



## Highlighting ACE Updates, Best Practices, Resources, Tools, and Upcoming Events

### ACE Updates

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#### **ACE Quarterly Data Reports**

All ACE facilities will receive two copies of their most recent ACE Quarterly Data Report in the mail in late December/early January. Please let us know if we can help you use this data to identify potential areas for improvement in your quality program. Remember, data drives quality improvement. Your report contains QAPI tools and resources to assist you in this activity. If you do not receive your copy, please let us know at [scace@thecarolinascenter.org](mailto:scace@thecarolinascenter.org).

#### **Announcing a New ACE Initiative and New Additions to the ACE Newsletter for 2017**

Starting January 2017, ACE will launch the new ***Reach for the Stars Initiative***. This initiative will focus on assisting ACE One and Two Star nursing homes in further strengthening their implementation of a comprehensive Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) program in their facilities. The overall goal is to facilitate nursing homes in improving their star rating while providing quality, resident-centered care, and remain a viable post-acute care partner to hospitals and ACOs in their community.

The monthly ACE e-newsletter will include two new sections. The first is "**We are QAPI.**" This section will include information and resources focused on quality assurance and performance improvement (QAPI) in the nursing home setting. The second section is "**Reach for the Stars**" and will include tips, best practices from the CMS Change Package, and other reports of success from local and national nursing homes that are improving quality of life and care for residents.

#### **What is NHSN? And what about the CDI/NHSN Pilot?**

*The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) is the nation's most widely used healthcare-associated infection tracking system. NHSN provides facilities, states, regions, and the nation with data needed **to identify problem areas, measure progress of prevention efforts, and ultimately eliminate healthcare-associated infections (HAI)**. In addition, NHSN allows healthcare facilities to*

*track blood safety errors and important healthcare process measures such as healthcare personnel influenza vaccine status and infection control adherence rates.* (From the CDC NHSN Website)

Much of the current data related to *Clostridium difficile* infections comes from hospitals and laboratories. Prior to the pilot, nursing homes were not entering data in NHSN, leaving the scope of the problem incomplete. That's about to change as volunteer nursing homes nationwide are now entering their own laboratory identified cases and CDI cases being treated on admission into NHSN. Missing pieces of the HAI puzzle will fall into place as data accumulates over the next several months.

Great News —13 of our South Carolina pilot homes have started entering CDI data into NHSN! Several others are in various stages of getting authorization and setting up their facility in the website.

Once facilities are set up, the actual monthly reporting takes only about five minutes. The overall outcome means that for the first time, nursing home data will round out the national picture of CDI prevalence and target reduction efforts more specifically. It is exciting to know that our SC homes are contributing in a big way to the identification of trends in CDI and help focus the right intervention and prevention efforts. A big thank you goes out to all of our participating homes!

### **CDI Prevention Tip**

([https://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff\\_infect.html](https://www.cdc.gov/HAI/organisms/cdiff/Cdiff_infect.html))

- Improve prescribing of antibiotics.
- Use best tests for accurate results to prevent spread.
- Rapidly identify and isolate patients with *C. difficile*.
- Wear gloves and gowns when treating patients with *C. difficile*. Remember that hand sanitizer doesn't kill *C. difficile*.
- Clean room surfaces with EPA-approved, spore-killing disinfectant (such as bleach), where *C. difficile* patients are treated.

## **ACE Best Practices**

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### **It's Flu Season**

National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) is planned for December 4-10, 2016 to highlight the importance of flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond. Visit the CDC's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/index.htm> to find tools and materials to help your facility promote vaccination during the holiday season.

The CDC notes that "while seasonal flu outbreaks can happen as early as October, flu activity is usually highest between December and February, though activity can last as late as May. As long as flu activity is ongoing, it's not too late to get vaccinated, even in January or later. With flu activity increasing and family and friends planning gatherings for the holidays, now is a great time to get a flu vaccine if you haven't been vaccinated yet this season. A flu vaccine can protect you and your loved ones from the flu."

## The ICAR (Infection Control and Response) Project

The CDC has awarded funding to the South Carolina Department of Environmental Health and Control (and public health departments in all 50 states) to build and strengthen epidemiology, laboratory and health information systems capacity. The goal of the three-year project, called Infection Control and Response (ICAR), is to bolster infection control practice and competency throughout all types of South Carolina health care facilities (long-term care, acute care, outpatient and dialysis).

