Applications for the Maitland-Warner Scholarship Fund Due June 1!

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.

Click here to download the PDF forms, or click here to access the online form. Don’t delay!! Applications must be submitted by June 1, 2016 to be considered!

AHCA Reaches Goal of 30 Percent Reduction in Antipsychotic Medications

Safely reducing the use of antipsychotic medications has been an important goal for AHCA since the association launched their Quality Initiative in 2012. They later joined in with CMS’s National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes, which also held reducing antipsychotics as a key focus. After meeting the first goal in this area last year, the association announced their new target—a 30 percent reduction in the use of antipsychotics by December 2016. And, according to recent numbers released by CMS, the association has already met this goal well ahead of schedule!

“The sharp drop in usage shows how our members are driving change on a national level,” stated David Gifford, MD, AHCA senior vice president of quality and regulatory affairs and a board-certified geriatrician in a Provider magazine piece posted yesterday. “Providers, residents, and their families are clearly learning more about safer alternatives to treating dementia. Together with CMS and the partnership, I’m confident we will continue to see progress.”
Numbers from CMS show that 16.4 percent of residents in AHCA member centers are currently being administered at least one antipsychotic medication, compared to 17.4 percent of non-member facility residents. Non-member facilities have thus far seen, on average, a 25 percent decrease in the use of these medications.

“Reaching this goal seven months ahead of schedule highlights our profession’s commitment to improve the quality of life for individuals living with dementia,” said Mark Parkinson, AHCA’s president and CEO. “This latest milestone means that tens of thousands of residents are no longer experiencing the negative effects of these medications. But we won’t stop with this announcement. We will continue to work with CMS and our Quality Initiative to set new, ambitious goals to reduce usage even more.”

For more about this, click here. To find out more about the Quality Initiative click here.

‘Intensive’ Blood Pressure Treatment Could Help Seniors Without Increasing Falls

A new study has found that increasing the level of blood pressure therapy for older adults can reduce their risk of heart disease, without increasing their fall risk. For the study, which was published last week, researchers analyzed more than 2,600 adults over the age of 75. Participants were randomly split into two groups—one group had a standard blood pressure target of 140 mm Hg and the other had an “intensive” target of 120 mm Hg.

On average, the participants in the “intensive” group needed on additional medication. Results showed that this group was one-third less likely to have a heart attack, heart failure of stroke, and nearly twenty-five percent less likely to die. They also have no changes in rates of complications that are commonly known to accompany low blood pressure, e.g. fainting, falling, acute kidney injury or hospitalizations.

“If you look at elderly people who are hospitalized in the year that they become disabled and have to leave their home, about half the time those diagnoses or hospitalizations result from complications of [high blood pressure], like heart failure, stroke and heart attack,” said lead researcher Jeff Williamson, M.D., of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center.

For more on this new approach, click here to read the full article from McKnight's.

New Study: Age Plays Little to No Role in Determining Your Risk of Dying

A recent study has revealed a dramatically different picture of aging in America than we have seen before—finding that how old a person is plays little to no role in determining differences in health and well-being. For the study, researchers from NORC at the University of Chicago (an independent research organization) did a major longitudinal survey of a representative sample of 3,000 individuals, ages 57 to 85.

After analyzing the information, they believe the results suggest that the medical community is focusing on the wrong set of factors to determine an individuals risk of dying. Instead of relying on a laundry list of infirmities (e.g. heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.) they believe it is time to institute a “comprehensive” model that looks at a number of factors, including psychological well-being, sensory function and mobility. This comprehensive model reflects a definition of health that has long been advance, but not studied, by the World Health Organization in which health is considered to include psychosocial, social and physical factors in addition to the diseases that are the basis to the current medical model.

“The new comprehensive model of health identifies constellations of health completely hidden by the medical model and reclassifies about half of the people seen as healthy as having significant vulnerabilities that affect the chances that they may die or become incapacitated within five years,” says Professor Martha McClintock, a biopsychologist and lead author of the study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

“At the same time, some people with chronic disease are revealed as having many strengths that lead to their reclassification as quite healthy, with low risks of death and incapacity,” adds Professor Linda Waite, a demographer and study coauthor.

The study showed two vulnerable classes of health traits that are being overlooked by the medical model—one group was made up of people over the age of 45 who had broken at least one bone and the other group included individuals with mental health problems, in addition to sleep issues, drinking problems, a poor sense of smell, and motion issues, symptoms which correlate to depression.
“From a health system perspective, a shift of attention is needed from disease-focused management, such as medications for hypertension or high cholesterol, to overall well-being across many areas,” stated William Dale, associate professor of medicine and a member of the research team.

For more information on this study, [click here](#) to read the full article from *Futurity.org*.

**Tai Chi Offers Alternative Therapy for Arthritic Knee Sufferers**

Many arthritis sufferers turn to physical therapy and/or anti-inflammatory medications to help with their pain. For some, these treatments offer little to no relief. Now they may have a new avenue to try for pain relief—the martial art tai chi. A [new study](#) shows that practicing tai chi may benefit individuals with knee osteoarthritis as an alternative to physical therapy, and improve their state of mind as well.

Tai chi may be particularly beneficial to adults who are overweight, according to the researchers. Overweight people are more likely to develop osteoarthritis than people with a healthy weight. For the study, researchers followed 200 people, with a mean age of 60, who had been experiencing osteoarthritis for an average of 8 years. Most of the participants were overweight or obese. Over a 12-week span, these individuals either received tai chi or standard physical therapy.

Physical therapy exercises were used to target the quadriceps, hamstrings and gluteal muscles, which all contribute to healthy knee function and help prevent injury, explained the Arthritis Foundation. Tai chi, on the other hand, combines mediation with slow, gentle, graceful movements, as well as deep breathing and relaxation.

