Happy National Nursing Home Week!!

We hope you are all having a wonderful National Nursing Home Week 2016. It's more than half way over now—how has your facility been celebrating? Are you taking advantage of this weeklong celebration to honor your staff and residents? This year’s theme, *It's a Small World with a Big Heart*, pays homage to the fact that each of your centers is a small, vibrant world. Have you been using any of AHCA’s ideas to go along with the theme?

IHCA would love to see/hear what you have been up to! Let us know how you are celebrating by sending pics, posting on Facebook, Tweeting, etc. and we’ll repost or retweet them! Check us out on social media and be sure to like or follow us today!

#NNHW2016 #NationalNursingHomeWeek

- Facebook – Illinois Health Care Association
- Twitter – @IHCA_LngTrmCare
- LinkedIn – Illinois Health Care Association

You can also send your pics directly to Kdicenso@ihca.com or acaldwell@ihca.com (don’t forget your signed release forms for any residents!). Check out the 2016 proclamation by Governor Rauner here too.

Have a fun time and a great week!

OSHA Released New Workplace Injury and Illness Reporting Requirement

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration released a final rule that was published in today’s Federal Register that will require skilled nursing facilities to electronically submit their workplace injury and illness data. OSHA officials explained that the requirement for employers in high-hazard industries (including skilled nursing, which is one of the most injury prone fields) to submit their data electronically will help to “modernize” data collection. The requirements take effect August 10, 2016, but will be phased in for data submission beginning January 2017.

OSHA also noted that employers in high-risk industries are already required to collect this data. Adding the electronic submission will the agency to compile and share what will become the largest public database of workplace injuries and illness. It will help the agency send compliance resources to workplaces where workers are at greater risk, and will also allow researchers to access the data for various studies.

“No employer wants to be seen publicly as operating a dangerous workplace,” wrote David Michaels, Ph.D., MPH, in a recent news release. “Our new reporting requirements will ‘nudge’ employers to prevent worker injuries and illnesses to demonstrate to investors, job seekers, customers and the public that they operate safe and well-managed facilities.”
The final rule also adds safeguards for employees who want to report injuries and illnesses without fear of retaliation.

Click here for more information.

**Elderly Women 23 Percent More Likely To Be Overprescribed Meds**

According to a recent study performed by the University of British Columbia, women ages 65 and older have a significantly higher chance of being overprescribed medication than elderly men. The study showed that close to one in three elderly women were prescribed “potentially inappropriate” medications, while one in four elderly men received problematic prescriptions. Taking into account income, ethnicity and marriage, this amounts to a 23 percent higher chance of receiving an inappropriate prescription.

This new study backs up previous findings, but includes more data than earlier studies, which helped eliminate some of the possible factors (e.g. women living longer than men) of why women are more likely to be overprescribed. According to lead researcher, Dr. Steve Morgan, the reasons for the discrepancies are complex, but could include a number of factors, such as seniors wanting to continue taking medications they took in their 50s well into their 70s and the overprescribing of sleep aids for the elderly. They could also include women's faster metabolism of drugs and certain social circumstances, added researcher Cara Tannenbaum, M.D., M.Sc.

“I expect that by empowering women with knowledge about the harms of sleeping pills and other medications, we can help drive decisions to try switching to safer therapies,” stated Tannenbaum.

Study results were published in Age and Ageing. For more information, click here to read the full article from McKnights.

**Hospice Services Don't Raise Care Costs in Long-Stay SNF Residents' Final Days**

A new analysis of data from more than 2,500 long-stay nursing home residents who passed away shows that the use of hospice services doesn't increase the care costs for the final months of the residents’ lives. The analysis, conducted by researchers from the Indiana University Center for Aging Research and the Regenstrief Institute, revealed that more than one-third of the decedents received hospice services in their final months. However, those services did not raise overall care costs.

Researchers believe that the cost of the hospice services within the long term care center was likely offset by the residents’ lack of hospitalizations and subsequent post-acute care stays. Additionally, the analysis showed that Medicare and Medicaid costs stayed relatively unchanged by the hospice services, with overall costs as well as Medicare costs even dropping in the month prior to a resident’s death.

The findings contradict previous research that found hospice care costs on the rise, particularly in longer stays or near the end of a resident's life. “Despite concerns that Medicare's hospice benefit is not being used appropriately in nursing homes, said lead researcher Kathleen Unroe, M.D., MHA, we didn't find evidence of cost shifting between Medicare and Medicaid.”

For more information on this analysis, read the full article published last week by McKnight's.

**Yoga and Meditation May Reduce Dementia Risk**

A new study recently published in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease says that completing a 3-month yoga and meditation course may reduce the risk of mild cognitive impairment (MCI) in older individuals. Mild cognitive impairment is considered a precursor for the development of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and is characterized by noticeable changes in areas such as the development of memory and thinking problems.

Presently, there are no approved medications on the market that treat the condition, but experts recommend that older adults with MCI engage in mentally stimulating activities in order to reduce their risk of dementia. With that in mind, researchers at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) enrolled 25 participants, ages 55 and older, in a study to see if yoga and meditation would be as effective, if not better, for individuals suffering from MCI.

During the three month period, 14 of the participants took part in a 1-hour Kundalini yoga class each week and practiced 20 minutes of Kirtan Kriya meditation each day. Meanwhile, the remaining 11 participants engaged in one hour of memory
enhancing training (via activities like crossword puzzles and computer games) each week as well as 20 minutes of memory exercises each day.

Researchers found that both groups showed improvement in verbal memory skills at the end of the 12-week period. However, the yoga group had better results when it came to improvements in visual-spatial memory skills. They also proved to fare better when it came to levels of anxiety, depression, coping skills and stress resilience.

