Membership Renewals/Updates – Please Review Your Information and Respond ASAP!

It’s that time of year again—time to update our membership database. Renewal information will be going out electronically to facility members and corporate offices this week. When you receive your renewal we ask that you review the information and respond to let us know of any changes. If there are no changes, please indicate that in a reply to Ashley Caldwell (acaldwell@ihca.com). Associate members will be receiving their information update requests next week.

We thank you for your assistance in keeping our records up-to-date. It helps ensure that association information is getting to the correct person/place and that the appropriate people have access to our IHCA Member Portal. This information will also be published in the 2019 IHCA Membership & Directory & Buyers’ Guide so please be sure we have the correct information by the deadline.

LTC Today Magazine – Advertising Opportunities for 2019

Are you in the process of reviewing your marketing plan for 2019? The 2019 issues of the LTC Today magazine offer multiple opportunities to promote your company, product or service to long term care providers! Click here to view the 2019 Media Kit for more information. To purchase an ad online, click here.

Issue and Distribution Information

- LTC Today is distributed semi-annually to all Illinois Health Care Association members in Illinois and other interested parties
- The magazine averages 1,000+ clicks per issue and includes clickable links to direct readers to your website.
- Each issue is hosted online through IHCA’s website.

If you have any questions or are interested in participating, contact Tyler Gilboe at 800-572-0011 or email tyler@emconsultinginc.com.
National Quality Awards – Only 1 Week Left! Submit Your Intent to Apply Today

The Intent to Apply (ITA) for the 2019 AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award application cycle is closing in one week! The deadline to submit an ITA is November 8, 2018 at 8 p.m. Eastern Time. AHCA/NCAL encourages you to submit an ITA through the Quality Award Portal here before the deadline.

Why should I submit an Intent to Apply?
While not mandatory, applicants who submit an ITA will save money on their overall application fee and receive extra educational resources. No paperwork or application is needed to submit an ITA through the Quality Award Portal here.

Please note:
- We encourage all applicants to review the application packet in full before submitting an ITA payment. Applications are available at ahcancal.org/qualityaward.
- The 2019 Quality Award Survey Eligibility, as of the September Nursing Home Compare release, for all award levels is now available on the Quality Award website.

How do I get started?
1. Download and review the application packet for your respective award level
   - Check out our self-assessments at the Silver and Gold level to see if you’re ready to apply!
2. Log into the Quality Award Portal
3. Submit a payment for your center in the Quality Award Portal

Key Upcoming 2019 Quality Award Program Dates
- November 8, 2018: Intent to Apply deadline
- November 29, 2018: Examiner application deadline
- January 31, 2019: Bronze, Silver and Gold final application deadline

All deadlines are at 8 p.m. Eastern Time and late submissions are not accepted for any reason. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award team at qualityaward@ahca.org.

U.S. News Names Best Nursing Homes for 2018-2019

U.S. News & World Report recently posted their Best Nursing Homes for 2018-2019 list and released their new Nursing Home Finder. To create these free and easy-to-use resources, U.S. News evaluated more than 15,000 homes nationwide, in every state and nearly 100 major metropolitan areas. This year, 2,975 nursing homes, including 733 from Illinois, earned the designation of a U.S. News Best Nursing Home. A number of IHCA member centers were featured in this year’s list, (click here to view).

Since its inception in 2009, the U.S. News nursing home ratings have relied on data from Nursing Home Compare. This year, due to CMS' recent move from a self-reported to a payroll-based nurse staffing reporting and a freeze in health inspection data since November 2017, U.S. News modified the way it uses CMS data for evaluating a nursing home's overall performance.

Significant updates for the 2018-19 Best Nursing Home Overall Rating include:
- U.S. News changed its overall rating methodology to put more emphasis on staffing quality.
- U.S. News used staffing data only from April 2018 onward.
- U.S. News applied additional rating indicators of care that CMS doesn't use in its own ratings - such as whether the amount of rehabilitation therapy provided was determined by reimbursement or by patient-centered needs.

For more information, please refer to the methodology.
A new collaborative program between nursing homes and a local hospital in Australia is keeping the elderly out of the emergency department, and rapidly decreasing hospital readmissions.

