New Survey Process Has 'Learning Curve for Everybody,' CMS Official Says

According to CMS officials, the new survey process for nursing homes will challenge our sector with a “learning curve,” but long term care professionals can stay on top of the process by utilizing the various training resources supplied by CMS.

During a recent speaking engagement, Karen Tritz, director of CMS’ Survey and Certification Group’s Division of Nursing Homes, noted that providers would be wise to keep an eye out for opportunities to get residents involved in their preparation for the new requirements and survey process—for example, opening a discussion with residents about what to expect when the surveyors arrive in the building.

“For some of them, they’ve never sat through a resident council interview, and now they will,” Tritz said. “So there’s an opportunity to say, ‘Here's how the process is changing, and here's what you can expect when surveyors arrive.’”

Another recent session had providers discussing how they could change the culture of the workplace to shift the focus over to decreasing fear and assuring employees they won’t lose their jobs.

"It is a choice to come in every day," explained session speaker Katharina Schulten, Twin Towers Senior Living Community’s director of marketing. "You train and coach them but you let them have autonomy. The worst thing you can do if you want to empower your workforce is that you can't put in processes that require permission at every turn.”

Schulten also noted that these changes don’t mean lower performance standards, but recognizing that change requires long term view. It will get worse before it gets better, but that's a part of change.

To read more on this, click here to read the full article from McKnight’s.

The Steps SNFs Can Take to Reduce Inappropriate Medication Use

A recent study published in the Annals of Internal Medicine suggests that skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) could lower the use of potentially inappropriate medications (PIMs) by implementing Multidisciplinary Multistep Medication Review (3MR) intervention.
For the study, researchers from the University Medical Center in Groningen in the Netherlands enlisted 426 nursing home residents from nearly 60 Dutch nursing homes and randomly assigned them to either a control group or the 3MR intervention.

The 3MR consisted of an evaluation of the patient's perspective, a medical history, a medication appraisal, a meeting between the pharmacist and the treating physician and changes in medication strategy.

The participants were followed for an average of 144 days and assessed after four months. At the end of the study, 39.1 percent of participants in the intervention group had discontinued the use of at least one inappropriate medication, compared to 29.5 percent in the control group. Additionally, there was no decline in clinical outcomes compared, indicating that intervention could be helpful for reducing inappropriate use without a negative clinical effect on nursing home residents.

In spite of the Dutch setting, these findings could have significant impact for SNFs here in the United States, especially when you consider the ongoing efforts by CMS to reduce unnecessary drug use. This study could provide a roadmap for future improvements.

Click here to read the full article from Skilled Nursing News.

Resident-Centered Policy for Dementia Activities Makes Life Better

"While there is no cure for Alzheimer’s disease," said Jillian Thomas in an article in Provider's November issue, "long term and post-acute care (LT/PAC) providers have an opportunity to enhance the quality of life for residents living with the disease. Resident-centered activity programs, led by compassionate and trained staff, can provide solace, comfort, and relaxation and, one hopes, lessen symptomatic behaviors. Inclusive programs that utilize family members or resident peers can enhance community life for everyone."

This month is National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month, an excellent time to review the center’s policy for providing resident-centered activities for those with dementia. A few questions to consider:

- Are activities meaningful, engaging, individualized, and appropriate for the resident’s stage of dementia?
- Do staff understand the communication challenges associated with cognitive impairment, and are they trained to intervene?
- Are there opportunities for family members or fellow resident volunteers to participate?
- Are staff assessing the actual abilities of the resident rather than making assumptions about inabilities?

Elements of a Successful Activity Program

Successful programs are part of a resident’s overall routine and can be adapted for safety and a resident’s capacity, current mood, behavior, and ability to stay focused. Well-trained staff can direct physical guidance and prompts, are flexible in approaching and optimizing the resident’s sense of success, and can validate what the resident is saying while preserving function and minimizing agitation.

Consider inclusive programming. Also, when planning activities, keep in mind the varying stages of dementia and how each impacts a resident’s cognitive function and ability to participate in and benefit from certain activities. Consider using a multisensory room to create an enjoyable, failure-free experience for residents.

A cure for Alzheimer’s and dementia may not yet be within reach, but every day LT/PAC providers have an opportunity to enhance the lives of those living with dementia.

To view the rest of the valuable information provided by Thomas to help guide activity planning (including information on activities for residents with dementia, multisensory rooms, communications challenges and more), click here to read the full article from this month’s Provider magazine.
**Throw Out Those Throw Rugs: Most Fall-Related Hip Fractures Occur Indoors**

According to a recent New England study, icy weather may lead to fewer hip fractures than previously believed. Most fall-related hip fractures among the elderly in the study occurred in warm months and indoors—with throw rugs a common culprit.

"Given the results of this study, it appears that efforts to decrease fall risk among the elderly living in cold climates should not be preferentially aimed at preventing outdoor fractures in winter," said study author Dr. Jason Guercio.

For the study, researchers analyzed data about hip fractures suffered by nearly 550 patients treated at the Hospital of Central Connecticut between 2013 and 2016. The analysis showed that more than 55 percent of the hip fractures happened in warm months, with the highest rates in May, September and October. Additionally, the research team found that more than 75 percent of the fractures occurred indoors.