Lower levels of stress and depression are particularly relevant in this situation, as dealing with MCI can be very emotionally difficult to handle. "When you have memory loss, you can get quite anxious about that and it can lead to depression," explained senior author, Dr. Helen Lavretsky.

The team suggests that the improvements in memory, mood, and stress resilience seen with yoga and meditation may be due to the increased production of a protein called brain-derived neurotrophic growth factor (BDNF), which is responsible for boosting connections between brain cells, as well as maintaining the survival of existing brain cell connections. They believe their findings indicate that yoga and meditation may be an effective strategy for protecting against cognitive decline in older adults.

Heartburn Medication May Damage Kidneys

Widely used heartburn medications, like Nexium, Prevacid and Prilosec, could damage kidneys and leave to kidney failure, according to new research. Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are assumed to be safe, but after following patients who use them regularly, researchers found that their risk for kidney disease was significantly higher.

Researchers identified over 170,000 new users of PPI inhibitors and more than 20,000 new users of an alternative type of stomach-acid medication known as histamine H2 receptor blockers. Results after the five-year study period ended showed that chronic kidney disease affected about 15 percent of PPI users and 11 percent of those who used H2 blockers, and that the risk kidney problems goes up the longer people use the drugs. In addition, PPI users were also found to be at a significantly higher risk than H2 blocker users (98 percent) of developing kidney failure.

Similar studies in the past have come to similar conclusions in regard to PPIs. Researchers have noted that the potential risks of these drugs should be taken seriously and further research needs to be done, as more than 15 million Americans currently have prescriptions for PPIs. And, that number is likely even higher as it does not take into account the PPIs purchased over-the-counter.

“The constellation of findings—the totality of evidence—is compelling," said researcher Yan Xie “The public and the medical community should be aware of the possible risk and should exercise judicious use of PPI.”

To find out more, please read the full article from Futurity.org.

May 2016 Observances

May 25 is National Senior Health and Fitness Day: Now in its 23rd year, National Senior Health and Fitness Day is a great day to focus on ways to help seniors stay healthy, fit and active. Visit www.fitnessday.com/senior for more information.

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month: Each year this month-long celebration provides opportunities to raise awareness about communication disorders—which is a lot of ground to cover. A communication disorder is an impairment in the ability to receive, send, process, and comprehend concepts or verbal, nonverbal and graphic symbol systems. A communication disorder may be evident in the processes of hearing, language, and/or speech. Take time this month to not only education others about these disorders, but to promote treatments that can improve the quality of life for individuals living with a communication disorder. Click here for more information.

May is National Older Americans Month: For more than 50 years, the Administration on Aging has been organizing Older Americans Month as a way to celebrate the vitality and aspirations of older adults, as well as their contributions to our communities.
May is National Mental Health Month: Since 1949, Mental Health America has arranged for this month-long observance in order to educate the public about mental health and wellness. This year’s theme for Mental Health Month is - *Life with a Mental Illness* - and will call on individuals to share what life with a mental illness feels like for them in words, pictures and video by tagging their social media posts with #mentalillnessfeelslike (or submitting to MHA anonymously). Posts will be collected and displayed at mentalhealthamerica.net/feelslike.

AHCA/NCAL Information

AHCA Award Nominations – Time is Running Out to Submit!

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.

NCAL Award Nominations – Submit Yours Today!

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.

Registration is 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.

National Assisted Living Week 2016

The 2016 theme for National Assisted Living Week® is: 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**

- Medicaid Managed Care Final Rule – Considerations for Nursing Centers
  May 20, 2016 – 1 p.m. CDT
- How to Run Reports in LTC Trend Tracker
  June 9, 2016 – 9 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**

**Registration for the 2016 ID/DD Symposium is Now Open!**

This one-day symposium provides updates on hot topics for long term care professionals who provide care for the intellectually and developmentally disabled. Illinois nursing home administrators, licensed nurses and social workers will receive continuing education hours for attending. This year's event is scheduled for Wednesday, June 15, 2016 at the Northfield Inn, Suites and Conference Center in Springfield. Attendees will hear updates on Ligas v. Norwood and the Life Choices Initiative, as well as other legislative/regulatory updates. Additionally, attendees can enjoy a small expo in the afternoon that features select vendors who provide products and services pertinent to this particular provider group. For more information, click here to view the brochure and registration form.

**Nominations Are Now Being Accepted for the 2016 IHCA Awards Program! Submit Yours Today!**

Who will you choose to recognize for their hard work and dedication this year? Nominate your outstanding staff, coworkers, volunteers and programs! The Annual IHCA Awards program offers a variety of categories, ranging from Housekeeping to Nurse, Social Services to Administrator, Communications to Innovative Programming and everything in between. Nominations are open to all IHCA members and multiple submissions are allowed! We encourage you to take this opportunity nominate your staff, peers, volunteers and specialty programming for one of these wonderful awards! Let us, and others, know what makes your facility so special! Click here to download the PDF nomination packet. You may also use our online nomination form. If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Caldwell (or Debbie Jackson for Nursing Awards). Nominations must be received by end of business day on Friday, June 17, 2016 to be considered.
Reserve Your Booth Space for the 66th Annual Convention & Expo!

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.

Maitland-Warner Scholarship Fund

Donate Today! 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.

Do you know a long term care nursing professional who is looking to further their education? Applications are now being accepted for the Maitland-Warner Scholarship! The Maitland-Warner Long Term Care Nurses Scholarship fund will award scholarships of up to $1,000 for the 2015-2016 school year. Click here to download the PDF forms. Or, click here to access the online form.

Click here for more information about the Maitland-Warner Scholarship Fund.

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

IHCA applauds those individuals that want to continue to 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, 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.