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nebraska now

January 15, 2020

UPCOMING EDUCATION

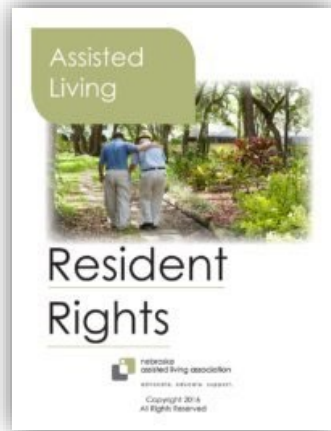
QUICK LINKS

- [Webinar: PDPM Essentials and Roles of the Interdisciplinary Team in Assessment and Coding for Reimbursement Accuracy – 1/17/20](#)
- [NNFA/NALA Winter District Education – 1/20/20](#)
- [NNFA Administrator Preceptor Training – 1/23/20](#)
- [Webinar: Clinical Category and Comorbid Conditions – 1/24/20](#)
- [Webinar: Assessing Cognition, Mood, and Behaviors – 1/31/20](#)
- [Webinar: Getting the PDPM Initial Assessment Right! Best Practices for Pre-admission, Admission, and Days 1-8 Processes – 2/4/20](#)
- [LPN IV Therapy and Basic Skills Courses – 2/4/20-2/5/20](#)
- [MDS 3.0 Intensive Training – 2/11/20-2/13/20](#)
- [Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar – 3/3/20-3/4/20](#)

- [Education](#)
- [Nurse Aide and Med Aide Store](#)
- [Care PAC](#)
- [Career Center](#)
- [Vendor Search](#)
- [Affordable Care Act Scholarships](#)

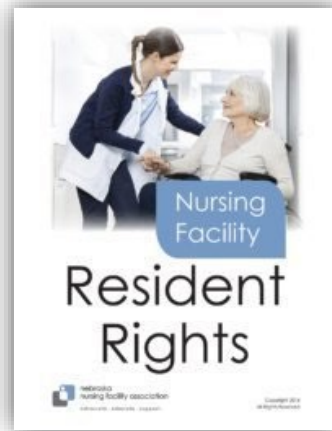


JANUARY FEATURED PRODUCTS



[Resident Rights for Assisted Living](#)

Member Price: \$24.95



[Resident Rights for Nursing Facilities](#)

Member Price: \$24.95



member benefits
ADVOCACY

The 106th Nebraska Legislative Session began Jan. 8, 2020. On behalf of its members, NNFA/NALA will provide:

- representation with Nebraska's Legislature and governmental agencies
- up-to-date legislative alerts
- access to public outreach tools

NNFA/NALA

NEBRASKA HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS OPEN

Applications for the Quality Summit Scholarship are due next **Friday, Jan. 24, 2020**. Two \$1,250 scholarships are offered to individuals wishing to attend the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) Quality Summit, March 9-11, 2020, in Grapevine, Texas. Apply through AwardSpring [here](#).

This scholarship is one of more than 40 offered annually by the Nebraska Health Care Foundation (NHCF) to NNFA/NALA member facility staff seeking education in long-term care. Some scholarships are also available to facility staff family members.

Contact Marketing@nehca.org with questions.

RSVP FOR THE 2020 LEGISLATIVE RECEPTION

NNFA/NALA members are invited to the Nebraska Health Care Association (NHCA) and LeadingAge Nebraska Legislative Reception, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020, from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. CT, at The Nebraska Club in Lincoln. Attendees will have the opportunity to visit with their senators and get to know them in an informal setting.

RSVP for the event to nhca@nehca.org by **Friday, Jan. 17, 2020**.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

Jade Harrah, NHA, CEO and Administrator at The Ambassador Lincoln, has been elected as the Nebraska Nursing Facility Association Southeast District Chair. Join us in congratulating Jade on her new position!