The most common cause of both indoor and outdoor hip fracture? Tripping over an obstacle—with throw rugs leading the pack for the most common obstacle found indoors. Falling out of bed was the second leading cause of indoor hip fractures, while the most common outdoor obstacles were found to be vehicle or stair related—being struck by a vehicle or falling getting in or out or tripping on the stairs.

"Falls are one of the most common health concerns facing the elderly today," said Guercio in a news release. "Falls leading to fracture can result in disability and even death. Understanding the risk factors for fractures can help to focus efforts on decreasing them, and guide resources and appropriate interventions to prevent them."

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

**Managers Need Better Understanding of Nurses' Stress, Burnout, Study Shows**

Health care managers have "big role" when it comes to the health and stress levels of the nurses they employ, according to a new study on stress in nursing, especially when it comes to a lack of understanding or appreciation of burnout.

Conducted by a team at Ball State University, the research found that of a group of 120 nurses working in the Midwest, the majority reported poor health habits and high levels of stress. More than 90 percent of the nurses reported that their stress levels ranged from moderate to very high and nearly 80 percent said that when it came to managing stress they failed to get the recommended eight hours of sleep per night. Additionally, a majority (69 percent) reported not exercising regularly and many reported binge drinking (22 percent). Many of the nurses (70 percent) noted they ate junk food when confronted with workplace stress or used it as a coping mechanism (63 percent).

"Management has a big role to play in providing health promotion services and employee assistance programs to help deal with stress-related poor health behaviors, such as addiction," said lead researcher Jagdish Khubchandani, Ph.D. "What I find severely lacking is the understanding of burnout in nurses, its prevalence and its long-term impact on the nursing workforce of any facility."

Khubchandani advised managers to invest in addressing their nurses’ stress and how they handle it—healthier, happier nurses will make a big difference in the long run.

To read the complete article posted by McKnight’s last week [click here](#).

**November 2017 Observances**

**November 14 is World Diabetes Day:** Each year, the International Diabetes Foundation organizes World Diabetes Day to drive policy, increase public awareness and encourage health improvement and education about diabetes. For more information, visit [www.idf.org](http://www.idf.org).
**November 12-18 is Home Care Aide Week:** This weeklong observance is organized by the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC). Join them in honoring these compassionate, tireless workers who play an invaluable role for their clients as caregivers, companions and friends by celebrating in your community. [Click here](#) for more information.

**November is American Diabetes Month:** The American Diabetes Association works each day toward a vision of a life free of diabetes and all of its burdens. To that effort, each November they organize American Diabetes Month and host programs designed to focus the nation’s attention on the issues surrounding diabetes and the many people who are impacted by the disease. Visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) for more information.

**November is National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month:** Nearly 15 million Americans are currently acting as Alzheimer’s and dementia care givers. This monthlong observance is an excellent time to say “thank you” to these caring, compassionate people who take care of friends and family members suffering from Alzheimer’s/dementia. Visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) for more information.

**November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month:** Each year during November, the home care and hospice community honor the millions of nurses, home care aides, therapists, and social workers who make a remarkable difference for the patients and families they serve. [Click here](#) to find out more.

### AHCA/NCAL Information

**National Quality Awards 2018—Submit Intent to Apply by 8 PM Eastern TONIGHT!!**
Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an Intent to Apply. The [Intent to Apply](#) is not mandatory to apply for the Quality Award, but members who submit an Intent to Apply benefit by saving money on their overall application fee and receive weekly tips on submitting a successful application. [Click here](#) for more information.

**AHCA/NCAL President and CEO Mark Parkinson Named Top Lobbyist for 5th Year Running**
The Hill released their [list of top lobbyists](#) recently, and AHCA/NCAL’s Mark Parkinson was on it for the 5th year in a row. Parkinson has been the president and chief executive officer of the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) since 2011. He’s a former long term care provider himself, having run, with his wife, Stacy, assisted living communities in his native Kansas and in Missouri. For more information, [click here](#).

**AHCA Now Accepting Poster Session Proposals for the 2018 Quality Summit**
Tell ACHA how you have employed either a QAPI or Baldrige approach to accomplishing one of the AHCA or NCAL Quality Initiative goals. Poster Sessions are excellent forums for communicating interventions, new models of service delivery and innovative research projects. They provide a fun, interactive learning experience. This will be your opportunity to shine and share all of the great things that your center has accomplished. It also provides a wonderful networking opportunity. All poster session participants will receive a certificate of recognition and 4 will be chosen for a special moderated session. The 2018 Quality Summit is scheduled for March 12-14, 2018 in New Orleans. Proposals can be submitted [here](#).

**The Call for Presentation for the 2018 AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo is Open**
Complete Submission Guidelines and Information can be found [here](#). Presentation proposals will be accepted from September 1 through November 30. You can only submit through the link above. No proposals will be accepted via regular mail or email. The 2018 AHCA/NCAL Annual Convention will be held in San Diego, CA from October 7-10, 2018. Submitters will be notified by April 2018 as to the status of the submission. Please hold all convention dates until you receive news of your submission status.

