dependable and professional staff. This web seminar will address: decreasing turnover, staff engagement and professional development as strategies for increasing retention that allows for staff stability and consistent assignment, which are proven to enhance quality outcomes.

For more information on NAHCA, you can go to www.nahcacareforce.org or call their office at 417-623-6049.

Choose the date and time that best fits your schedule!

- April 5, 2016 at 10:00 AM CDT
- April 7, 2016 at 2:00 PM CDT
- April 14, 2016 at 10:00 AM CDT
- April 14, 2016 at 2:00 PM CDT

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the web seminar.

Save the Date for the 19th Annual Resources for Success!!

This year’s annual nursing conference, hosted by IHCA and LTCNA, will be held April 20 & 21 at the Wyndham City Centre in Springfield. Topics will include an overview of the change to the requirements of participation; how to conduct a facility assessment, identifying areas of concern and put a plan in place to correct; ethics; infection control and antibiotic stewardship. Click here to view the brochure and registration form.
IHCA Member Spotlight

IHCA Associate Member – Medline
Let’s Talk about Care Transitions
Medline

Medline is a global manufacturer and distributor serving the health care industry with medical supplies and clinical solutions that help customers achieve both clinical and financial success. In today’s complex health care world, Medline is committed to helping health care providers perform at their very best. They do that through a personal approach to listen and better understand their customers’ needs.

Bundled payments. ACOs. Care transitions. It’s easy to feel like we know what many health care buzzwords mean, but it’s not until we’re asked to define something that we realize we’re not always sure.

“Care transitions” refer to “the movement patients make between health care practitioners and settings as their condition and care needs change during the course of a chronic or acute illness.” But how are they best handled?

Many programs are designed to help avoid readmissions — the trick is finding the right solution mix offering the strongest foundation and support. You might start with INTERACT® eCurriculum to establish base level quality improvement training to standardize and bolster all forms of communications regarding acute changes in condition. Then, consider adding abaqis® Quality Management System, which replicates QIS system methods and procedures to help better comply with regulations, provide patient-specific care and monitor readmissions.

The race for partners is on. Demonstrate you are a viable partner, or you just might find yourself on the outside looking in.

Learn more about solutions, products and how Medline can help you achieve both clinical and financial success by visiting www.medline.com.

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. We are always looking for members to feature, either here or in our other publications (like LTC Today magazine!). 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 Ashley Caldwell.

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