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December 12, 2019

UPCOMING EDUCATION

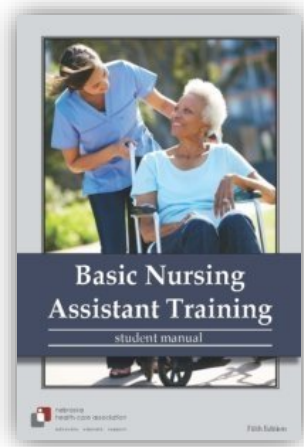
- [LPN IV Therapy and Basic Skills Courses – 12/17/19-12/18/19](#)
- [Webinar: Build and Implement Crucial PDPM Policies – 1/7/20](#)
- [LPN IV Therapy and Basic Skills Courses – 1/7/20-1/8/20](#)
- [NNFA/NALA Winter District Education – 1/20/20](#)
- [NNFA Administrator Preceptor Training – 1/23/20](#)
- [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](#)
- [Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Care Seminar – 3/3/20-3/4/20](#)

QUICK LINKS

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

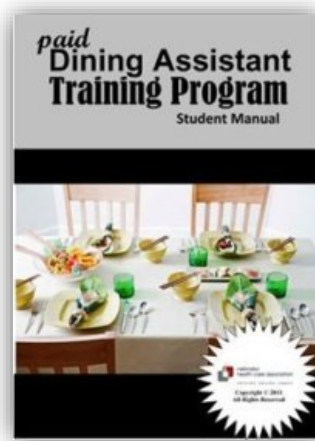


DECEMBER FEATURED PRODUCTS



[Basic Nursing Assistant Training Student Manual](#)

Member Price: \$49.99



[Paid Dining Assistant Training Student Manual](#)

Member Price: \$17.95

NNFA/NALA

RENEW YOUR 2020 NNFA/NALA MEMBERSHIP

As a member of the Nebraska Nursing Facility Association and/or the Nebraska Assisted Living Association, we welcome the opportunity to serve you again in 2020. Membership renewal forms were mailed on Nov. 18. Please let us know if you need an additional copy.

Facility membership is automatically renewed for a full calendar year unless terminated in writing by Dec. 15. Personal associate and student membership forms are due to the NHCA office by Jan. 1, 2020.

Business Associate Members interested in renewing their membership can contact NHCA at 402-435-3551 or marketing@nehca.org for more information.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

Chris Ulven, Administrator at Rose Blumkin Jewish Home, has been elected as the Nebraska Nursing Facility Association Omaha District Chair. Join us in congratulating Chris on his new position!

TEAM UPDATE

Maddie Hall joined the NHCA team on Dec. 2, 2019, as Marketing and Vendor Relations Coordinator. Maddie is a recent graduate of the University of Nebraska Omaha and an experienced event planner. She will work directly with NNFA/NALA Business Associate Members and help coordinate the spring and fall conventions and trade shows, as well as the annual Nebraska Health Care Foundation golf tournament.

"Maddie will be a tremendous asset to the team," said Heath Boddy, NHCA president and CEO. "Furthermore, her values and spirit reflect the organization's. We are excited for members to get to work with her."

SUPPORT THE NEBRASKA HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

While you are completing your holiday shopping this year, please keep the Nebraska Health Care Foundation (NHCF) in mind. Click [here](#) to select NHCF as your AmazonSmile charity to ensure that 0.5% of eligible purchases through AmazonSmile will support NHCF and the scholarships it provides for Nebraska's long-term care professionals.

Interested in making a direct contribution? Donate online [here](#).

WELCOME, ADMINISTRATORS

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

- Ann Smith — Columbus Community Hospital – Skilled Nursing Unit, Columbus
- Megan Kilonzo — Prairie View Assisted Living, Tilden
- Peggy Ratzlaff — Westfield Quality Care, Aurora
- Tara Konen — Good Samaritan Society – The Villa, Hastings

- Sara Bunting — Old Cheney Rehabilitation, Lincoln
- Tammy Coffey — Mahoney House, York

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

APPLY TO SPEAK AT THE 2020 ANNUAL SPRING CONVENTION IN KEARNEY

The Nebraska Nursing Facility Association, Nebraska Assisted Living Association, Nebraska Association of Home Health Agencies, and Licensed Practical Nurse Association are accepting presentation proposals for the Annual Spring Convention, April 27-29, 2020, in Kearney.

Submit the [call for presentations application](#) to Connie Knorr, Director of Professional Development, at ConnieK@nehca.org or fax to 402-475-6289. The deadline to submit a proposal is **Friday, Jan. 17, 2020**.

View the [application](#) for additional details and submission requirements or contact the NHCA office at 402-435-3551.

QUALITY

NEBRASKA CIVIL MONEY PENALTY GRANT APPLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

On Jan. 1, 2020, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC) in collaboration with the Division of Public Health and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will begin accepting project applications for the Nebraska Civil Money Penalty (CMP) Grant Program.

The Nebraska CMP Grant Program is funded through the collection of penalties imposed on certified nursing facilities due to certain facility deficiencies. The purpose of the program is to improve the quality of care and services for nursing facility residents.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

- Nebraska nursing facilities and their residents
- Professional/state nursing home associations/advocacy groups
- Consumer advocacy organizations
- Resident or family councils
- Nursing facility resident quality improvement organizations, private contractors, etc.

PROGRAM CRITERIA:

Grant applications are eligible for submission during the months of January and February of each year and are awarded on an annual basis to eligible entities for one-time or start-up projects.

The project must have a continuing and long-term benefit on the quality of life of residents in certified nursing facilities. The project must be practical and stimulate resident quality of care. A grant project may be continued; however, must do so without additional Civil Money Penalty (CMP) funding.

