

2 Operations: Highly Satisfied Residents Best Referral Source

7 Clinical: CEAL Publishes Medication Error Brief

Caregivers And Administrators Benefit From NAHCA Enrollment

When Chelsea Senior Living's President Roger Bernier offered enrollment in the National Association of Health Care Assistants (NAHCA) to employees throughout Chelsea's 13 communities, he understood how it would positively impact the workforce and ultimately improve the quality of care given to residents.

"Enrollment in NAHCA made sound business sense. When we offer NAHCA membership to our caregivers through our communities, it provides them opportunities to increase their professional skills and gain recognition for their talents. It also demonstrates the company's concern for their welfare and development, making caregivers feel valued," says Bernier. "Employees who feel valued by their company are satisfied with their work and are happier when they deliver care to our residents. Happy employees translate into satisfied residents."

Chelsea Senior Living is among the first NCAL members to participate in a new collaborative effort between NCAL and NAHCA that began in August 2009. As chair of NCAL's Workforce Committee, Bernier proposed that NCAL promote NAHCA membership as a way to improve the morale and loyalty of frontline caregivers in NCAL member companies.

"NCAL is excited to introduce its

members to an outstanding resource that improves staff satisfaction and workforce retention in assisted living communities," says David Kylo, NCAL's executive director. "We believe NAHCA's unique programs will be valued by assisted living caregivers."

NAHCA is a nonprofit, professional caregiver organization currently representing 35,000 caregivers in 752 acute and long term health care communities and organizations located across the country. NAHCA's mission is to elevate the professional standing and performance of care-

givers through recognition, advocacy, education, and empowerment, while building a strong alliance with health care providers to maximize success and quality care.

Through its programs, NAHCA provides development training for caregivers, mentoring programs that reduce caregiver turnover, and advocates for issues that are important to providers and staff.

NAHCA enrollment covers every caregiver in an assisted living community. The annual cost is \$500 per community. Upon enrollment, care-

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NCAL DAY Speakers Define Success



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Highly Satisfied Residents Most Likely To Recommend Communities

Residents who rate their community “highly” are almost four times more likely to recommend that a friend move in, and these “highly satisfied” residents are increasingly important for maintaining high occupancy levels, says a 2009 *Seniors Housing & Care Journal* prize-winning article.

While the data pertain to residents who had moved into independent living within the prior six months, The ProMatura Group’s Margaret Wylde, the article’s lead author, told *Focus* that the findings have a direct correlation to assisted living.

“In our analyses of satisfaction surveys of assisted living residents, the results consistently show that the attributes of the community that have the greatest impact on the residents’ satisfaction with their life in the community and the quality of the community overall are: the quality of their daily life (what they do each day), their relationships with the personnel and other residents, their sense of control, and the degree to which they feel at home.

“The only scores that have any meaning are the ‘very satisfied’ and those that are less than satisfied,” she says. “If a community is intent on providing the best quality of life, service, care, and community, they would focus on how they can improve.”

The article, “Satisfied Residents Won’t Recommend Your Community, But Very Satisfied Residents Will,”

examines the attributes related to residents’ willingness to recommend communities to their friends. The answers to survey questions were used to measure the satisfaction levels of residents on physical and nonphysical aspects

of the community. Physical attributes are factors such as

the appearance of a building; the size of a resident’s unit; and the availability of a fitness center, chapel, and library. Questions on the nonphysical attributes of the community were used to explore resident satisfaction levels related to factors such as housekeeping services; menu choices; social, educational, and entertainment opportunities; and a sense of belonging.

Data were collected between June and October 2008, from 1,042 independent living residents at 291 different communities throughout the United States. The article won the GE Award for Best Research Paper. The co-authors are Edie Smith, senior vice president and director of research at the ProMatura Group; David Schless, president of the American Seniors Housing Association (ASHA); and Rachele Bernstecker, ASHA’s vice president of government affairs.

“The importance of residents [and] their family and friends advocating a community is paramount to success. Satisfied is not sufficient,” the article says. “A community must have very satisfied residents to create advocates.

People who are highly satisfied will recommend their community to their friends and advocate the community as a place to live.”

The major findings of the study are:

- As the age of the community increased, a significantly greater proportion of the new residents learned about the community from a resident living at the community, and fewer learned about it from advertising or direct mail marketing.

- Very satisfied residents are about four times (74 percent) more likely to recommend the community to a friend than residents who are satisfied (19 percent).

- Nonphysical attributes have a significantly greater impact on satisfaction of residents than physical attributes.