**Registration for the 2018 AHCA/NCAL Independent Owner Leadership Conference is Now Open!**
AHCA/NCAL’s Independent Owner Leadership Conference is Jazzing Up the Path to Success. Join in on the fun March 14-16, 2018 (directly following the 2018 Quality Summit) in New Orleans. Get together with AL and SNF Independent Owners from across the country to discuss the issues that matter most to you. Hot Topics this year will include, ACOs,
IHCA Information

Convention CE Certificate Changes Due TOMORROW!!
If you attended the 67th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo last month in Peoria, your CE Certificates are now available online. To download your certificate, simply click here and enter your first and last name as it was entered on your convention registration. You will need to print your certificate off and keep it for your own records. If you have any changes or corrections to your certificate, please send them, in writing, to Kelli Showalter (kshowalter@ihca.com) no later than November 10, 2017.

IHCA Membership Directory & Buyers’ Guide 2018
Member Centers: IHCA recently sent out the 2018 Membership Renewals, via email, to our member facilities and corporate offices. In an effort to streamline the process this year, we have made the entire process electronic. Member center administrators can simply reply to the email they received, check the box indicating whether or not the information is correct, make any necessary changes to the information in the email reply, check the box noting that they acknowledge and accept the terms of conditions, enter the date and then type in your name to electronically “sign” the form and send it back. Corporate offices received spreadsheets of their facility information, which they can update if needed and return to IHCA.

Associate Members: You should have received an email with the information that we currently have on file for your company. Please reply to this email with any changes that need to be made in our membership database or if you would like something different listed in the directory.

If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Caldwell at acaldwell@ihca.com.

IHCA’s New Publisher—E&M Consulting, Inc.
IHCA recently changed publishing companies from Naylor to E&M Consulting Inc. A member of the E&M team may have already reached out to you regarding ad sales for the 2018 IHCA Membership Directory & Buyers’ Guide. They are wrapping up the ad sales for the directory soon. In the next few weeks, they will be contacting all of our members with advertising opportunities. If you have any interest in advertising this year, please contact a sales associate at E&M or sign up online at http://www.emconsultinginc.com/adreservation/IHCA. Click here to view rate card for more information. The team at E&M is very professional and they produce a high quality publication. Don’t hesitate to call if you have any questions. As always, your support of the Illinois Health Care Association is greatly appreciated!

You may also hear from E&M regarding the 2018 issues of LTC Today magazine. For more information about purchasing an advertisement our magazine, check out the LTC Today Media Kit and/or the LTC Today Rate Card.

IHCA VCast – Sponsored in November by Forum Extended Care Services
Have you been watching our IHCA VCast videos?? This new feature is a brief video message that comes to you every week on a specific topic. Last week’s episode featured IHCA Regulatory Director Bill Bell and IHCA VP of Public Policy Matt Hartman discussing the new RoPs. This week’s episode features Matt and IHCA’s Legislative Liaison Ashley Snavely discussing our Legislative Initiatives for the coming year. Coming soon: Past issues of the weekly VCast emails, with all of the appropriate links, will be available in the IHCA Resource Center. To access the resource center, simply log in to the member portal and click on Resources.

LTCNA 2018 Seasons of Care Wall Calendar
Each year, LTCNA produces a wall calendar featuring residents from your centers. If you have a photo you would like to share, please submit photos as soon as possible in digital format (along with a signed photo release form) to Debbie Jackson at djackson@ihca.com. This calendar is a great marketing tool as well as a nice memento for those residents and their families who are featured.

Time to Renew Your Commitment to Serve on IHCA’s Standing Committees!
Each year, IHCA asks members of their standing committees and task force groups to renew their commitment to serve for the coming year. This is also a great opportunity for anyone who would like to join a committee to sign up. IHCA standing committees are tasked with the responsibility of reviewing the policy of all IHCA functions.
For more information about these committees please visit www.ihca.com/committees. You can sign up/renew your commitment for any of these committees by completing this form and sending it to Gina Alex or by completing our online commitment form (click here). Your commitment will be to attend four to six meetings a year, in person or by telephone conference call depending on the committee. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact IHCA.

**Infection Preventionist Specialized Training (IPCO) Now Available!**

IHCA has partnered with AHCA to bring you a new quality improvement resource that will meet the new Infection Preventionist specialized training requirement finalized by CMS in the Requirements of Participation (RoP) for long term care centers. The Infection Preventionist Specialized Training (IPCO) course provides specialized training for healthcare professionals who seek to serve as Infection Preventionists. Through this course, individuals will be specially trained to effectively implement and manage an Infection Prevention and Control Program at their nursing center.

IHCA and AHCA are committed to ensuring nursing centers are fully prepared to meet the rigors of the new RoP requirements. This course is an online, self-study program with 23 hours of training. It includes online lectures, case studies and interactive components taught by an array of experts from around the country. To learn more, see the Infection Preventionist Specialized Training (IPCO) slides. To register, just click here.

**LTCNA 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 a future issue!!

Has your company recently celebrated a milestone? 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!