TEAM UPDATE

Susan Eichele joined the NHCA team on Jan. 13, 2020, as the Guest Relations Coordinator. Susan previously served as the Hospice Volunteer Coordinator for HoriSun Hospice as well as Tabitha Health Care Services. "I am super excited to have someone with Susan's experience and passion join our team, and I'm confident she will be a great addition in serving you as members," said Heath Boddy, NHCA president and CEO.

NHCF SEEKS GENTLY USED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

NHCF seeks donations of gently used medical equipment such as wheelchairs, mattress pads, mechanical lifts, etc. All donated equipment will be used for long-term care education and training cases. If you would like to donate an item, contact Connie Knorr, Director of Professional Development, at ConnieK@nehca.org or 402-435-3551. NHCF will pick up donations within 100 miles of Lincoln. Thank you in advance for your support!

NHCF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your donation may be tax deductible.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Eastmont was featured by *Strictly Business Magazine* for celebrating the grand opening of their new Presentation Center, a sales and event space with a demo kitchen, interior finish samples, and a scale model of their upcoming renovations and expansion plans. Read more [here](#).

Legacy Retirement Communities was featured by *Strictly Business Magazine* for the recent hiring of Jennifer Galdamez as the director of nursing for Legacy Estates in Lincoln. Read more [here](#).

If your organization has recently been featured in the news, please notify KatyB@nehca.org with the link to be included in Nebraska Now and on social media.

WELCOME, ADMINISTRATORS

NNFA/NALA shares the following changes to a member administrator position:

- Megan Wieck — Arbor Care Centers – Fullerton LLC, Fullerton
- Kelli Pachner — Azria Health Blue Hill, Blue Hill
- Michael Early — Azria Health Gretna, Gretna
- Anthony Brewer — Azria Health Midtown, Omaha
- Hayley Adams — Azria Health Montclair, Omaha
- David Young — Belle Terrance, Tecumseh
- Cassandra Mounce — CountryHouse Residence (25th Street), Lincoln
- Jared Rodman — Life Care Center of Elkhorn, Elkhorn

Congratulations to these individuals on their new roles! To notify NNFA/NALA of administrator updates, contact Karen Jefferson at KarenJ@nehca.org.

QUALITY

NATIONAL QUALITY AWARD APPLICATIONS DUE JAN. 23

Submit your application for the 2020 National Quality Award Program through the [Quality Award Portal](#) by **Thursday, Jan. 23, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. CT**. Download Bronze, Silver, and Gold application packets and free educational resources on the Quality Award [website](#).

For additional information or questions, contact qualityaward@ahca.org.

HEALTH ADVISORY: ELEVATED INFLUENZA ACTIVITY

On Monday, Jan. 13, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) posted an [advisory](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) explaining that influenza activity remains elevated and widespread throughout the United States, and the flu season is likely to last several more weeks. Early treatment with antiviral medications is recommended for hospitalized and high-risk patients. View the full advisory [here](#).

REGULATIONS & REIMBURSEMENT

NEW ASSISTED LIVING MEDICAID WAIVER RATES

DHHS recently posted the new Home and Community Based Services Medicaid Aged and Disabled Waiver Assisted Living Rates, effective Jan. 1, 2020. Click [here](#) to view the rates.

CMS PROPOSED REMOVAL OF MDS SECTION G

On Dec. 20, 2019, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) posted a draft version of the 2020 MDS item sets ([v1.18.0](#)), which is scheduled to become effective Oct. 1, 2020. This proposal includes the removal of Section G from all federal item sets.

At the federal level, AHCA is in conversation with CMS about concerns associated with this proposed change and its impact on case mix states. As Nebraska's Medicaid payment for nursing facility residents is based on information gathered from their MDS assessments, NHCA has asked DHHS for information on how this proposed change would impact Medicaid's requirements for nursing facilities.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Cindy Kadavy, NHCA Senior Vice President of Policy, Research, and Reimbursement, at cindyk@nehca.org.