- High satisfaction is related to five factors in the community: quality of daily life (cultural, musical, arts/crafts, entertainment, and social activities); dining flexibility (quality of food, variety of menu items, services, and times available for dining); quality of personnel; personal control (privacy and sense of safety and security); and comfort (ease of making friends and sense that the residence is their home).

“Millions of dollars are spent to create and maintain lavish communities with built-in entertainment venues, and yet the willingness of residents to recommend their community to friends correlates most strongly with nonphysical attributes,” says the article.

For more information, visit NIC.org, click on Research & Data, and select NIC Publications. ♦

Residents’ Quality Of Daily Life Linked To Scores

NCAL Elects Officers And Board of Directors For 2009-2010 Term At 60th Annual Convention

For the first time in the organization's history, NCAL held its board of directors election in conjunction with AHCA's election during the 60th Annual AHCA/NCAL Convention & Exposition, held last month in Chicago.

At the Council of States meeting, NCAL's Board of Directors and State Leaders elected the executive officers and seven at-large board members—the terms of an additional seven at-large members end in 2010.

The newly elected executive officers are:

- NCAL Chair, Nicolette Merino, regional director of operations, Avamere Health Systems, Wilsonville, Ore.;
- NCAL Vice Chair, Michael Shepard, owner, The Shepard Group, Pine Bluff, Ark.; and
- NCAL Secretary / Treasurer, Patricia Giorgio, president/ chief executive officer (CEO), Evergreen Estates, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

These officers, along with Immediate Past NCAL

Chair Howie Groff, comprise NCAL's Executive Committee, which will determine and direct NCAL's goals and activities for the 2009-2010 term.

The seven newly elected at-large board members are:

- Jim Birchem, president and CEO, ElderCare of Minnesota, Bemidji, Minn.;
- Ashley Blankenship, administrator, Southridge Village Retirement Center, Heber Springs, Ark.;
- Marcia Dooner, CEO, Parkinson's Specialty Care, Minneapolis;
- Edie Gerelli, vice president of operations, Chelsea Senior Living, Summit, N.J.;
- Joe Perkin, vice president of operations, Midwest Health Management, Topeka, Kan.;
- Dean Solden, president, Solden Development Co., Ann Arbor, Mich.; and
- Brett Waters, administrator, New Beginnings Community Living Home, Idaho Falls, Idaho. ♦

2010 Call for Presentations

Begins September 7, 2009 | Ends November 30, 2009
All submissions must be received by November 30, 2009.

The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living are seeking presentations from professionals in long term care. Presentations should focus on practical applications, insights, success stories, and inspiring ideas that you can share with your colleagues through Professional Development Seminars at our 2010 Convention and Expo. We are looking to showcase the best and the brightest minds in the long term care profession.

You are invited to submit a seminar proposal for consideration. Submission details can be found on our convention website: www.ahcaconvention.org. Don't miss this opportunity to share your expertise with other professionals.

AHCA/NCAL 61st Annual Convention & Expo

October 10-13, 2010*

Long Beach California | Long Beach Convention Center



*The dates in last month's Call for Presentations ad were listed incorrectly. The above dates are the correct dates. We apologize for any confusion.



Submissions should be submitted electronically beginning September 7, 2009 to www.ahcaconvention.org.

Third Annual NCAL Day Speakers Define Good Customer Service

The third annual NCAL Day was a tremendous success! The overarching theme of the day was how to keep assisted living communities competitive in the current economic environment.

More than 175 participants listened to speakers and panel discussions that covered a variety of topics. Among the themes discussed was good customer service.

Keynote speaker Ken Schmidt, a marketing and branding consultant and former director of communications for Harley-Davidson Motorcycles, spoke about how important it is for every employee within an organization to make residents, family members, and other visitors feel special.

His motivational speech included anecdotes of Harley-Davidson's struggle to rebuild the motorcycle company from near bankruptcy. He explained that asking customers for their feedback, incorporating free rides, and developing an accessories catalog that allows purchasers to customize their motorcycles helped turn a dissatisfied customer base into loyal enthusiasts and won new customers. At the root, he said, is that people make decisions based on emotions and that using personal and friendly gestures that make people feel cared for or good about themselves is the way to attract residents.

Harley-Davidson began gathering customer input by going out to dealerships and providing motorcycles for test drives and then asking potential purchasers what they liked and didn't like. One Harley-Davidson executive accompanies motorcycle owners on longer rides. When the bikers take a break, the executive begins asking the riders questions, then takes out a pen and jots down their feedback on a note card. He gets their names and addresses, and when he returns to the office, he sends them a letter.

