NCAL is pleased to unveil the second step in its Performance Measurement Initiative, The Assisted Living Performance Measures Survey. The Assisted Living Performance Measure Survey is a short, online survey consisting of 23 “yes” or “no” questions. Members who participate will provide NCAL and themselves data that help identify the high-quality care areas for the profession that can be easily understood by consumers and policy makers. Simultaneously, member participation in the Performance Measurement Initiative supports NCAL’s advocacy efforts because it demonstrates to state and federal policy makers that the profession is concerned with quality issues. “Michigan and many other states have long been concerned with the value of self-regulating within the assisted living profession. While some continue to believe that the state inspection and survey process improves quality—the reality is that only commitment and action within the assisted living community can assure quality initiatives and outcomes,” says Linda Lawther, president and chief executive officer of the Michigan Center for Assisted Living. “The collecting of information and sharable, quantifiable data will help all of us to show that quality is in our own hands, and we are committed to serving our customers at the best level possible.” The questions in the Assisted Living Performance Measures Survey cover nine of the 10 performance measures established by NCAL’s Quality Committee in 2009. The 10th measure—staff retention—is being addressed by NCAL’s.

Many States’ Legislative Changes Focus On Disclosure; Life Safety Issues

At least 22 states reported making statutory, regulatory, or policy changes in 2009 that impact assisted living, residential care, or assisted living, according to NCAL’s “Assisted Living State Regulatory Review 2010.” “Even though the troubled economy slowed down or stopped the development of assisted living regulations in a few states, from a national perspective during 2009 there was a fairly heavy volume and variety of state assisted living regulatory or policy changes,” says Karl Polzer, NCAL’s senior policy director and the report’s author.

In 2009, state trends focused on added disclosure requirements, changes to fire or physical safety or disaster/emergency preparedness standards, an increase or change required for staff training, and the creation or expansion of standards to protect residents with Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of dementia. Many states made changes to Medicaid programs covering assisted living services. Several states cut or changed how they calculated pay-
Performance Measures Survey

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Employee Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey. The nine measures covered in the Assisted Living Performance Measures Survey are related to the following:

- Resident and family satisfaction
- Employee satisfaction
- Census/occupancy rate
- Resident councils
- Family councils
- Mission and vision statements
- Safety programs
- State criminal background checks
- Nurse availability

Development of the 10 performance measures was based on two elements:

- NCAL’s Guiding Principles of Quality for Assisted Living; and
- The question: What items would a consumer consider important in identifying an assisted living community as a good one?

Results from the survey will provide quantifiable data demonstrating that success in assisted living can be achieved without federal intervention.

“It has been important to me in the assisted living profession to prevent the federal government from telling our profession what quality is in assisted living—I think as professionals we have the capability to do that ourselves,” says Cindy Leach, vice president of operations for Copper Sands, a Phoenix-based assisted living company managing six communities with 500 units throughout the state. Leach is the NCAL State Leader representing Arizona and is a member of NCAL’s Quality Committee, which developed the Performance Measurement Initiative.

Leach believes strongly in the philosophy underlying the surveys but is also participating because participation itself will provide a benefit to Copper Sands operations.

“Being part of the Performance Measurement Initiative gives the profession a starting point for future data collection to evaluate quality. It is critical for our profession to demonstrate we are at the forefront of examining quality,” says Leach.

“In addition, the results of these surveys can be shared by assisted living companies and can assist us in establishing benchmarks.”

Once the data collection for the Assisted Living Performance Measures Survey and the first survey—the Employee Vacancy, Retention, and Turnover Survey—are finished, NCAL, through AHCA’s Research Department, will analyze the survey results and compile reports for members to benchmark their own operations, as well as provide the data for state and federal advocacy efforts.

This year, 2010, marks the inaugural year of the Performance Measurement Initiative surveys. Henceforth, NCAL will issue these two surveys on an annual basis so that NCAL will be able to provide its members with data for benchmarking.

ASSISTED LIVING SATISFACTION WEBINAR

Satisfaction Survey Initiative
Thursday, March 25, 2010, 2 p.m. EST
Register at MyInnerview.com/Webinar_registration/indexp.php

Review results from the 2008 national survey of resident, family, and workforce satisfaction. Identify implications of using and understanding satisfaction results, both from a provider perspective and as part of a public policy agenda. Learn how providers have effectively used satisfaction measures to improve residents’ lives.
Legislative Changes

continued from page 1

ment rates; a few states planned modest coverage expansions. One state, Oklahoma, launched Medicaid waiver coverage, while Colorado revised regulations to make assisted living centers serving Medicaid residents look more homelike.