Australian researchers have been testing out the use of a program they call “Hospital in the Nursing Home,” which involves coordination between one of the country’s largest providers and local nursing homes. The state-funded program includes a team of two or three ED-based nurses, who coordinate care with nursing homes and other healthcare professionals. The goal is to facilitate lower-acuity care, such as changing catheters, wound treatment or blood transfusions, in nursing homes.

Testing out the model at nursing homes serving some 2,000 elderly, they found that it led to a 17 percent decrease in trips to the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital, and a 36 percent drop in hospital admissions from the emergency department. All told, the program spelled a 47 percent dip in hospital admissions, according to the study, published in PLoS ONE.

Those drops in hospital use have spelled sizable savings — with the researchers estimating that every $1 Australian dollar invested into the program equated to $17 in savings for the government.

“When emergency departments, hospitals and community health providers work together providing the best possible care for older Australians in their home, everyone benefits,” Emergency Medicine Foundation of Australia Director Anthony Bell, M.D., said in an announcement of the study results. “Emergency and hospital beds are freed up and older patients are not unnecessarily coming into an unfamiliar and often stressful environment.”

*This article was taken from McKnight’s.

As skilled nursing providers start preparing for the new Medicare payment model, they need to zero in on how much money they’re making now on the various services they provide, stated a recent article from Skilled Nursing News. Specifically, they need to brush up on their ICD-10 codes, which will play a key part in the setting of their reimbursement rate, as well as their rehab contracts.

Above all, the article went on to say, they can’t rely solely on CMS’ projections on how well they’ll do under the new Patient-Driven Payment Model (PDPM).

“The information you receive from CMS is based on a point and time, and based on how the population changes between now and [October 1, 2019], you’re going to have different outcomes,” Cory Rutledge, managing principal of senior living at the professional services firm CliftonLarsonAllen, said during a recent panel discussion during LeadingAge’s annual conference.

ICD-10 matters now
Under the new payment model, SNFs have to get a handle on their ICD-10 coding, Judy Wilhide Brandt, principal at Wilhide Consulting, said at the conference.

ICD-10, along with other patient characteristics, is used as the basis for patient classification in the finalized PDPM case-mix model. One of the biggest challenges for SNFs will be making sure these ICD-10 codes are accurate.

“We’ve never had to tighten up ICD-10 coding because it’s never really mattered,” Wilhide Brandt said. “We’ve done the best we can. We’ve gone to the two-day seminars, we’ve shuffled through the book, Google has been our best friend, and it’s never mattered. Because it’s not how we got paid; it’s how doctors get paid, and it’s how hospitals get paid. [But] it’s now how we get paid.”

Reviewing rehab contracts
One of the earliest takeaways from the initial PDPM announcements was that the rehabilitation business model would change substantially. Though therapy providers do agree that PDPM is an improvement over old models, PDPM
eliminates therapy minutes as a driver of reimbursement. And rehab providers aren’t the only ones who have to adjust to this sea change; SNFs must take a look at their third-party rehab contracts, the panelists agreed.

“Those per-minute [rehab] contracts will probably not make sense under PDPM,” Rutledge said. “If your therapy provider has not come to contract renegotiation, they will soon, and they have a lot more data than you do. So understanding the nuts and bolts of that … that’s an area that we’re talking to clients about a lot.”

When skilled providers go into these negotiations with their third-party rehab providers, it’s essential that they understand exactly how the rehab provided affects their bottom line so they have some ammunition to work with, Rutledge stressed.

“One thing we’re recommending to organizations is to take a sample of 20 individuals, see the therapy minutes they’ve given, and dig in and understand what was the therapy component of your reimbursement and how much did you pay your therapy provider,” he said.

And, while SNFs need to start having these conversations sooner rather than later, added Rutledge, they don’t need to jump the gun.

For more details, click here to read the full article.

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**How You Breathe May Affect Your Memory**

According to a team of Swedish-based researchers, breathing through the nose may help memory storage and consolidation. These findings are published in *The Journal of Neuroscience*.

Neuroscientists have been scrutinizing the link between smell and memory, with some suggesting that a damaged sense of smell can predict dementia. Others have focused in on why that might be. Along the way, these scientists have picked up various clues.

The amygdala, which is a small brain region that processes sensory information, is close to the memory-storing hippocampus.