"What are you doing to make someone who enters your facility feel special?" says Schmidt. "Are you

making an effort to make the family member and the resident feel special? What do people see when they enter your community?" he says. During his mother-in-law's final days in a nursing facility he remembered that there was never any coffee in the pot, and when the janitor passed as he mopped the floor he never smiled or asked Schmidt or his family members how they

were or if they needed anything. Schmidt said after those types of experiences he wouldn't recommend this community to another person.

Lou Burgess of Front Line Advantage, Scottsdale, Ariz., reinforced the message of good customer service. He explained the importance of a potential customer's first impression of a community.

"It may take less than 30 seconds, but a first impression has the longevity of concrete,"

Burgess said. "Seventy percent of the customers who stop doing business with a company do so based upon a negative first impression."

A community's receptionist has a key role in conveying the right attitude of the community over the phone and in person, he said. "This person is the voice and the perception of your company," he said, explaining that potential customers make decisions about a community within seconds of hearing or seeing the receptionist.

Later in the day, Jeanne Jaeckels, director of housing for Tealwood Care Centers, Bloomington, Minn., said that Tealwood employees are trained to provide good customer service because it is essential to the company's marketing efforts. Tealwood operates assisted living and nursing facilities in rural towns located in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, and South Dakota. Jaeckels says that residents often move into their communities because of someone they know and the superior customer service they provide.

"I could have thousands of dollars of marketing materials, but if the customer service is not there," says Jaeckels, "It takes away everything I've got." ♦



NCAL Day audience listening to keynote speaker Ken Schmidt.

Why Is The NCAL-My InnerView Quality Initiative So Important?

Budgets are tight, competition is high, and organizations are being asked to do more with less. Now is the time to join NCAL's Quality Initiative to take advantage of *My InnerView's* affordable solution to knowing what matters most.

By listening to the voice of your residents, families, and employees, you can base your decisions on what you know, not what you think. You will have the data you need to make evidence-based decisions that can help you reduce costs and save resources.

Knowing More Matters Most

Assisted Living is fundamentally a people business. Research indicates, and practice supports, the fact that operational efficiency, the quality of residents' lives, and financial sustainability are correlated to employee satisfaction and commitment. Many of the same factors

that determine employee satisfaction are also related to customer satisfaction. Knowing, for example, that management cares and listens is important to both customers and employees. Using the data collected through this initiative, you can identify what matters most--helping you focus on opportunities as well as strengths--so you can quickly determine priorities for action.

Collecting The Right Data

Although you may be collecting data, it doesn't mean the right data are being collected. The data, and the information they convey, should be accurate, applicable, consistent, meaningful, organized, and current. *My InnerView's* surveys, developed by nationally known senior care experts, have been scientifically proven to

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Profile of a personal caregiver

- ★ **9 in 10** are female
- ★ **1 in 2** are over 40 years of age
- ★ **1 in 10** does not speak English as first language
- ★ **1 in 10** works 40+ hours a week in this location
- ★ **7 in 10** have worked only in their current location
- ★ **1 in 2** has worked in current location for 2+ years

Based on responses to demographic and background questions by 3,384 personal caregivers in 487 assisted living communities across the nation.

Source: Assisted Living Employee Satisfaction Surveys conducted in 2008 by My InnerView



Minneapolis Leads In New Assisted Living Unit Construction In 2009

The “Seniors Housing Construction Trends Report 2009” survey of the largest 100 metropolitan areas says Minneapolis had the largest number of new assisted living units being constructed (462) between second quarter 2008 and first quarter 2009.

There are 8,402 units under construction in “majority assisted living properties,” meaning properties primarily focused on assisted living services. Eighty new majority assisted living properties accounted for 7,415 units, with 987 units being added to existing properties. As-

sisted living unit construction accounted for 21 percent of all seniors housing units in the 2009 report.

The study, recently published by the American Seniors Housing Association and the National Investment Center for Seniors Housing & Care Industry, examined construction starts for senior apartments, independent living, assisted living, and nursing facilities for the same time period—April 1, 2008, to March 31, 2009. Construction statistics included properties that added units and new properties.

Overall, a total of 21,475 seniors

housing units began construction during this time period, a 37.1 percent decline compared to the same period a year ago.

