Registration for the 66th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo is Now Open!

Registration for the 66th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo – September 12-15, 2016 – is Now Open! Check out the Preliminary Program (click here) to see what's in store! The Preliminary Program offers a wealth of information about our biggest event! Check it out to see descriptions of this year's educational sessions, details regarding our special events (like the Party on the Riverfront (formerly the Kickoff Party), the Golf Outing and the Oksnevad 5K), bios for our keynote speakers and more! To register, complete the registration form found at the back of the program and send it along with your payment to: IHCA, 1029 S. 4th St., Springfield, IL 62703.

If you have any questions, please contact the IHCA office – (217) 528-6455 or (800) 252-8988.

Time is Running out to Reserve a Booth for the Expo! Get Your Space Today! 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!! Don’t miss out on your chance to be a part of this excellent event! 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.

Molly Carpenter of Imboden Creek Selected as an AHCA/NCAL Future Leader!

Last week it was announced that Molly Carpenter, administrator at Imboden Creek Living Center in Decatur, IL has been chosen as a member of the 2016/2017 class of the AHCA/NCAL Future Leaders program! She follows in the footsteps of a handful of other IHCA members who have completed this prestigious program. Carpenter is a member of the inaugural class of the IHCA Illinois Leaders program (stay tuned for information on how to apply to be a member of the 2016/2017 class of the Illinois Leaders program, coming your way soon!). The graduates of the class of 2016 will be honored at the 66th Annual IHCA Convention & Expo in September. She will then join her new AHCA/NCAL classmates (the 2016/2017 class has 38 members and is the largest to date) later that month at the Future Leaders Symposium in Washington, D.C. Click here to read the news release regarding the announcement (which was featured on the WAND 17 website). Congratulations Molly!
Congratulations to this year’s AHCA/NCAL Silver Award Winners!

Last week AHCA/NCAL announced the names of the 71 skilled nursing care centers and assisted living communities that have earned the 2016 Silver - Achievement in Quality Award. The Silver award is the second of three distinctions possible through the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program, which honors long term and post-acute care providers that have demonstrated their commitment to improving the quality of care for seniors and persons with disabilities.

“It takes incredible dedication and passion to successfully apply the demands of the criteria,” said Christine Boldt, Chair of the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Board of Overseers. “This group has risen to that challenge. I commend them for the work they do to improve the lives of those we serve every day.”

Implemented in 1996, the National Quality Award Program is centered on the core values and criteria of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, which is the foundation of the metric-based AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative. The program assists providers of long term and post-acute care services in achieving their performance goals.

The second step in the National Quality Award Program is the Silver – Achievement in Quality Award. A requirement of the program is to receive a Bronze – Commitment to Quality Award before applying at the Silver level. At the silver level, applicants continue to learn and develop effective approaches that help improve performance and health care outcomes. The Silver program provides a clear pathway for recipients moving to the Gold – Excellence in Quality Award.

IHCA would like to congratulate Odin Health Care Center in Odin, IL for receiving a Silver Award this year!

Well done and good luck as you move forward in the Quality Award Program!

The Illinois Department on Aging is Now Accepting Nominations for their Caregiver of the Year Award!

The Illinois Department on Aging is now accepting nominations for the 2016 Outstanding Caregiver Awards. The purpose of this award is to recognize a direct care worker over the age of 55, who has provided outstanding direct caregiving to seniors through an Illinois nursing facility; Illinois senior housing; the Illinois homecare industry; or Title III services.

Nominees are restricted to caregivers over the age of 55 working directly with seniors in within Illinois nursing facilities; Illinois senior housing; the Illinois homecare industry; or Title III services. The award can be given posthumously.

A candidate must be nominated by August 19, 2016 to be considered. For more information about the award and how to nominate an outstanding caregiver, click here.

Competency Testing is Key to Preventing Hospitalizations

According to long term care nursing expert—Linda Shubert, MSN, RN, CHSE, director of clinical education at River Garden Hebrew Home Senior Services—improving competency testing in long term care facilities is a crucial step toward reducing readmissions, cutting down on workplace injuries and improving the overall quality of care for residents. It can also help address other issues in long term care, such as the shallow hiring pool for prospective long term care nursing employees, budgeting and more. Employers can expect to benefit from competency testing in areas like employee retention, education and experience, which help increase employees' perceived value.

"Why would you competency test? The biggest question would be why would you not competency test, especially since all the stakeholders are asking for it," explained Shubert. “Research shows competency and care quality go hand in hand.”

“People can either be your asset or they can be your risk,” said Robin Bleier, RN, LHRM, CLC of RB Health Partners, Inc. “It is up to us to make them our asset.”
New Study—Why Some Seniors Don’t Take Their Meds

Managing daily medications can be a challenge—especially for seniors and their caretakers. New research suggests that the problem of missed medications increases with age and failing memory, and can have serious consequences.

