Less Than One Week to Register 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. This year's conference will cover two of the most pressing issues facing long term care centers today—complying with the new Requirements of Participation and Antibiotic Stewardship.

Day one will start with an overview of the proposed changes to the RoP presented by IHCA Regulatory Director Bill Bell. Following Bill's presentation, Caryn Adams, Wipfli, will discuss how to conduct and follow through with the facility assessment and Mardy Chizek will talk about ethics. The day concludes with a legislative update and the Just for You Reception.

Day two will feature the popular speaker Barb Bancroft! Barb will spend the day discussing infection control and how to implement an antibiotic stewardship program, all in true Barb Bancroft style…funny and entertaining!

Click here to view the brochure and registration form.

Improve Dementia Care—Add a Pharmacist to Your Care Team

A new study from the Umeå University in Sweden indicates that adding a pharmacist to health care teams may help improve dementia care and reduce the number of drug-related hospital readmissions for seniors with dementia.

For the study, researchers looked at the effect pharmacists had on patient/resident care when they participated with hospital health care teams to ensure that the patients’ medication lists were complete and correct. They also analyzed all medications taken by the patients and made suggestions regarding improvements physicians could make when prescribing medications to elderly patients with dementia.

Study results showed that the pharmacists’ interventions helped reduce the number of drug-related readmissions (within 180 days of discharge) by 50 percent. Additionally, patients who had medications reviews with a pharmacist were also found to have a decreased risk of inappropriate use of possibly harmful medications, like antipsychotics and benzodiazepines, according to lead researcher Maria Gustafsson.

“More work is needed in order to prevent, identify and treat these problems in this part of the population,” Gustafsson said.

Click here to view the full article from McKnight’s.
FDA Approves First Wire-Free Pacemaker

Earlier this month, the first leadless, wire-free heart pacemaker was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Approval for the device came after a clinical trial that lasted over 6 months and included more than 700 patients.

The new device, Medtronic’s Micra Transcatheter Pacing System, works like other pacemakers to regulate the heart rate in individuals with heart rhythm disorders; however, unlike other devices this new pacemaker doesn’t make the electrical connection between the device and the heart using wired leads.

Wire leads, which are inserted near the shoulder and then guided through a blood vessel and attached to the heart, can occasionally malfunction, and infections in the surrounding tissue can also occur from time to time. If either of these occur, surgery is required to replace the device.

The new inch-long Micra device is implanted directly into the right ventricle chamber of the heart. It is meant for patients with a common heart rhythm disorder—atrial fibrillation—or other dangerous problems, such as bradycardia-tachycardia syndrome. However, due to possible complications, the Micra device should not be used in patients who have other implanted devices that would interfere with the pacemaker, who are severely obese, have an intolerance to materials in the pacemaker or to the blood thinner heparin, or whose veins are too small for the implantation procedure.

"The leadless pacemaker is a major breakthrough in the field of heart rhythm management and will benefit patients through its ease of insertion and elimination of the lead," said Dr. Nicholas Skipitaris, who directs cardiac electrophysiology at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City. "It is delivered to the heart through a long tube placed in a large vein in the groin area. The self-contained device is then anchored to the heart and the guiding tube is removed," he explained.

"It is very exciting that we will now have a leadless device in our arsenal of weapons to treat flow heart rhythm problems," stated another expert, Dr. Todd Cohen, director of electrophysiology at Winthrop-University Hospital in Mineola, N.Y. "The problem with pacing and defibrillator wires has continued to the present -- by removing the lead from the pacing system, a more reliable system may result."

To find out more, click here to read the full article from HealthDay News.

Emory University Launches Largest-Ever Healthy Aging Study

Late last year, Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia began the launch of their Health Aging Study—aimed at better understanding chronic diseases, such as Alzheimer’s disease, that affect people as they get older. The goal of the study is to discover new ways to identify and treat these disease earlier so that individuals who develop them can remain healthier longer as they grow older.

The school’s research team has an ambitions goal for the study. They hope to reach 100,000 participants in the first five years, and have already enlisted more than 2,000 applicants with little promotion. Dr. Allan Levey, who is helping to lead the study, believes that their goal can be easily met. “We’ll be happy to continue recruiting people because the power’s in the numbers,” he stated.

The article in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution noted that by the year 2050 Americans ages 65 and older are expected to make up one-fifth of the population here in the U.S.—compared to approximately 15 percent of the population today. As the elderly population increases, so too does the rates of individuals with chronic diseases and other health problems.

