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August 29, 2019

UPCOMING EDUCATION

- [Webinar: Phase 3: Trauma Informed and Culturally Competent Care – 9/3/19](#)
- [2019 NNFA/NALA Fall Convention, Lincoln – 9/23/19 – 9/25/19](#)
- [LPN IV Therapy and Basic Skills Course, Lincoln – 10/1/19 – 10/2/19](#)
- [Webinar: PDPM Triple Check Process and Billing Accuracy, Lincoln 10/1/19](#)
- [Life Safety Workshop, Lincoln – 10/8/19 – 10/9/19](#)
- [Bronze Quality Award Training, Lincoln – 10/22/19](#)
- [Silver Quality Award Training, Lincoln – 10/23/19 – 10/24/19](#)
- [Gold Quality Award Training, Lincoln – 10/29/19 – 10/30/19](#)
- [Structuring Your Restorative Nursing, Lincoln – 11/5/19](#)
- [Webinar: Skilled Nursing Supportive Documentation for PDPM – 11/5/19](#)

QUICK LINKS

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



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Member Price: \$8.00



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NNFA/NALA



2019 NHCA/NNFA/NALA MEMBERSHIP MEETING SEPT. 24

The 2019 NHCA/NNFA/NALA Membership Meeting will be Sept. 24, 2019, at 12:30 p.m. at The Cornhusker Marriott Hotel, 333 South 13th Street, in Lincoln.

To provide information in advance as well as conserve resources, handouts for the Membership Meeting are posted [here](#). The following elections will be held during the meeting:

NALA

NALA membership will be electing the following officers:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Candidate</u>
Chair	Mark Iverson
Vice Chair	Tracy Lichti
Secretary	Jeff Fritzen
Secretary	Linda Anderson
Treasurer	MaryLynne Bolden
Treasurer	Michelle Diaz
Director-at-Large Independent Owner	Shannon Buckminster
Director-at-Large Non-Profit	Sherri Due
Director-at-Large Multi-Provider	Gina Rankin
Director-at-Large Governmental	Amie Clausen

NNFA

There are no NNFA-specific elections being held at this meeting.

NHCA

NNFA/NALA membership will elect the 2020 Nebraska Health Care Association Chair. Nominees for this position are current NNFA Chair Shari Terry and the individual elected as the NALA Chair. The nominee for the NALA Chair is Mark Iverson.

Please review the [2019 NALA Candidate Guide](#) information as you will be requested to vote for one candidate for each of these board positions during the Membership Meeting. A designated representative from each member facility is requested to attend this meeting as a quorum is necessary so elections can be held. The Candidate Guide gives a summary of each person nominated as a candidate for the NALA Board Officers and the Directors-at-Large (for NALA members) and the candidates for the NHCA Chair position (both NNFA and NALA members).

If there has been a recent administrator change, please provide the NHCA office with written or

electronic notification of the administrator and/or alternate designated representative name and email address if you have not done so already.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register for the convention.

SAVE NOW! EARLY REGISTRATION FOR CONVENTION ENDS SEPT. 6

Early registration for the 2019 NNFA/NALA/NAHHA/LPNAN Fall Convention ends **Sept. 6**. Earn up to 18 credit hours while networking and celebrating with colleagues from across the state during the three-day event. Convention will take place at The Cornhusker Marriott Hotel Sept. 23-25.

Hear from speakers Susan Krall, Christine Berke, Rebecca Wester, Kevin Kush, and others to acquire a maximum of 18.5 continuing education hours. View the full list of education sessions and speakers on topics that are important to your profession, including regulatory updates, quality improvement, and clinical best practices [here](#).

NHCF GOLF TOURNAMENT: REGISTER, SPONSOR, DONATE

The Nebraska Health Care Foundation invites you to participate in the 2019 NHCF Golf Tournament. The golf tournament is the largest fundraiser for the Foundation, which has awarded more than \$70,000 in scholarships for long-term care in 2019.

Register now for the four-person scramble scheduled for Monday, Sept. 23, at Yankee Hill Golf Course in Lincoln. Along with a new location and later start time, attendees will enjoy lunch, a day of golf, a steak dinner, awards, and prizes. Sponsorships are available, and donations are being accepted for the raffle and silent auction.

Register to play, sponsor, donate, or volunteer [here](#) before **Monday, Sept. 9**.