"Health conditions may worsen or not improve if older adults skip or don't take their medications properly," said Brenda Jamerson, of the Center on Biobehavioral Health Disparities Research at Duke University, in Durham, N.C. "Serious side effects may also occur from taking medications at the wrong time or in the wrong dose."

For the study, researchers looked at data concerning more than 4,100 North Carolina residents, ages 65 and older, who had health conditions (such as poor vision, poor hearing, diabetes, high blood pressure, and others). They found that difficulties taking the right medications at the right time increased as age increased. When the study started, approximately 7 percent of participants needed assistance, and just three years later 11 percent of those who didn’t already need assistance when the study began required help.

Overall, people ages 80 and older were 1.5 to 3 times more likely to require help taking medications than those ages 65-69. Individuals who had memory deficits, who had trouble with everyday tasks, also had a higher risk for forgetting to take their medications. Additionally, gender proved to be a factor, as men were 1.5 to 2 times more likely to need assistance with their medications as women.

Michele Pisano, a pharmacist who works in the Geriatric-Palliative faculty practice at Northwell Health in New Hyde Park, NY, believes this study draws attention to a very important issue. She offered some tips to help older adults manage their medications:

- Examine medicine bottle labels for the last date of renewal to confirm that you’re taking medicine regularly.
- Discuss with your doctor and pharmacist whether or not your current medications are still warranted, to avoid taking unnecessary meds or experiencing side effects.
- Use "medication adherence" tools, such as labeled pillboxes, to help keep you on track.

Click here for more information from HealthDay News.

FDA Approves New Eye Implant

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced last week that they had approved a new implant that helps the aging eye focus on small print and nearby objects (click here to read the news release from the FDA). According to the FDA, the Raindrop Near Vision Inlay, is a device implanted in the cornea (the clear, front surface) of one eye in order to improve near vision in certain patients with presbyopia. It is the second FDA-approved implantable corneal device for correction of near vision in patients who have not had cataract surgery and the first implantable device that changes the shape of the cornea to achieve improved vision.

Presbyopia is the loss of the ability to change the focusing power of the eye, resulting in diminished near vision. As explained in the release, the focusing power of the eye decreases in nearly all adults over the course of their lifetime. It usually occurs in the fourth or fifth decade of life due to normal aging, though some may develop symptoms of presbyopia sooner than others. Nearly everyone will develop symptoms of presbyopia at some point in their lives and may require some method of near vision correction, such as bifocals or reading glasses. Corneal inlay surgery is an elective option for those who may not want to wear glasses.

"Given the prevalence of presbyopia and the aging of the baby boomer population, the need for near vision correction will likely rise in the coming years," said William Maisel, M.D., M.P.H., deputy director for science and chief scientist in the

To implant the device, which is smaller than the eye of a needle and resembles a tiny contact lens, an eye surgeon uses a laser to create a flap in the cornea of the patient’s non-dominant eye, slides the device in through the opening and puts the flap back in place. The approval of the device came after a clinical trial of more than 300 patients. Trial patients went through the procedure and after two years, 92 percent of them were able to see 20/40 vision or better with the implant. Of course, the implant does come with its own set of risks, including corneal scarring, swelling, inflammation, thinning or other issues.

For more on this, click here to read the full story from HealthDay News.

New Clues to How Parkinson’s Disease Destroys Neurons
According to a study published last month in Science Translational Medicine, researchers have uncovered a major reason why proteins that are the hallmark of Parkinson’s disease are toxic to neurons in the brain. This discovery could be key to finding a way to slow down or halt the disease. Parkinson’s disease (PD) is a chronic and progressive movement disorder that affects nearly one million people in the U.S.

“It’s really exciting that we have found a mechanism we can target to create new treatments for this devastating disease,” stated lead investigator J. Timothy Greenamyre, a neurology professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

The research shows that degenerating neurons contain large clumps of a protein called alpha-synuclein. For those individuals whose cells make too much alpha-synuclein, or a mutated form of it, are at a high risk for developing Parkinson’s due to the protein’s toxicity. Greenamyre and his colleagues also found that the accumulation of alpha-synuclein is toxic because it disrupts the normal functioning of mitochondria, which are responsible for generating a cell’s energy. This leads to less energy and more damaging cellular waste, eventually causing neurodegeneration.

The research team used cell cultures to find ways to prevent the toxicity caused by alpha-synuclein, and came up with two options. One was a form of gene therapy that forced the neurons to make more of a mitochondrial protein called TOM20 to protect from the alpha-synuclein; and the other was a protein that was able to prevent the alpha-synuclein from sticking to TOM20, which prevented alpha-nuclein’s harmful effects on the mitochondria.