“We’ve got a major national crisis building up in the next couple decades,” said Dr. John Haaga, acting director of the National Institute of Aging’s Division of Behavioral and Social Research. “We just don’t understand enough about the epidemiology behind Alzheimer’s and other dementias.”

Researchers are hopeful that this study will address this growing problem. Study participants will be asked to complete memory tasks or answer a short survey regarding their health habits every few months. Given the diversity of the Atlanta area—a community that encompasses all colors, backgrounds, etc.—the survey has a strong pool of possible participants to draw from. The project is an excellent opportunity to not only tackle existing hurdles in understanding the onset of Alzheimer's diseases, but to also develop a platform for all aging-related diseases.
“It gives us an opportunity to open up a huge group of participants that can be accessed by investigators in any aging-related field — whether it’s brain or heart or mobility health,” said Dr. James Lah, another one of the study’s principal investigators. “Any area that can help expand health span could have a huge impact worldwide.”

**Medications for Parkinson’s Disease Could Lead to Impulse Control Disorders**

Medications commonly used to treat Parkinson’s disease have recently been linked to impulse control disorders, such as pathological gambling, compulsive buying, hypersexuality and binge eating, according to neurologists at Loyola Medicine and Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine.

*Parkinson’s disease* is a chronic and progressive movement disorder. It involves the malfunction and death of important nerve cells in the brain. The cause still remains a mystery, and there is no cure, but the symptoms of the disease can be treated by medications or surgery. These symptoms include, but are not limited to, tremors of the hands, arms, legs jaw and face; rigidity or stiffness of the limbs and trunk; and bradykinesia, or slowness of movement.

The primary risk factor for impulse control disorders (ICDs) is the use of a class of Parkinson’s disease medications known as dopamine agonists. These medications help control tremors and other symptoms. Other risk factors include younger age, smoking, alcohol abuse and natural personality traits like impulsivity, obsessive compulsive disorder, anxiety and depression.

According to a previous study, nearly 15 percent of Parkinson’s disease patients experience at least one ICD. ICDs are more common in men, and they are more likely to display hypersexuality and pathological gambling than women, who are predisposed to display ICDs like compulsive eating and buying.

The management of ICDs is difficult and there are currently no guidelines in place to help Parkinson’s disease patients. The study’s authors noted that treatment should be individualized and the careful selection of specific interventions is critical to the success of the patient. There are a number of options available that doctors believe to be helpful, including medications like antidepressants, atypical antipsychotics and antiepileptic drugs; cognitive behavioral therapy; and a “brain pacemaker” known as deep brain stimulation.

[Click here](#) to read the full article for more information.

**Women Are at Greater Risk for Vision Loss**

According to a [recent article](#) in *HealthDay News*, women make up the majority of the 4.4 million Americans over the age of 40 who suffer from visual impairment or blindness. This month has been declared Women’s Eye Health and Safety Awareness Month by the national organization, Prevent Blindness. They have outlined several things women need to know about vision and eye health.

Women are at a greater risk than men for vision loss from eye diseases like cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration, as well as the more common dry eye. Additionally, pregnant women are at even greater risk for vision issues.

Eyes benefit from a healthy lifestyle, including regular exercise and good nutrition. Periodic dilated eye exams are the best way to track eye health, according to experts, and can also detect conditions that can affect overall health, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Visit the [U.S. National Eye Institute’s website](#) for more information about healthy eyes.

**April 2016 Observances**

**April 16, 2016 is the 7th Annual National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD):** This national observance acts as a reminder to take the time to consider your future health care decisions and care planning. NHDD is an initiative to encourage patients to express their wishes regarding health care and for providers and facilities to respect those wishes, whatever they may be. The theme for 2016 is “It Always Seems Too Early, Until It’s Too Late.” [Click here](#) for more.

**April 22 is Earth Day:** Earth Day Network’s mission is to broaden and diversify the environmental movement worldwide and to mobilize it as the most effective vehicle to build a healthy, sustainable environment, address climate change, and protect the Earth for future generations. [Click here](#) for more information.
April 14-30, 2016 is Administrative Professionals Week: For more than 60 years, Administrative Professionals Week has been celebrating and shedding light on administrative professionals’ devoted, valued work. There are more than 22 million administrative and office support professionals working in the United States. Visit www.iaap-hq.org for more information.

April is National Parkinson’s Awareness Month: Each year this month-long observation is celebrated in order to bring awareness to Parkinson’s disease, its symptoms and its treatments. Check out the Parkinson's Disease Foundation website (www.pdf.org) for ideas on how you can get involved this month or for more information about this chronic and progressive disease.