To obtain a copy of the report, visit SeniorsHousing.org. ♦

Top Five Metro Areas With AL Construction Starts		
Rank	City	No. Of Units
1	Minneapolis	462
2	Indianapolis	319
3	Atlanta	233
4	Chicago	214
5	Boise, Idaho	196

NAHCA Enrollment

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givers receive a membership lapel pin, card, and certificate; a prescription drug discount card; affordable medical and dental benefits; discounts on Dell computer purchases; and access to the NAHCA Resource Center, which provides members assistance through a toll-free phone number. After dialing (800) 784-6049, caregivers are connected with NAHCA’s Resource Center, which offers personal support such as helping caregivers transfer professional certifications between states, connecting them with utility and housing programs, or identifying local emergency shelters.

Membership benefits for the community’s administrator or directors of nursing or wellness include receipt of an electronic newsletter E-NAHCA, a quarterly magazine, *Caregiver*, and 12 DVD editions of Pep Talk, which are 15-minute

discussions conducted by NAHCA co-founder Lori Porter that can be used to motivate or educate staff.

The staff is excited to be included in a much larger professional organization.

—Jeff Wellman

Porter spoke about NAHCA membership at AHCA/NCAL’s 60th Annual Convention and Exposition in Chicago. After Porter’s presentation, an assisted living administrator told NAHCA’s Vice President of Member Services Jeff Wellman, “At first, I wasn’t sure what I was getting for \$500. I knew they were getting member benefits, but now I know it’s worth every penny. The staff is excited to be included in a much larger professional organization.”

“Caregivers often express one

common idea to us, and that is they feel like they are operating in isolation,” Wellman says. Membership in NAHCA gives caregivers a greater perspective and personal support.

Wellman recalls a young male caregiver employed at an Arizona assisted living community who approached him during NAHCA’s annual conference and said, “I never realized what a role I play in the continuum of care. I go to work every day not thinking much about it. But now I see I’m part of a much larger system that impacts elders positively every day.”

Wellman adds, “If a caregiver in assisted living does a great job, it may mean fewer hospital days for the senior. We’re all part of a great web of care where people feel, ‘I do make a difference.’”

To enroll your community, contact Jeff Wellman at jwellman@nahca cares.org or call (417) 623-6049. ♦

Most Medication Errors Related To Two-Hour Administration Window

Less than 3 percent of all medication administered in assisted living communities involved errors with moderate to significant potential to cause harm to residents, says a Center for Excellence in Assisted Living (CEAL) research brief on medication management.

While 35 percent of all medication administrations involved an error, 71 percent of these errors involved the drug being administered more than two hours outside the requested administration time, which rarely causes substantial harm to residents. The two-hour drug administration time is not a written standard, but rather a practice. This type of error rarely has the potential to cause harm.

CEAL's research brief summarizes key findings from a study of medication administration in 11 assisted living communities in South Carolina and Ten-

nessee. South Carolina allows unlicensed but trained medication aides to administer medications. In contrast, Tennessee requires licensed nurses to administer medications. The two states were chosen to determine whether administration error rates differed between trained medication technicians and licensed nurses.

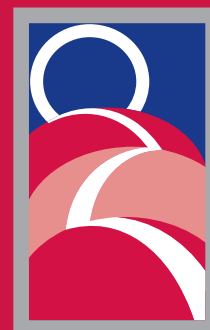
"Medication technicians did not have a higher rate of medication errors with a moderate to significant potential to cause harm than did nurses," the brief says. The brief defines moderate harm as the potential to cause discomfort or annoyance to a resident. A medication error that leads to physician intervention, hospitalization, or disability is considered serious harm.

Visit NCAL.org, Resources & Publications, and select Assisted Living Studies to download the CEAL Medication Management Brief. ♦



American Health Care Association
The National Center for Assisted Living

2010 AHCA/NCAL Quality Symposium February 9-10, 2010



2010 AHCA/NCAL
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INSPIRING EXCELLENCE
IN LONG TERM CARE

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13 CEUs are available for this event. For more information and updates, visit www.ahcancal.org, or call (202) 842-4444.

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NCAL-My InnerView Quality Initiative

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gather the right data, so that you have the results that matter most.

Through this initiative, not only do participants have a turnkey process for collecting data, *My InnerView's* reporting options allow participants to generate reports, compare themselves to others, analyze their findings, and make evidence-based decisions.

Supporting The Profession

By being part of the largest database on satisfaction in senior care, you can help the profession prove the great value it provides to this nation's residents and families, impact policy, and tell the story of quality care and service. In order for the assisted living story to be told correctly, we must tell it! This initiative allows assisted living to do just that by strengthening its unified voice through feedback from those that matter most—residents and employees.

To learn about additional benefits, the minimal investment associated with this initiative, and the turnkey nature of this opportunity, contact *My InnerView's* Julie Flaig-Smith at (952) 303-3998 or visit MyInnerview.com. ♦

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