NHCA SURVEY CONNECTION CANCELLED FOR SEPTEMBER, RESUMES FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

The Nebraska Health Care Association holds monthly Survey Connections for members via ZOOM the 4th Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m CT. Member participation has been increasing with over 100 members joining the August Connection. As next month's Survey Connection falls during Fall Convention, we are cancelling the September Connection and encouraging members to attend the Convention presentations by Connie Vogt, Manager of the Long-Term Care Licensure Unit. Connie is scheduled to speak on Wednesday, September 25th on "Guidance on Complex Nursing in Assisted Living" and "Abuse Reporting and Investigation Requirements." NHCA's Survey Connection will resume on Tuesday, October 22, 2019, with Tuesday, November 26, 2019 being the final Survey Connection for 2019. Beginning Tuesday, January 28, 2020, NHCA's Survey Connection will again be scheduled for the 4th Tuesday of each month at 10:00am CT.

WELCOME, ADMINISTRATORS

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

- Kristin Arrowsmith-Skiles, Administrator – Premier Estates of Pawnee, LLC, Pawnee City

- Stephanie Bunner, Executive Director – Arbor Care Centers--O'Neill, O'Neill
- Hannah Elliott, Executive Director – The Woodlands at Hillcrest, Lincoln
- Paula Fandry, Executive Director – WEL-Life at Papillion, Papillion
- Todd Milbrandt, Executive Director – The Waterford at Roxbury Park, Omaha
- Vail Oleson, CEO – Prestige Care Center of Nebraska City, Nebraska City
- Kassandra Shultz, Administrator – Good Samaritan Society--Grand Island Village, Grand Island
- Cheri Wingert, Executive Director – Wayne CountryView Care and Rehabilitation/CountryView Assisted Living, Wayne
- Gwen Jacobitz, Executive Director – Midwest Homestead of Kearney, Kearney

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

REGULATIONS & REIMBURSEMENT

NHCA COMMENTS ON PROPOSED MEDICAID REGULATIONS

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is proposing changes to a number of Medicaid regulations, including client eligibility, provider participation, nursing facility services, managed care, long-term care ombudsman program, home health services, nursing facility provider tax, and more.

The Nebraska Health Care Association has reviewed, and continues to analyze, the proposed changes. Verbal and written testimony on changes with the potential to impact members and the Nebraskans served has been offered. Thank you to the members who have also reviewed these proposed regulations and shared comments with NHCA and DHHS. Representatives of the Nebraska Legislature have been present to hear public comments at several of these regulatory hearings.

If you are interested in reviewing the proposed changes to regulations with upcoming hearings, click [here](#).

- **Monday, Sept. 23** – Medicaid Administration (471 NAC 1), Nursing Home Administrators (172 NAC 106) and Nursing Facility Provider Tax (405 NAC 2)
- **Wednesday, Sept. 25** – Medicaid Client Eligibility (477 NAC 20, 22 & 23)
- **Friday, Sept. 27** – Adult Protective Services (463 NAC 1) and Nursing Services (471 NAC 13)

If you are interested in NHCA's comments on the following proposed regulations, click on the following links.

- [Title 471 NAC 12 Nursing Facility Services](#)
- [NHCA Legal Counsel Comments on Title 471 NAC 12](#)
- [Title 471 NAC 9 Home Health Services](#)
- [Title 482 Medicaid Managed Care](#)
- [Title 15 NAC 6 Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](#)
- [Title 471 NAC 2 Medicaid Provider Participation](#)

FORBES ARTICLE ON THREE-DAY STAY RULE

Forbes released an article entitled, "[Are We Nearing The End Of Medicare's Three-Day Rule That Makes Patients Pay For Skilled Nursing Care?](#)" Senior Contributor Howard Gleckman focused on the Aug. 4 tweet from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Administrator Seema Verma, in which she noted, "#Medicare beneficiary who requires skilled care in a nursing home? Better be admitted for at least three days in the hospital first if you want the nursing home paid for. Gov't doesn't always make sense. We're listening to feedback." For more information about observation stays and the three-day stay requirement, [please visit the AHCA/NCAL website](#).

NEW MEDICARE PART D PLAN FINDER UPDATE

Medicare has updated the Part D Plan Finder tool on its website to increase functionality for consumers. Click [here](#) for more information. Part D Open Enrollment begins Oct. 15, 2019, and ends Dec. 7, 2019.

ANNUAL OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR MEDICAID MANAGED CARE

Annual Open Enrollment for Heritage Health, Medicaid's managed care program is fast approaching. Heritage Health members who wish to switch to a different health plan have an opportunity to make this change from **Nov. 1- Dec. 15, 2019**. Heritage Health members who do not take any action will remain with their existing Heritage Health plan.

