



First Quarter 2014 Accomplishments

Advocacy/Policy

- In January, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published its final rule defining on home- and community-based settings for Medicaid waiver programs. NCAL and its members have fought for the last few years to ensure that assisted living remains a viable option for seniors who rely on Medicaid. The final rule positively addressed virtually of NCAL's concerns with earlier proposed versions of the rule.

Under the final rule, Medicaid programs will support home and community-based settings that serve as an alternative to institutional care and that take into account the quality of individuals' experiences. The final rule includes a transitional period for states to ensure that their programs meet the home and community-based services settings requirements.

Soon after the rule was published, AHCA/NCAL hosted a webinar, "Preliminary Analysis of HCBS Final Rule," which explained the scope of the rule and the provisions that apply to assisted living centers.

In March, NCAL informed members about a toolkit that CMS created for states to use in their process of developing 1915 (c) and 1915 (i) waiver plan amendments and renewal applications. CMS is working on future guidance for states to use when implementing the rule. NCAL is monitoring developments and has been meeting with CMS officials. NCAL will continue to inform members of developments. Visit www.Medicaid.gov/HCBS for more information about the rule.

- NCAL informed members that the Administration delayed the Affordable Care Act's Employer Mandate for employers with 50 to 99 employees. The Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service released regulations that included this delay to the health insurance law.

- NCAL informed members that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will examine hospice services in assisted living as part of the OIG's 2014 work plan.
- A new webinar was developed titled. "Evacuate or Defend in Place?" The 60-minute webinar explained Life Safety Code requirements for assisted living communities and reviewed critical fire safety decisions for determining whether to evacuate or defend in place. Eric Rosenbaum of Hughes Associates discussed key concepts such as evacuation capability, self-preservation, and how to work with local code officials.

Quality

- The National Patient Safety Organization, a collaboration between NCAL and the New Jersey Hospital Association's Patient Safety Organization, officially opened the innovative program in January and NCAL members began submitting data on clinical outcomes and process measures. The use of a PSO for assisted living communities nationally is a landmark moment for the profession.
- NCAL's Professional Development Workgroup developed and implemented an assisted living education track for the 2014 AHCA/NCAL Quality Symposium. A four-hour Symposium Intensive was held on the rising acuity of residents in assisted living. Education sessions were conducted on Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) for assisted living, the National Patient Safety Organization for Assisted Living, and basic quality improvement for assisted living.
- NCAL opened the 2014 NCAL Quality Initiative Recognition Program to recognize members who meet one or more of the four Quality Initiative goals.

Workforce

- NCAL published results from its "2012 Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey," which found that the average rate of staff turnover in assisted living communities across the nation was 30.2 percent in 2012.
- NCAL opened the 2013 Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey (VRT) in March. To promote participation in the VRT survey, a member mailing was conducted and stories were published in *NCAL Connections* and *Focus*. Progress reports containing the number of VRT surveys received by state were sent out to the State Affiliates, the NCAL Board, and NCAL's Committees.
- NCAL developed a new guide providing step-by-step explanations about completing the VRT survey.

- In conjunction with the American Assisted Living Nurses Association, NCAL hosted the first quarterly “Caring Together” conference call for 2014. The topic of the call was rising acuity in assisted living. The “Caring Together” calls are held quarterly and are tailored to assisted living nurses.
- The NCAL Awards Program opened in February and is accepting nominations until May 9, 2014. This year, nomination applications can be submitted online. To encourage more applications for the NCAL Awards Program, a member mailing was conducted, a full-page ad was featured in *Provider* magazine, and stories were published in *NCAL Focus* and *Connections*.

Membership

- At the end of first quarter, NCAL membership stood at 161,040 member beds, an increase of 2,248 beds or 1.4 percent. NCAL is well on its way to meeting its 4 percent growth goal for 2014.
- On Feb. 19, NCAL held its fourth Assisted Living In-House General Counsel Roundtable, which took place in conjunction with the American Health Lawyers Association’s Long Term Care and the Law Conference. The Roundtable featured Dave Kylo, NCAL executive director, and Katherine Preede, NCAL membership director, providing crisis communications training. In addition, Tom O’Toole, a jury consultant expert, discussed the importance of jury selection and how juries typically view assisted living and senior care. The more than 30 in-house general counsels who participated represented assisted living companies from across the nation.
- The third annual NCAL Spring Conference, “The Future is Now,” was held March 10 -12 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The conference featured in-depth educational sessions, engaging keynote speakers, and offered several networking events for assisted living providers. More than 150 individuals attended and 13 companies sponsored the event – exceeding NCAL’s 2013 attendance and sponsorship levels. The 2015 Spring Conference will be held in Fort Lauderdale.
- The theme “The Magic of Music” and the logo were announced for the 2014 National Assisted Living Week[®]. The logo can be downloaded in black and white, and color from www.nalw.org. The event will take place Sept. 7 – 13, 2014. Design of the National Assisted Living Week Planning Guide and Product Catalog has begun and will be available in early June.
- The NCAL State Leader program held its first conference call. NCAL Business Development Committee Chair Rod Wolfe discussed the program’s plan for the year. Rod also oversees the NCAL State Leader program. State Leaders received the book, “Leadership & Self-Deception” which will become the basis of leadership training discussions this summer. The in-person training for State Leaders will be held Monday, June 23 to Wednesday, June 25 in Washington, D.C.

- In the first quarter, NCAL staff presented at state affiliate conferences in Colorado, Georgia, Michigan, and Pennsylvania.

Customer Relations

- The third *Faces of Assisted Living* album was unveiled on NCAL’s website. Member communities submitted more than 100 photos of their residents. The album is filled with photos of residents participating in activities such as riding a zip line, attending boxing matches, riding in a horse drawn carriage, displaying art work, participating in a beauty pageant, playing music, exercising, and enjoying each other’s company. To view the album, visit www.NCAL.org and click on, *Faces of Assisted Living* photo box at the top of the page.

Governance

- NCAL opened its election season for the NCAL Board of Directors 2014-2015 term with a call for candidates. Members in good standing interested in becoming a candidate for an open position on the Board of Directors must submit completed candidate applications by June 2, 2014. Candidates are needed for three officer positions—Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer—and seven At-Large Representatives. Candidate materials must be submitted by email to Dave Kylo at dkyllo@ncal.org or Martece Yates at myates@ncal.org. Elections will be held this October at the AHCA/NCAL 65^h Annual Convention & Expo in Washington, D.C.

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