



## **Second Quarter 2013 Accomplishments**

### **Advocacy/Policy**

- NCAL stepped up advocacy efforts aimed at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS') proposed rules defining Medicaid home- and community-based services (HCBS) settings. As CMS began moving the rules through final clearance within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, NCAL continued reaching out to CMS and other HHS staff, members of Congress, and groups such as those representing state Medicaid programs. During the June AHCA/NCAL Congressional Briefing, NCAL members asked their federally elected representatives to send letters to CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner expressing concern that several elements of the most recent proposed rule could threaten Medicaid coverage for thousands of assisted living residents.
- Working with the CMS' Division of Durable Medical Equipment Competitive Bidding, NCAL helped its members navigate the agency's new program to have Medicare beneficiaries buy diabetes testing supplies through selected national mail order suppliers, effective on July 1. At NCAL's request, CMS officials provided background information and answers to member questions. NCAL strongly urged CMS to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries living in assisted living communities are able to purchase safety lancets through the national mail order program. Safety lancets are required under U.S. Occupational Safety & Health Administration standards when workers help assisted living residents test their blood sugar levels. About one-fifth of assisted living residents have diabetes.
- Staff briefed the newly hired staff director of the congressionally-mandated Long Term Care Commission about the growing role that assisted living plays in the long term care sector. Although assisted living has emerged as a major long term care option and is an industry generating more than \$30 billion in annual revenues, most of the spending on assisted living does not show up in government data bases, because the majority of assisted living care is paid for by individuals or their families rather than government programs such as Medicaid and Medicare. Issues before the commission include finding ways to increase private financing for long term services and supports and examining the role that Medicaid plays in providing these services.

- As it began updating a federal report on assisted living regulation and Medicaid policy last published in 2007, researchers at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) consulted with NCAL staff about what to include in the report and how to gain access to state regulatory and Medicaid officials.
- More than 400 long term and post-acute care professionals held Capitol Hill meetings with their Members of Congress to discuss priority legislative issues for the profession at the annual Congressional Briefing held June 3 and June 4. During the two day meeting, attendees heard from key industry leaders and Members of Congress such as House Leader Nancy Pelosi, Congressman Joe Courtney, Majority Whip Rep. Kevin McCarthy, and this year's keynote speaker, investigative journalist Bob Woodward.
- In partnership with The Advisory Board, NCAL and AHCA hosted a webinar on accountable care organizations (ACO) titled, "Partnership Strategies for Post-Acute Care Providers." The webinar discussed 15 tactics that assisted living providers could use in developing partnership strategies with ACOs and other provider organizations. Some of the tactics discussed included easing care transitions, collaborating on quality, and migrating toward shared accountability.

## Quality

- Staff worked with outside legal counsel, Reed Smith to finalize a contract with the New Jersey Hospital Association's Patient Safety Organization (NJHA PSO), which will be signed in July.
- NCAL staff met with NJHA PSO to define numerators, denominators, inclusions, and exclusions for the Tier II Clinical Performance Measures.
- In conjunction with the American Assisted Living Nurses Association (AALNA), NCAL held the "Caring Together" quarterly conference call for assisted living nurses on improving staff stability.
- A new resource, *Getting Started Checklist*, was developed to assist members on how to start participating in the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative for Assisted Living.
- The AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative one-pager was updated with the new logos and posted on the website.
- NCAL submitted feedback in response to a Request for Information from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) on a possible future study on fall injury prevention in non-institutionalized older adults.

- A team of assisted living experts determined that it was not necessary to create new Assisted Living criteria at the Silver level for the AHCA/NCAL Quality Awards. The group did, however, make changes to the wording of a few criteria and added information to the notes section, to help assisted living facilities applying for the Silver.
- NCAL hosted a webinar on May 23, titled, “Safely Reducing the Off-Label Use of Antipsychotics” as part of the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative for assisted living. NCAL’s Quality Committee Chair Helen Crunk, RN, Anna Fisher, PhD, and Sanjay Singh, MD, chairman of the neurology department at Creighton University School of Medicine were the panelists discussing how to safely reduce the use of off-label antipsychotics for residents with dementia.