At the end of the 12 weeks researchers used questionnaires to evaluate patients for pain, stiffness and joint functioning. Results showed that both groups saw significant improvements, some of which lasted up to a year. The tai chi group also had significantly greater relief from depression than those in the physical therapy group.

"Tai chi helps patients preserve and improve function by increasing strength, flexibility, and coordination while avoiding aggravation of arthritic pain and inflammation," stated Dr. Matthew Hepinstall, an orthopedic surgeon with Lenox Hill Hospital's Center for Joint Preservation and Reconstruction.

"Tai chi is a particularly appealing form of exercise, as it is very low impact and emphasizes balance, coordination and strength," he added. "Tai chi is safe and has been shown to reduce falls in the elderly."

To find out more, [click here](#) to read the full article from *HealthDay News*.

**HeadScan Device Could Alert Doctor of Depression and Other Health Issues**

Health and fitness monitors are nothing new, but a new type of wearable technology may be able to provide health care providers with useful information about their patients. The new “HeadScan” device uses existing technology—wireless radio signals—to sense certain activities like eating, drinking, coughing and more.

According to Mi Zhang, assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering at Michigan State University, the device "provides a noninvasive and privacy-preserving solution that overcomes the drawbacks of current wearable technologies."

To use the device, two small antennas (placed on the shoulders) emit radio waves that bounce off the wearer's head and capture movements of the mouth and head that are caused by eating, drinking, etc. This information is relayed to a health care provider for analysis.

An individual’s actual behavior can be much more revealing than a verbal account. "For example, it can monitor how often a person eats," Zhang says. "Dietary monitoring is important. However, humans are not good at tracking these sorts of things. Fortunately computers are."

HeadScan provides an accurate account of a patient’s activities, and can even monitor how much an individual speaks, which can be used as an indicator for their mental well-being.
Religious Women May Enjoy Better Health

Harvard researchers have recently discovered that regularly attending religious services may lead to better health for American women. After reviewing the data from nearly 75,000 American women (from the Nurses’ Health Study that started in 1976), the researchers saw that those that attended some sort of service twice a week were one-third less likely to die than women who never attended services over the 20-year period of the study.

“The association between religious participation and mortality probably has more to do with religious practice and specifically, communal practice, like attending religious services, than with religious belief,” said study author Tyler VanderWeele, a professor of epidemiology at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in Boston. "Something about the communal religious experience seems to be powerful for health.”

VanderWeele noted that previous research on the subject has shown that personal religious or spiritual identity, or private religious practices, don’t seem to matter as much in regard to health. He also noted that while the data cannot definitively demonstrate a cause-effect relationship, the information does seem to indicate that women who regularly attend religious services appear to benefit in social support and a heightened sense of self-discipline, as well as a lower risk for smoking and depression.

During the 20-year study, more than 13,500 of the women died. Researchers took a number of other factors into account—including diet, physical activity, drinking, smoking, weight, depression, social life and race. Results of the study showed that women who attended services at least once a week had a 27 percent lower risk of dying from heart disease and 21 percent lower risk of dying of cancer. Overall, those who went each week saw their risk for dying drop by 26 percent, while those who went less often only saw a 13 percent drop.

Additionally, women who attended religious services had fewer signs of depression, were less likely to be smokers, and were more likely to be married.

Study authors made note of the fact that the majority of the women in the study were white and Christian, so the findings may not apply to all American women. More research is needed for a clearer picture. However, according to Dr. Dan Blazer II, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Duke University Medical Center, this investigation "provides significantly more reason to believe that there is something about religious belief [and] practice among these women which contributes to protection against dying.”

To read the complete article from HealthDay News, click here.

May 2016 Observances

The month is almost over, but it isn’t too late to celebrate some of these national observances!

**May is Employee Health and Fitness Month:** The National Association for Health and Fitness ([www.physicalfitness.org](http://www.physicalfitness.org)) organized this celebration as a way to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyles to employers and their employees through educational activities in workplace environments.

**May is National American Stroke Month:** For more than 25 years the National Stroke Association has been organizing National American Stroke Month to promote increased public awareness of stroke. This month, gear up with lifesaving information, not just for yourself, but also for your family, your friends and others around you. During National Stroke Awareness Month and beyond, let's work together to raise awareness about the fifth leading cause of death in the U.S. Visit [www.stroke.org](http://www.stroke.org) for more information.

**May is National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month:** Did you know that one in two women and up to one in four men over age 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis? It’s true; but, there are ways that we can help slow or stop the loss of bone mass. A healthy diet and daily exercise can go a long way. This month-long observation is organized each year by the National Osteoporosis Foundation to bring national awareness to this important health issue, and to encourage men and women to begin conversations about bone health and their family history. Click [here](http://www.osteofoundation.org) for more.
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! Click here to view the preliminary program!

AHCA is Looking for Members Interested in Running for the AHCA Board of Governors
Less than two weeks to submit materials to run for the 2016-2017 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.

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.

Upcoming Webinars
- An Overview of the Functional Assessment Standardized Item (FASI)  
  June 3, 2016 – 1:00 p.m. CDT
- How to Run Reports in LTC Trend Tracker  
  June 9, 2016 – 9 a.m. CDT

IHCA PAC Information
It's Almost Here!! Register for the Southern Illinois Golf Outing Before It's Too Late!
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**

**Have You Registered for the 2016 ID/DD Symposium?! Sign Up Today!**

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.

**Just a Few Weeks Left to Submit Your Nominations for the IHCA Awards Program!**

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.

**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.