

General Suggested Talking Points Quality & 5-Star Rating System

- ♦ Our first commitment – always – is to provide quality care to residents in a safe and secure environment.
- ♦ Delivering the highest quality of care and customer satisfaction is a top priority for those of us in the long term care profession—and the vast majority of nursing homes nationwide provide the type of high quality, compassionate care that patients, residents and their families want and deserve.
- ♦ The facts speak for themselves – quality is improving in our nation’s nursing facilities – a reality not reflected in the 5 Star program.
- ♦ The long term care profession has helped to lead the nation's healthcare sector in terms of quality improvement, and we are committed to continuing our work with CMS to advance a transparent survey process that recognizes quality, and provides the resources for facility improvement, which will enhance efforts to further improve quality long term care.
- ♦ We support a rating system that accurately reflects the quality of care in our nation’s nursing facilities; however, we do not believe that a system based on the current survey system will provide consumers with accurate, up-to-date information.
- ♦ CMS claims that the survey component of its 5-Star Quality Rating System represents the most important dimension in determining a facility’s overall quality rating. We disagree—today’s survey system does not measure quality, but rather assesses compliance with federal or state regulations. We believe that customer satisfaction – how a resident and family members judge the care being provided in a particular facility – is a better indicator of the quality of care and quality of life residents enjoy.
- ♦ Quality improvement is a dynamic ongoing process – and its quantification must reflect the many variants that go into the delivery of care. We believe that consumer and staff satisfaction are two important components of quality care.
- ♦ In June, My InnerView, Inc. released its national report on customer satisfaction with nursing facilities. The report is based on surveys of more than 146,300 residents and family members and nearly 162,000 employees; 83% of the respondents rated overall satisfaction with their nursing home as “excellent” or “good” and fully 82% of the respondents said they would recommend the facility to others as “excellent” or “good.”
- ♦ Long term care providers are providing quality of care and quality of life for residents, and that the profession is clearly being part of the solution. We are helping lead the charge, changing the culture, turning a corner on quality care.
- ♦ AHCA is working closely in coalition with other long term care providers, quality improvement experts, medical professionals, and consumers on the *Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes* campaign, which builds on our efforts with Quality First and seeks to coordinate and leverage the various quality improvement initiatives already underway in nursing homes nationwide (see www.nhqualitycampaign.org).
- ♦ Government data indicates that quality is improving in several areas. A few examples include::

- Nationally, direct care staffing levels (which include all levels of nursing care: Registered Nurses (RNs), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs)) have increased 10.6 percent between 2000 and 2008 – from 3.12 hours per patient day in 2000 to 3.45 hours in 2008;
 - The Quality Measure tracking pain for long term stay residents vastly improved from a rate of 10.7 percent in 2002 to 4.1 percent in 2008 – more than a 60 percent decrease;
 - The Quality Measure tracking the use of physical restraints for long stay residents dropped by more than 50 percent over six years – from 9.7 percent in 2002 to 4.5 percent in 2008;
 - The Quality Measure tracking pressure ulcers for post-acute skilled nursing facility patients (many of whom are admitted to the nursing facility with a pre-existing pressure ulcer) improved by nearly 22 percent over the course of five years, from 20.4 percent in 2003 to 16 percent in 2008; and
 - Substandard Quality of Care Citations as tracked by CMS surveys were reduced by 35.5 percent over seven years – from 4.5 percent in 2000 to 2.9 percent in 2007.
- ♦ We know that getting the *appropriate* care in the *appropriate* setting is critical. That's why we offer consumer-friendly information to help find a facility that will meet their specific needs like *How to Choose a Nursing Home*, which is available at www.LongTermCareLiving.com.