## **Workforce**

- The Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey (VRT) opened in February and closed May 17, 2013. NCAL collected 577 responses which is an increase of more than 200 responses compared to 2012. This year in addition to a downloadable survey, the VRT was available online via Survey Monkey. The VRT survey was promoted in *NCAL Connections* and *Focus* in addition to a member mailing. Progress reports on the number of VRT surveys received by state were sent out to the State Affiliates, NCAL Board, and NCAL Committees.
- NCAL received a total of 91 nominations for the NCAL Awards from 22 states, including: 18 for NCAL Administrator of the Year, 18 for NCAL Assisted Living Nurse of the Year, 43 for NCAL Noble Caregiver in Assisted Living, and 12 for Best Programming for National Assisted Living Week. Winners were announced on June 19 and are as follows:

### **NCAL Administrator of the Year**

**Julie Taylor**

Gilman Park Assisted Living  
Oregon City, Ore.

### **NCAL Assisted Living Nurse of the Year**

**Cheryl Hopkins**

Vintage Park at Paola  
Paola, Kan.

### **NCAL Noble Caregiver in Assisted Living**

**Robin Moran**

The Chelsea at Tinton Falls  
Tinton Falls, N.J.

## **Best Programming for National Assisted Living Week**

*For the 2012 Theme: Art of the Ages*

**Kim Pitsenbarger, Allison Gatliff, Melissa LaFave & Lany Puckett**

Summer's Landing of Warner Robins

Warner Robins, Ga.

### **Customer Relations**

- The second online art gallery featuring member residents' artworks and crafts (*Art for the Ages II*) was a huge success. There were 125 resident works from 40 member communities featured in the exhibit that can be viewed on NCAL's website, and the social media sites, Pinterest and Flickr. The number of submissions was significantly greater than last year's first *Art for the Ages* exhibit.
- Members conducted resident focus groups asking the residents for their advice on moving into an assisted living community. The responses are being used in a video tape series that is going to be created and posted on NCAL's website.

### **Membership**

- At the end of the second quarter, NCAL member beds stood at 154,382; an increase of 9,424 beds since the beginning of the year, adding 3,741 beds in the second quarter alone. The goal for 2013 was 3 percent, and that goal has been surpassed with growth at 6.5 percent since the beginning of the year. NCAL expects this growth to continue.
- The Planning Guide and Product Catalog for the 2013 National Assisted Living Week® was completed in second quarter and sent to all members as well as non-members. A media kit, the logo and more is available for download at [www.nalw.org](http://www.nalw.org). The event will take place September 8 – 14, 2013 and will feature the theme "Homemade Happiness." Visit NALW.org periodically as the event approaches for additional information. If you have any questions or have difficulty downloading the logo, please contact Katherine Preede at [kpreede@ncal.org](mailto:kpreede@ncal.org).
- NCAL unveiled its re-designed website, [www.NCAL.org](http://www.NCAL.org). Featuring a refreshed look that supports our new branding colors and logo, this interactive website contains useable content for a variety of constituency groups such as State Affiliates, member communities, residents, family members, policymakers, the media and vendors. The new website has a streamlined look and simple layout to help users easily find the materials, resources and tools.

- A new video was produced about NCAL highlighting the journey of assisted living and how the profession keeps is dedicated to person-centered care and choice.
- In the second quarter, NCAL staff presented at conferences in New York, Oklahoma, Maryland, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Minnesota.
- The date and location of NCAL’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Conference have been chosen for 2014. The event will take place March 10-12, 2014 at Caesars’s Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada.

## Governance

- NCAL closed its call for candidates on June 14 for the NCAL Board of Directors 2013-2014 term. Candidates are needed for three officer positions—Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer—and seven At-Large Representatives. Elections will be held at the AHCA/NCAL 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention & Expo in October. The slate of candidates will be announced by early August.

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