The minimum grant amount will be \$5,000. Annually, MLTC will award up to three CMP grant projects. Grant funds will be dispersed among the chosen grant projects (not to exceed \$50,000 in total).

PROJECTS MAY INCLUDE:

- Training and support for the State and local long-term health care ombudsman regarding resident-centered care
- Direct improvement to quality of resident care
- Resident or family councils
- Consumer education
- Transition preparation
- Non-routine staff training focusing on industry advancements specific to quality services

For additional information regarding the use of the CMP funds and the Nebraska CMP Grant Program, click [here](#).

AHCA SEEKS EXAMPLES OF UNREASONABLE ABUSE/NEGLECT CITATIONS

NHCA has heard from members, as well as other states, who are experiencing high-level survey citations for abuse in situations involving resident to resident incidents and being held responsible, even when the facility took all the correct actions.

As you are aware, these actions create disincentives to admit or continue to care for residents with difficult behavioral health issues and to self-report incidents. This approach by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is counter to all the evidence and best practices on how to address and mitigate adverse events and resident to resident interactions.

The American Health Care Association (AHCA) continues to raise these concerns with CMS and reports there is some receptiveness to the unintended consequences that may result from this punitive approach. AHCA is requesting help in collecting recent 2567s with citations of abuse and neglect, particularly those that show a resident to resident interaction or incident where a reasonable person would say there is no way a facility could prevent this from happening, where there was a single incident yet no evidence of a systemic issue, or where the facility took appropriately and timely action, yet was still cited (particularly at G or above).

Contact Cindy Kadavy at cindyk@nehca.org if your facility was recently cited for an incident meeting the above criteria. AHCA also reminds members of relevant resources available on [mitigating adverse events](#) and [resident to resident issues](#).

USING QAPI PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS TO AVOID HARM, RECOGNIZE IMPROVEMENTS

Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs) are focused improvement efforts in a problem area of a facility. PIPs are part of the Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) initiative from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Care teams conduct PIPs by using a team approach and trial interventions to solve a problem in their facility. Though it may seem like a daunting task, a PIP offers the opportunity to avoid harm and/or understand care improvements.

Click [here](#) to learn whether a PIP is necessary in your facility and how to implement a PIP.

REGULATIONS & REIMBURSEMENT

CMS REORGANIZATION DESIGNED TO IMPROVE CONSISTENCY BETWEEN REGIONS

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has announced a reorganization plan that will:

- Improve integration of regional office staff into policy development and implementation;
- Put similar activities together to make the work easier and more efficient;
- Help ensure CMS is consistent in how issues are handled across the country;
- Bring together all staff, regardless of location, who work on quality improvement and who survey facility quality and safety to ensure consistency; and
- Combine the regionally-based Medicare operations work, the local oversight of federally-facilitated exchange plans, and external affairs into a single office.

For additional information, see the [Federal Register Notice](#).

NEW STANDARD FOR HANDLING HAZARDOUS MEDICATION

Although it is not a federal or state regulation, the United States Pharmacopeia (USP) has created an industry standard related to the safe handling of hazardous drugs, entitled [USP<800>](#), which may impact practices in nursing and assisted living facilities.

USP is a nonprofit organization that works to improve global health by establishing standards in compounding, biologics, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and other fields.

Prior USP standards identified safe practice standards for compounding hazardous medications (e.g., warfarin), but USP<800> is designed to provide standards for safe handling of these medications, including drug administration, provision, and destruction.

The most likely health risk to long-term care facility staff would occur if drugs with hazardous ingredients are being crushed or split to assist residents with swallowing, as this practice could result in potential exposure, surface contamination, and medication errors.

According to a McKnight's [article](#) on USP<800>, a long-term care facility can address these concerns by conducting a risk assessment to determine if any medication administered or provided by staff are considered hazardous by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and taking steps to control exposure. NIOSH provides an updated [list of hazardous medication ingredients](#) on its website and guidelines on controlling exposure.

The [<800> HazRx Mobile App](#) is also available on the Apple App Store and Google Play. This application allows the user to enter the name of a medication to determine whether it contains hazardous ingredients.

At this point, USP<800> is informational only and intended to provide educational guidance for public health. USP is not an enforcement agency. It will be up to regulatory agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to determine whether to enforce compliance with USP<800> in the future.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION PROVIDING LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES ACCESS TO NATIONAL PRACTITIONER DATA BANK

To address worker recruitment and retention challenges facing long-term care facilities, Sens. Mark Warner (Virginia) and Tim Scott (South Carolina) recently introduced bipartisan legislation which would allow providers access to the National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) to better screen potential staff.

The NPDB is a database operated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that contains malpractice and history of behavior reports on health care professionals. Currently, long-term care facilities are not authorized to use the NPDB and must instead use less robust state-level criminal background checks.

The bill, titled the Ensuring Seniors Access to Quality Care Act, would also include amended regulations for in-house nursing assistant training in facilities found to have deficiencies. Learn more [here](#).

FOURTH QUARTER LTC STATISTICAL QUARTERLY REPORT DUE JAN. 24

The third quarterly Long-Term Care Bed Utilization and Occupancy report for 2019 is due Jan. 24, 2020, to the Nebraska DHHS Office of Health Statistics. Submit your statistics via email attachment as a Word document to Carla.Becker@nebraska.gov. Note that the first quarter report will be due April 24, 2020.

PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS CYBERSECURITY NEWSLETTER

The Office of Civil Rights recently released a [cybersecurity newsletter](#) that provides guidance on how the HIPAA Security Rule can help prevent, mitigate, and recover from ransomware attacks and safeguard electronic protected health information.

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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