In the next few weeks, all Medicaid clients should receive their Notice of Annual Enrollment letter in either [English](#) or [Spanish](#). This initial mailing to Heritage Health members alerts them to the annual open enrollment period and tells them to watch for additional information that will be sent to them beginning the first week of September.

Open Enrollment information that can be shared with residents and family members:

- [Open Enrollment General Information – English](#)
- [Open Enrollment General Information – Spanish](#)
- [Open Enrollment Important Dates – English](#)
- [Open Enrollment Important Dates – Spanish](#)

Additional resources to assist in answering Heritage Health members' inquiries and where to refer them for assistance can be found on the Heritage Health [website](#).

CMS PROPOSES LENGTHENING TIME BETWEEN SURVEYS FOR TOP-PERFORMING NURSING FACILITIES

In April 2019, Seema Verma, Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced the development of a five-part approach to help ensure safety and quality in America's nursing facilities. The plan consists of the following components:

1. Strengthen oversight
2. Enhance enforcement
3. Increase transparency
4. Improve quality

5. Put patients over paperwork

Click [here](#) for more information on the steps CMS is taking related to Part 1: Strengthen Oversight, including CMS's request to Congress for the authority to transition to a risk-based survey model for nursing facilities that would target low-performing nursing facilities with more frequent surveys. The proposal seeks to survey top-performing facilities every 30 months, with no more than 36 months between surveys of any single facility. The cost savings would be invested in strengthening CMS's oversight and quality improvement efforts for facilities that are low performers. CMS would continue to inspect facilities in response to complaints.

PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

NEW LONG-TERM CARE TREND TRACKER PUBLICATION: YOUR RESIDENT PROFILE

LTC Trend Tracker recently published "Your Resident Profile." This publication is a summary of your resident population based on diagnoses and special care needs. Data are provided for 2017 and 2018, so trends can be compared across years. This information will help determine what resources and direct care staff are needed to take care of your residents in both day-to-day operations and emergencies. [Read More](#)

WEBINAR ON INFECTION PREVENTION IN LONG-TERM CARE ON SEPT. 17

The U.S. Center for Disease Control is offering a [webinar](#), Identifying Barriers in Infection Prevention in Long-Term Care, on Sept. 17, 2019, at 12:00 p.m. CT, featuring Morgan Katz, Assistant Professor of Infectious Diseases at John Hopkins Hospital. Dr. Katz specializes in infectious diseases with a research focus on infection control and antibiotic stewardship in long-term care. She has research support from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to implement antibiotic stewardship in nursing facilities using a comprehensive safety-based approach that includes front-line staff. [Read More](#)

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE ON EFFORTS TO INCREASE SALES TAXES AND REMOVE TAX EXEMPTIONS

Gov. Pete Ricketts released his [message](#) this week regarding proposed legislative and ballot initiative efforts to increase sales taxes and/or remove tax exemptions as an approach to provide additional property tax relief. This message may be of interest to NHCA's members who could be impacted by changes to current tax exemptions.

NEW WELLCARE PROVIDER MANUAL

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services has posted WellCare's new [Provider Manual](#) on its website. WellCare is one of Nebraska's three Heritage Health managed care plans.

NEW DHHS 2019-20 BUSINESS PLAN ANNOUNCED

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services has released its [2019-20 Business Plan](#), which identifies 15 priority initiatives designed around the following goals:

1. Create an integrated service delivery system
2. Establish and enhance collaborative relationships
3. Align DHHS teammates under their mission of Helping People Live Better Lives
4. Enhance the Department's internal infrastructure to provide more effective, efficient, customer-focused services to Nebraskans

The identified initiatives include changing the nursing facility level of care criteria and implementing a new Medicaid nursing facility payment methodology on July 1, 2020. The initiative also seeks to move the methodology out of regulations, allowing future changes at will.

ROBOTS ASSIST WITH ELDER CARE

Robots powered by artificial intelligence are now showing up in assisted living facilities, according to Time.com. These robots "can do everything from keeping the elderly company to reminding them to take their medication at the right time." Watch the [video](#) to hear Stevie the robot sing, "These Boots are Made for Walking" and call bingo.

SKILLED NURSING FACILITY QRP PREVIEW REPORTS NOW AVAILABLE

Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Quality Reporting Program (QRP) Provider Preview Reports are now available. This is an opportunity to review performance data before Sept. 16, prior to its public release on Nursing Home Compare in October. CMS does not allow corrections to the underlying data to be made during this time; however, if a provider believes the data is inaccurate, a CMS review can be requested. For more information, click [here](#).

PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR MULTIDRUG-RESISTANT ORGANISMS AND C-DIFF FROM HEALTHCAP

Twenty percent of individuals admitted to long-term care acquire C. difficile during their stay, according to the Center for Disease Control's Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion. Preventing the spread of multi-drug resistant organisms poses an ongoing challenge for providers. HealthCap has created a one-page resource containing easy-to-understand prevention strategies for multidrug-resistant organisms and C. difficile. The infographic provides useful reminders for the common preventative measures known to reduce the spread of these infections. [Read More](#)

CENTENE AND AETNA PROTEST LOSS OF LOUISIANA MANAGED CARE CONTRACT

Centene and Aetna, two of Louisiana's five existing Medicaid managed care organizations, filed protests against Louisiana's decision not to select the companies for the new Medicaid managed care contracts set to go into effect Jan. 1, 2020. According to [The Advocate](#), these contracts are worth billions of dollars.

NEW YORK OVERPAID MEDICAID MANAGED CARE PLANS BY MORE THAN \$100 MILLION

An audit by Office of State Controller determined that New York overpaid Medicaid managed care plans by \$102.1 million between 2014 and 2018. According to the [New York Post](#), the error involved duplicated payments for nearly 66,000 members with multiple identification numbers.

GAIN EDGE IN THE MARKETPLACE WITH GERO NURSE PREP COURSE

[AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep](#) is designed to prepare registered nurses (RNs) to take the [American Nurses Credentialing Center](#) (ANCC) board certification exam in gerontological nursing. RNs who complete the Gero Nurse Prep program have a passing rate of 96 percent on the ANCC exam on their first try and receive 30 CEUs.

Research conducted by AHCA/NCAL in 2019 shows that nursing facilities with ANCC Board certified RNs have:

- Significantly higher average SNF Value Based Purchasing (VBP) scores (44.17 versus 34.42 for the nation). Higher SNF VBP Score = Higher Medicare Part A reimbursement rates
- Two fewer deficiencies on average (5.71 citations versus the 7.55 national average in last cycle)
- Fewer Immediate Jeopardy (IJ) citations (1.60 versus the 2.27 national average)
- More stars - nearly twice as likely to be a CMS five-Star facility (50 percent versus 28 percent national average)
- Significantly lower re-hospitalization rates over the last six years
- Significantly lower rates of off-label use of antipsychotics over the last five years

ANCC is the world's largest and most prestigious nurse credentialing organization and a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association. Less than one percent of America's RNs are board certified in gerontological nursing. Having an ANCC Board certified RN can easily give providers an edge in the marketplace.

Watch this [video](#) to learn more about AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep. Get an edge in your local market. Check out [AHCA/NCAL Gero Nurse Prep](#) today.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT NEWS

LATEST ISSUE OF NFP NEWS AVAILABLE

The latest version of AHCA/NCAL's *NFP News*, a monthly newsletter for not-for-profit providers, is [now available](#).

PDPM

“ONE-TIME” TRANSITIONAL POLICIES WEBINAR SEPT. 17

AHCA is offering a 90-minute live webinar Sept. 17 at 2:00 p.m. CT to discuss details related to unique challenges providers will face during the SNF Prospective Payment System (PPS) transition period from the RUG-IV to PDPM. Many of these challenges are related to "one-time" transitional policies for residents receiving Part A services under RUGs in September and transitioning to PDPM on Oct. 1. Specific topics to be discussed include:

1. Handling RUG-IV assessments and billing for late September admissions expected to extend into October

2. Use of the 5-Day PDPM assessment versus the Transitional IPA Assessment during week one in October
3. Interrupted stay policy during week one in October
4. Assessment considerations for payers that may have continued with RUG-III or RUG-IV payment models (i.e. Medicaid, Medicare Advantage, VA)
5. Strategies to troubleshoot and resolve payment challenges should they occur

Presenters are AHCA's Senior Vice President, Reimbursement Policy, Mike Cheek, and Dan Ciolek, Associate Vice President, Therapy Advocacy.

Register for the webinar [here](#).