Additionally, newer research shows that people with a good spatial memory may be better at identifying smells. Studies have shown that information related to time and space is present in the anterior olfactory nucleus. This is a brain area that is involved in the development of Alzheimer’s.

Other recent research adds breathing into the mix. A study carried out by scientists at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden, finds that breathing through the nose, rather than the mouth, improves olfactory memory.

For the study, Arshamian and team asked male and female participants to learn 12 new smells on two occasions. After each "sniffing session," they asked the participants to breathe either through their noses or through their mouths for 1 hour.

When the hour was up, the participants smelled the old 12 scents along with the dozen new ones. The participants then decided which smells were old and which were new.

Overall, when the people breathed through their noses, they memorized the smells better than when they breathed through their mouths.

“Our study shows that we remember smells better if we breathe through the nose when the memory is being consolidated — the process that takes place between learning and memory retrieval,” said Arshamian. “This is the first time someone has demonstrated this.”

As the scientists explain, previous research has shown that olfactory brain receptors can pick up not only smell but also small variations in airflow, with different parts of the brain being activated upon inhalation and exhalation.
"The idea that breathing affects our behavior is actually not new," Arshamian said. "In fact, the knowledge has been around for thousands of years in such areas as meditation. But no one has managed to prove scientifically what actually goes on in the brain. We now have tools that can reveal new clinical knowledge."

For more information, click here to read the full article from Medical News Today.

The CDC Wants to Hear From You!

The most reliable information comes directly from providers like you. In order for policy makers to make solid, evidence-based decisions about long term care in the U.S., it is essential that the CDC’s National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) collect data from the 2,090 residential care communities invited to participate in the 2018 National Study of Long-Term Care Providers (NSLTCP). If your residential care community was randomly selected, you were chosen to represent not only your residential care community, but also other comparable residential care communities across the United States. Without your help, it may be impossible to make accurate estimates about the amount and types of care provided to residents in residential care communities like yours. NSLTCP data will provide benchmarks, which will allow you to compare your residential care communities with other communities like your own. AHCA/NCAL and the Center for Excellence in Assisted Living (CEAL) support this research and regularly use data from the study.

November 2018 Observances

**November 14 is World Diabetes Day:** Each year, World Diabetes Day is celebrated to increase public awareness and encourage health improvement for people with diabetes and their health care providers. Click here for more information.

**November 12-18 is Home Care Aide Week:** This weeklong observance celebrates the dedicated professionals that work in home health care. Click here for more information.

**November is National Family Caregivers Month:** Each year, more and more Americans are caring for a loved one with a chronic condition, disability or the frailties of old age. This month, please take the time to celebrate the approximately 90 million family caregivers around the U.S. Click here for more information.

AHCA/NCAL Information

**70th Annual Convention & Expo - Call for Presentations**
AHCA/NCAL will hold its 70th Annual Convention and Expo at The Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL. As a long term care professional, you understand the trends, issues and challenges facing our profession. Now is your chance to share ideas that reflect your success stories and professional insight, as well as ideas and programs that enhance the long term and post-acute care service delivery. We are particularly interested in proposals that reflect and will help support providers in achieving the AHCA Quality Initiative goals the Quality Initiative for Assisted Living and Advancing the Core Values of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria. Click here to submit your proposal by the deadline of November 30, 2018.

**AHCA/NCAL Elect New Boards**
The American Health Care Association (AHCA) and the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) elected full slates of board officers at their annual convention just a few weeks ago.

Michael Wylie of Pennsylvania was elected for a second term as AHCA Chair, and Ashley Blankenship of Arkansas was reelected as NCAL chair.

“We are fortunate to have the knowledge and passion of these leaders on our Boards,” said AHCA/NCAL President and Chief Executive Officer Mark Parkinson. “Under Michael and Ashley’s leadership, we will be able to face the challenges and opportunities ahead.”

To view a full list of AHCA’s Board of Governors and NCAL’s Board of Directors, click here to view the article from Provider Magazine.
AHCA/NCAL Launches Online Resource Center to Promote Long Term Care Workforce Recruitment, Retention and Development

Finding a qualified workforce is one of the largest challenges facing long term care providers. AHCA/NCAL recently unveiled new resources to help members attract and retain qualified caregivers. The online Workforce Resource Center includes resources and tools for AHCA/NCAL members to learn more about effective strategies for recruiting, retention and staff development. The association also announced a partnership with PHI, a leading provider of workforce training programs. PHI offers a range of services that help providers attract quality workers, promote excellent care, reduce turnover and achieve cost efficiencies. AHCA/NCAL and PHI will provide coaching, training and consulting to help long term care providers deliver quality care.