Greenamyre is optimistic that one or both of these approaches may ultimately make it to human clinical trials.

For more on this, click here to read the full article from Futurity.

July 2016 Observances

July UV Safety Month: Learn about UV rays and how best to protect yourself and others by participating in this month-long observance! Visit the Federal Occupational Health website and check your UV IQ.

AHCA/NCAL Information

Call for Presentations for the 2017 Independent Owner Leadership Conference is Open!
The AHCA/NCAL2017 Independent Owner Leadership Conference is for independent owners (IOs) and not for profit operators of 10 or fewer long term care facilities. The conference can also serve as a national forum to share professional knowledge, insights, programs and ideas that enhance the long term care provider model.

AHCA/NCAL invites you to submit a conference proposal for consideration. Proposals should be geared toward individuals who own or operate 10 or fewer for profit or not for profit long term care facilities. Click here for more information. Proposals should be submitted by Wednesday, August 17 to ionfpconference@ahca.org.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is Offering a Discounted Rate to AHCA Members for Training Tool
IHI is offering a 15 percent discount to AHCA members for its SNF Trigger Tool virtual training beginning on August 10. Participants of this training will learn how to efficiently use the IHI SNF Trigger Tool, which can be used to identify patient harm and to measure the effectiveness of safety improvements to reduce adverse events. The fee associated with the
virtual training covers six sessions of learning that can be enjoyed by multiple individuals at one location on scheduled dates in August, September and October. AHCA members must register by visiting the IHI website here and using the code ACHA15. To learn more click here.

**New 8-Part Quality Initiative Webcast Series: Succeeding in the Midst of Change**

This month, ahcancalED will kick-off its new 8-part webcast series designed to assist members with using the Quality Initiative to achieve quality success in these changing times.

On July 27, Dr. David Gifford, AHCA Senior Vice President of Quality and Regulatory Affairs and a board-certified geriatrician, will host the first in the series, Reducing Rehospitalizations: Practical Strategies for Success. Today, hospital readmissions impact payment, Five-Star ratings, your access to participation in preferred networks and your quality measures. In these changing times, you must have a low readmission rate to be competitive. The webcast will provide centers with strategies and tactics to reduce rehospitalizations.

For more information about the series and to register, click here.

**The Early Bird Deadline to Register for the 67th Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Expo is Fast Approaching!**

Early Bird registration ends July 22! Register before it’s too late! 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!

**NCAL Releases New Resource for Recruiting Staff**

NCAL is pleased to announce a new resource to help members achieve the Quality Initiative staff stability goal, *How to Recruit Assisted Living Staff*. Staff stability starts with good recruiting practices. Members who have had success at recruiting and retaining excellent staff are sharing their secrets to success!

Ideas include:
- thinking outside of the box when it comes to recruiting,
- offering incentives,
- career growth,
- on-the-job training, and
- building a presence in the larger community.

This resource could also be utilized in skilled nursing centers.

**National Assisted Living Week 2016**

Visit [www.NALW.org](http://www.NALW.org) for ideas and other resources, including the NALW logo that can be used to advertise the celebration in your assisted living center. **Be sure to check out this year’s planning guide, which is now available online!** This year’s theme is: *Keep Connected*, which recognizes the increasing opportunity technology can offer to enhance the care and overall experience in assisted living communities. 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.

**Upcoming Webinars**

- [Payroll-Based Journal Reporting: Staffing Strategies for Success](#)  
  July 13, 2016 – 1:00 p.m. CDT
- [AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Program and Member Recruitment and Retention](#)  
  July 19, 2016 – 1:00 p.m. CDT
IHCA PAC Information

Support IHCA PAC!!! Learn and Earn; Then Take a Break on the Lake!

Next month IHCA PAC is offering a new opportunity—earn CEs at an educational session at Duane Morris in Chicago, then board the Spirit of Chicago for a cruise on Lake Michigan! IHCA last held a Lake Michigan Cruise in 2008, and we thought it was time to give it another go! Join us on July 22, 2016 for education, networking and good times in the Windy City!

Education Sessions – Noon – 3 p.m.:
- Neville Bilimoria will present a session on HIPAA
- Al Litwiller will present a session on Proper Documentation

Lake Michigan Cocktail Cruise – 4 – 6 p.m:
- Board the Spirit of Chicago at Navy Pier
- Cocktails and hors d’oeuvres included

Click here to view the brochure. Cost: $125. You can also choose to participate in just the educational sessions, just the cruise, or both! Contact Kristin DiCenso for more information: kdicenso@ihca.com.

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 an issue later this year!!

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?

Ready to sign up for a member spotlight?! Contact Ashley Caldwell! Email acaldwell@ihca.com or give her a call today!