*How can this FREE program assist your facility?*

- Onsite infection prevention expert to evaluate your program
- Comprehensive site visit summary with identified gaps. (All data submitted to the CDC is anonymous.)
- Infection prevention tools to enhance your infection prevention program
- Connects your facility with a direct resource for future questions or concerns
- CDC assessment tool with CMS updates

Review the assessment tool here: <https://www.cdc.gov/hai/prevent/infection-control-assessment-tools.html>

Assessments will be conducted throughout 2017.

To schedule a **no-cost** infection prevention assessment for your facility or to ask questions, please contact:

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## CMS Updates

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### **CMS Revisions to the Long-Term Care Facilities Requirements of Participation have started Phase 1 of Implementation.**

You may be aware that the requirements of participation for LTC Facilities were finalized on September 28, 2016. These revised requirements became effective on November 28, 2016 with the first of three phases being implemented on that date. Please refer to the final rule (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/10/04/2016-23503/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-reform-of-requirements-for-long-term-care-facilities>) for the federal health and safety standards requirements.

CMS has made available a recorded webinar for mandatory state surveyors' training ([http://surveyortraining.cms.hhs.gov/pubs/ClassInformation.aspx?cid=OCMS\\_P1INNHR\\_PROVIDER](http://surveyortraining.cms.hhs.gov/pubs/ClassInformation.aspx?cid=OCMS_P1INNHR_PROVIDER)). This webinar highlights the new language included in the New Nursing Home Regulations, and how Phase 1 will be implemented via the State Operations Manual, F-Tags, and survey process. This training prepares surveyors to implement Phase 1 requirements.

On November 9, 2016, CMS released memo S & C 17-07-NH which included an Advance Copy - Revisions to State Operations Manual (SOM), Appendix PP-Revised Regulations and Tags (<https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Downloads/Survey-and-Cert-Letter-17-07.pdf>).

## Upcoming Events

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### **The Best Practice Lunch & Learn Webinar Series Will Return on January 19, 2017.**

Our best practices webinar series will be taking a break over the holiday season. However, it will return on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at its usual 11:30 a.m. time. Presently, we are looking for a nursing home to present on how their facility, using the principles of QAPI, selected an area for improvement then implemented a quality improvement project with a successful outcome. The facility would need to present for 15 minutes before opening the call up to discussion. CCME assists with preparing the presentation slides for the call. Please consider how you could help by presenting. Have a topic you'd like to suggest? Are you a facility that has a best practice that's resulted in success that you'd like to share? Please contact us as [scace@thecarolinascenter.org](mailto:scace@thecarolinascenter.org).

### **National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes Call – December 6**

The MLN Connects® National Provider Call hosted call occurred Tuesday, December 6, 2016. Access the call's materials here: <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/NPC/National-Provider-Calls-and-Events-Items/2016-12-06-Dementia-Care.html?DLPage=1&DLEntries=10&DLSort=0&DLSortDir=descending>. Materials include a link to an article from Provider Magazine – May 2016 titled, *A Collaborative Approach To Reducing Antipsychotics*, which used QAPI principles in one nursing home to dramatically decrease the use of antipsychotic medications with its residents ([http://www.providermagazine.com/archives/2016\\_Archives/Pages/0516/A-Collaborative-Approach-To-Reducing-Antipsychotics.aspx](http://www.providermagazine.com/archives/2016_Archives/Pages/0516/A-Collaborative-Approach-To-Reducing-Antipsychotics.aspx)).

**QAPI Bootcamp Event** – Thursday, January 26, 2017 in the Columbia area for those participating in *Reach for the Stars*. Those ACE nursing homes will receive further information on how to register.

**SAVE THE DATE! QAPI Principles to Implement Effective Infection Control and Antibiotic Stewardship in Nursing Homes** will be held on Wednesday, February 22, 2017. This will be an afternoon learning event for all ACE participants in Charleston. More details coming soon!

***To ensure delivery of data and ACE updates, please add [scace@thecarolinascenter.org](mailto:scace@thecarolinascenter.org) to your email address book. Make sure that the person responsible for your computer security adds this address to a "white list" of allowed senders.***

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