Gero Nurse Prep: A Real World Solution for Your RN’s Real World and Its On Sale!

AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep does much more than just prepare RNs to take the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) board certification exam in gerontological nursing. It increases experienced RNs’ knowledge of gerontological nursing practice. Gero Nurse Prep students see a dramatic 24 percent average increase on their pre- and post-test scores.

Gero Nurse Prep is on sale! Save $100 off the regular registration fee now through November 30 by using promo code REALRN18 (all caps). AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep provides tremendous value at this AHCA/NCAL member $590 sale price. That’s less than $20 per contact hour for outstanding nursing education that makes a measurable difference on so many fronts. For RNs interested in pursuing Board certification through ANCC, there is an additional and separate cost of $395. Watch this video to learn more about AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep.

AL Cost Calculator

The AL Cost Calculator is a web-based, enhanced resident assessment tool that assesses how costs are allocated across residents. Better understand the needs of your residents, so you can put the right staff with the right skills in the right place and at the right time. Multi-facility companies can see their company’s costs across different buildings and over time. Learn more about the features and benefits.

The AL Cost Calculator will be available to NCAL member providers at no additional cost—it’s included with your membership.

AHCA/NCAL Resources

Looking for additional resources to help you in your daily routine? Don’t forget about AHCA/NCAL’s online store. There you will find various publications, manuals, forms, etc. that can be useful in your day-to-day operations—like this one:

Quality Assisted Living: Informing Practice Through Research | This book uniquely explores the lives of those who inhabit assisted living facilities, seeking to understand and evaluate their perceived ideas of what constitutes quality of life. It provides results from a National Institute on Aging-funded study that gathered information from not only residents, but also staff and family members, to help better understand how quality of life should be conceived and evaluated. The volume provides concrete suggestions for reframing problems in order to find better solutions. Plentiful stories and quotations are used to identify those elements of assisted living that are most conducive to a satisfying quality of life. The authors also address how this research has led to a consideration of quality as a process rather than as a single condition.

Upcoming Webinar

Improving Clinical Outcomes through Competent Gerontological Nurses | November 8 | 2:00 p.m. EST

IHCA Information


Our publishing partner, E&M Consulting, will be wrapping up the sales for the 2019 IHCA Membership Directory & Buyers’ Guide soon. E&M will be contacting members in the coming weeks about advertising opportunities in the 2019 directory. This gives you a chance to promote your business while supporting the association. If you have any questions or would like to advertise, please contact Tyler with E&M at 217-391-3719, 800-572-0011 or tyler@emconsultinginc.com. Check out the 2019 Rate Card for information on the available advertising opportunities or view them online here.
Latest IHCA VCast
In last week’s episode, Bill Bell discussed the new proposed emergency rule on health care employee vaccinations. This week’s episode featured Michelle Stuercke sharing helpful information about Legionella and water management plans. VCast Online: Past VCast emails, with all of the appropriate links, are now available in the IHCA Resource Center. To access the resource center, simply log in to the member portal and click on Resources.

CE Certificates from the 68th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo Now Available in IHCA’s CE Central
Attendees can now access their Continuing Education Certificates from the 68th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo through CE Central (click here). Please access your certificate and review it to make sure that everything is correct. If you have any corrections, please submit them in writing to Kelli Showalter at kshowalter@ihca.com. Correction requests must be submitted by Friday, November 2, 2018.

Additionally, CE certificates are also available for all of our past 2018 educational sessions, as well as the 2017 convention. To access CE Central, go to www.ihca.com/education and click on the CE Central link. Once there, simply enter your first and last name into the system to retrieve your information.

LTCNA Scholarship Application Now Available!
The Long Term Care Nurses Association will award up to two scholarships in the amount of $1,000.00 each in 2018 for RNs, LPNs and Nurse Aides to further their careers in nursing. Application deadline is December 31, 2018. Click here to view the application.

LTCNA Offering Core Competency 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!