April is Stress Awareness Month: Stress is a constant issue for many of us. During this annual thirty-day period, health care professionals and health promotion experts across the country will join forces to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic. Visit http://healthresourcenetwork.org/ for more.

AHCA/NCAL Information

Registration is Now Open for the 67th Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo
Great entertainment, friendly people and unforgettable experiences—all of this describes Nashville, Tennessee, known as Music City USA. It also describes the AHCA/NCAL 67th Annual Convention & Expo, to be held in Nashville, October 16-19. This is the gathering place for long term and post-acute care professionals, where leaders in the field gather to share ideas, learn about new techniques and services, network, and have fun. Educational sessions are designed to help you provide for your residents in the most efficient and effective way; keynote talks will inspire you; visits to the Expo Hall will expose you to the very latest in products and services for your business; and networking events will help you make new friends. Make your plans now to attend - we'll give you lots to sing about! Click here for more information! See below for a new scholarship opportunity offered by IHCA to help pay to attend the AHCA/NCAL convention.

AHCA is Looking for Members Interested in Running for the AHCA Board of Governors
The 2016-2017 election cycle has officially opened for AHCA members in good standing interested in running for the AHCA Board of Governors. The AHCA elections are for three officer positions (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer), one Not-for-Profit Representative, one Multifacility Representative and three At-large Representatives. AHCA members interested in running for an AHCA Board position may obtain the necessary candidacy materials online. Applicants must complete and electronically submit (via email to Christy Sharp) the AHCA candidacy materials by close of business on June 6, 2016.

The AHCA elections will take place during the second Council of States meeting at the AHCA/NCAL 67th Annual Convention & Expo, October 16 - 19 in Nashville, TN. Once the application phase has ended, the AHCA/NCAL Credentialing Committee will hold an in-person meeting to conduct a certification process for each candidate. Once certification occurs, AHCA will announce the slate of candidates to the membership. If you have further questions, contact Christy Sharp.

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.
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.

Place orders early for the 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!

National Assisted Living Week 2016

NCAL recently announced the 2016 theme for National Assisted Living Week® - Keep Connected. The annual, national observance provides a unique opportunity for residents, their loved ones, staff, volunteers and surrounding communities to celebrate the individuals served in assisted living and learn more about this sector of the long term care profession.

Established by NCAL in 1995, NALW will be held September 11-17, 2016. Assisted living communities across the country are encouraged to use the theme and logo as inspiration for celebrations leading up to and during the week.

The "Keep Connected" logo may be downloaded from www.NALW.org, and assisted living communities, stakeholders and members of the public may use the logo on materials, such as calendars, flyers, and invitations to support the national observance. Additionally, in the coming months, NCAL will issue a planning guide and product catalog centered on ways to “Keep Connected.” Please visit www.NALW.org for updated information and resources.

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

- How I plan on succeeding with Payroll Based Journal
  April 29, 2016 – 10 a.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

Thank You to Everyone Who Attended the 3rd Annual Public Policy Forum

Yesterday's event saw a great turnout from IHCA members! Thank you to everyone who attended the forum, participated in lobbying at the capitol and to those who stuck around for the reception! See you at next year's forum!

We also want to give a big thanks to Medline for sponsoring the event!!

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? Do you want access to facility decision makers? Exhibiting at our annual expo is a great way to do just that!! Reserve your space today for the annual show in September (click here to view the prospectus, or visit our Exhibitor Information page for more information)! If you have any questions, please contact Kelli Showalter.

Help Support Long Term Care Nurses! Donate to the Maitland-Warner Scholarship Fund!

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. Senator Maitland is considered to have done more to advance the needs of the long term care profession and residents in the General Assembly than any other elected official in Illinois. Warner is credited with spending countless hours educating legislators and elected officials about long term care issues. A former IHCA board president, he truly valued the power of education.

Last month you should have received a letter from the Maitland-Warner fund asking for a donation. We hope that you will consider donating to this worthy cause to help us support long term care nurses and encourage them to move forward in their education and their careers in long term care. Click here for more information.

New! IHCA Scholarships Available for the Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo in October

IHCA applauds those individuals that want to continue their education in long term care. AHCA/NCAL holds an annual convention and expo offering continuing education for long term care professionals. New this year, IHCA will award up to four (4) scholarships to administrators and direct care staff individuals who would like to attend the 67th Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention and Expo, October 16-19, 2016 in Nashville, TN. The scholarship can cover the cost of Full Member registration, transportation, lodging and food up to a maximum of $1,500 per award winner. For more information, or to access the scholarship application, visit our Scholarships page on the IHCA website.

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. 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.