IMPORTANT MEDICARE PART B THERAPY SERVICES CODING AND PAYMENT UPDATES

CMS published the [Calendar Year 2020 Physician Fee Schedule Payment Final Rule](#). This rule implements several changes effective Jan. 1, 2020, including:

- Updated payment rates for individual billing procedure codes used to report outpatient therapy services
- Finalized coding requirements for the reporting of therapy services furnished in whole or in part by a therapy/therapist assistant

CMS also posted updated National Correct Coding Initiative (NCCI) edits with unexpected changes that impact outpatient therapy coding and payment. AHCA has prepared several fact sheets related to these changes and highly recommends that providers share these resources with in-house and/or contracted therapy staff, as well as billing staff so everyone is aware of these important changes and can take any necessary actions to ensure accurate outpatient therapy coding and payments in 2020.

- [Medicare Part B Therapy Procedure Payment Rates for 2020](#)
- [New Medicare Part B Claim Coding Modifiers for Therapy Assistants Effective 1/1/2020](#)
- [New Medicare Part B NCCI Edits Impacting Therapy Services Effective 1/1/2020](#)

DHHS POSTS FINAL NEBRASKA OLMSTEAD PLAN

In December 2019, at the direction of the Legislature, DHHS posted its [Final Nebraska Olmstead Plan](#). This Plan is designed to help ensure services for Nebraskans with disabilities are provided in “the most integrated community-based setting.” [Neb. Rev. Stat. 81-6,121]

NHCA provided recommendations on items to be included in the Plan, which are not completely reflected in the final product. The Plan does include strategies that may impact nursing facility and assisted living members in the future. Click [here](#) to download applicable excerpts from the Plan.

NEBRASKA MEDICAID DIRECTOR RESIGNS

On Monday, Jan. 13, Gov. Ricketts [announced](#) that Dr. Matthew Van Patton is leaving his position as Director of the DHHS Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care, effective Feb. 7, 2020. The Governor explained that Director Van Patton's plan is to transition “back into the private sector.” Jeremy Brunssen, current Medicaid Deputy Director of Finance and Program Integrity will serve as the Interim Medicaid Director. According to the [announcement](#), the search for the next Medicaid Director has commenced.

PROPOSED MEDICAID NURSING FACILITY REGULATIONS TERMINATED

The [Nebraska Secretary of State](#) recently posted information on the docket website indicating the promulgation process for the proposed changes to the Medicaid nursing facility regulations has been terminated and that the regulations were not approved. NHCA will keep members posted on any new developments in this process.

MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CHARGE FOR NON-WAIVER ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS

In response to an NHCA request, DHHS shared the 2020 Standard of Need for Medicaid-eligible individuals residing in assisted living facilities who are not eligible for the Medicaid Aged and Disabled Waiver program is \$1,225 per month. Because this amount includes the individual's \$64 per month Personal Needs Allowance, the maximum allowable amount the assisted living facility can charge these individuals is \$1,161 per month. This information has not yet been posted to the DHHS website but was shared directly with NHCA. The website currently reflects only the 2019 amounts, but when it is updated, the 2020 Standard of Need will be found in [Appendix 469-000-211](#).

PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

ICD-10-CM BROWSER TOOL

The CDC National Center for Health Statistics released an ICD-10-CM [Browser Tool](#) to assist with:

- Searching for ICD-10-CM codes
- Understanding how to use the codes
- Accessing multiple fiscal year version sets with comprehensive results

UPCOMING SENIOR HOUSING AND CARE SYMPOSIUM

The Nebraska Chapter of the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) will host a two-day symposium titled, The State of the Senior Care Industry: Operations, Reimbursement, and Care Coordination, Jan. 30 – 31, 2020, at the La Vista Conference Center. For more information, download the symposium flyer [here](#).

Nebraska Now is distributed regularly to all NNFA/NALA members for which we have email addresses.

Nebraska Nursing Facility Association and Nebraska Assisted Living Association are affiliates of Nebraska Health Care Association, American Health Care Association, and National Center for Assisted Living.

Contact NNFA/NALA at 402-435-3551 or nhca@nehca.org if you have questions, are unable to open the links, or have misplaced your password.

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www.nehca.org

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