PDPM AND MEDICARE ADVANTAGE TOOLKIT

Based on member feedback, AHCA has added three new resources to the [PDPM and Medicare Advantage Toolkit](#) that providers can use to help prepare for discussions with Medicare Advantage (MA) plans prior to Oct. 1 to help assure a seamless transition as the SNF Prospective Payment System (PPS) transitions to Patient Driven Payment Model (PDPM). Because SNF providers contract directly with Medical Advantage plans, it is essential that both parties understand any changes in resident assessment and claims processing that may be necessary to assure that beneficiary access and provider cash flow are not interrupted. Additionally, contract terms should be reviewed and updated if necessary. The toolkit includes:

- For Providers - PDPM Impact on Medicare Advantage
- Sample PDPM Survey for Medicare Advantage Health Plans
- PDPM in Medicare Advantage Contracts Readiness Checklist
- PDPM Impact on Medicare Advantage Webinar

NEW PDPM BASICS FOR AHCA PROVIDER AND ASSOCIATE BUSINESS MEMBERS WEBINAR

Members have asked AHCA to update the PDPM Basics webinar to include updates announced by CMS since January as well as highlight the importance of collaborating with care delivery partners including hospitals, physicians, and vendors, including therapy contractors and pharmacies. This 40-minute webinar is designed for introductory in-services and individual learning for those with limited knowledge about PDPM. The webinar discusses the basic design of the PDPM payment model as well as discusses changes in operations and clinical processes that will be occurring with the introduction of the PDPM payment model. After viewing the webinar, the participant will understand:

1. Key features of the new Medicare Part A Skilled Nursing Facility Prospective Payment System (SNF PPS) Patient-Driven Payment Model (PDPM) case-mix payment model that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will be implementing on October 1, 2019
2. How and why PDPM will require SNFs to transform their operational and clinical processes in order to be successful in achieving optimal resident care outcomes in a financially viable manner
3. How and why it is critical for SNFs to consider "Win-Win" approaches when approaching care delivery partners to improve communications and service delivery

Click [here](#) to register for the webinar.

CMS TWO-DAY QUALITY REPORTING PROGRAM TRAINING RESOURCES

On Aug. 13-14, 2019, CMS conducted a two-day train-the-trainer session on the Oct. 1, 2019, updates to the Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Quality Reporting Program (QRP). This includes minor updates to the May 7-8, 2019, training. Examples of agenda items directly relevant to PDPM include: discussions on how to properly code Section GG of the MDS, Changes in Sections A, I, J, and O of the MDS, PDPM: What is changing and what is not, and Integrated Coding and PDPM Case Study. This [link](#) includes all available CMS agenda, slides, and video resources related to these training dates.

PDPM BASICS AND IMPACTS ON EXTERNAL CARE DELIVERY PARTNERS – WEBINAR RESOURCES

Because CMS has provided limited to no guidance to SNF care delivery partners impacted by the PDPM implementation on Oct. 1, AHCA has created a webinar about PDPM to share with referring hospitals, physicians, Medicare Advantage plans, Accountable Care Organizations, and Bundled Payment program partners. To help facilitate AHCA member discussions with care delivery partners about PDPM, a one-page document that includes links to five pre-recorded webinars and slides that are intended to be viewed by SNF care delivery partners to get a better understanding about what PDPM is and how PDPM may impact their relationships with SNF providers is also available. No password is necessary to access this content.

Each recording is identical except for the third item that includes content that is customized to the specific type of SNF care delivery partner. AHCA members are encouraged to open a dialogue with their care delivery partners as part of their PDPM transition preparations. SNFs are encouraged to share the respective links below with these partners as a supplement to your discussions.

Each webinar recording (approximately 30 minutes each) contains the following:

- An overview of the PDPM payment model
- Key clinical characteristics impacting PDPM
- Specific PDPM considerations for SNF partners, and (each recording has partner-specific content)
- Where SNF care delivery partners can go for more information

Register for the webinar [here](#).

BE PDPM READY – GET TRAINED ON ICD-10 CODING NOW

The Oct. 1 PDPM implementation date is rapidly approaching. Training key staff now to be ICD-10 proficient is critical. Inaccurate ICD-10 coding can negatively impact a facility's bottom line and resident care. Because staff coding responsibilities differ, two separate on-line trainings are available.

ICD-10 for Coders is an in-depth course designed for SNF billing staff, MDS staff, nursing and therapy staff, and admissions and discharge staff. The cost is \$499 for AHCA members and \$599 for non-members.

ICD-10 for Non-Coders is a four-hour course developed for non-coders who need to lead a successful PDPM transition and is intended for administrators, director of nursing, and other management staff. The cost is \$199 for AHCA members and \$249 for non-members.

To learn more or register for either on-line training, please visit the websites below.

- ICD-10 for Coders: ahcancal.org/icd10pdpmcoder
- ICD-10 for Non-Coders: ahcancal.org/icd10pdpmnoncoder

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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