NCAL contacts each state’s regulatory agency to produce the profession’s only report summarizing state assisted living policies and regulations on an annual basis. This important resource is sought after by state regulators who like to review what other states are doing. The report covers 21 categories, including licensure definitions, staffing requirements, and administrator education and training requirements, as well as continuing education requirements. In addition, key contact information is provided for each state’s department of health that oversees assisted living.

“During 2009 there was a fairly heavy volume and variety of state assisted living regulatory or policy changes.”

—Karl Polzer

NCAL’s executive director. “NCAL is pleased so many consumers, state regulators, state and federal policy makers, professional educators, and media use this unique resource.” NCAL provides complimentary copies of the report. To obtain a copy of the 2010 edition, call Martece Yates at (202) 898-2855 or send an e-mail to Myates@ncal.org. To download a copy of the report from NCAL’s Web site, enter keyword search: State Regulatory Review.

Consumers can use this resource when shopping for an assisted living community to check out a community’s licensure or survey records.

“Without NCAL’s annual regulatory review, the assisted living profession would face a tremendous void in the public policy arena,” says David Kyllo, NCAL’s executive director. “NCAL is pleased so many consumers, state regulators, state and federal policy makers, professional educators, and media use this unique resource.”

Assisted Living Salary & Benefits Report 2009-2010

Published by Hospital & Healthcare Compensation Service (HCS)
Supported by NCAL

The 2009-2010 Assisted Living Salary & Benefits Report is published by HCS, the leader in healthcare salary & benefits research since 1971. The 220-page Report contains data from 1,370+ ALFs that provided data on more than 58,700 employees. The Report provides the most reliable and comprehensive source of ALF compensation information available at an affordable price.

Data Covered
- Base Salary
- Bonus
- Hourly Rates
- Turnover Rates
- Shift Differentials
- Vacancy Rates
- Planned and Actual Percent Increases

Data Breakouts
- County, State, Region
- Bed Size
- Profit Type
- Revenue Size

Results Include
- Average
- 10th, 25th, 50th and 75th Percentiles
- Formal Salary Ranges
- Fringe Benefits

Price $295
NCAL Member Price $225

Also Available*:
Report Results in Excel $300

*Available with Report purchase.
The Power Of A Recommendation Of Your Community To Others

Nationally, 92 percent of assisted living residents would recommend their community to others. As for families, 94 percent would be willing to give a recommendation. At the same time, 76 percent of employees would recommend their community as a place to work (based on assisted living resident, family, and employee satisfaction surveys conducted by My InnerView in 2008). That’s a story about assisted living that is worth telling.

When customers or employees recommend you to their friends, they are putting their reputation on the line. They will take that risk only when they are loyal, and loyalty is generated when memorable things happen that a person didn’t expect. These memorable instances cause a person to give a high score (such as “excellent”) on a satisfaction survey. What story would your customers and employees tell about your community?

NCAL’s data partner, My InnerView, is building the first assisted living customer and employee satisfaction database of its kind so this profession can tell its own story. By building a foundation of quality through satisfaction measurement, we can raise the bar of excellence. At the local level, you can collect the evidence-based data you need for a clear and accurate picture of what your customers and employees really think.

By being part of the largest database on satisfaction in long term care, you can help the profession prove the great value it provides to this nation’s families and taxpayers, impact policy, and tell the story of quality care and service. This initiative allows assisted living to do just that by strengthening its unified voice through feedback from those that matter most—your customers and your employees.

If you are not yet a participant in NCAL’s Quality Initiative, we encourage you to learn how easy and affordable it is to join other assisted living communities across the nation. To learn more, contact My InnerView’s Julie Flaig-Smith at (952) 303-3998 or visit www.myinnerview.com.

What matters most to customers

**RESIDENTS**

1. Management’s responsiveness
2. Choices and preferences met
3. Home-like atmosphere
4. Reasonable charges
5. Staff’s care and concern
6. Competent staff
7. Quality of amenities
8. Staff’s responsiveness to requests
9. Personal assistance needs met

**FAMILIES**

1. Competent staff
2. Staff’s care and concern
3. Management’s responsiveness
4. Staff’s responsiveness to requests
5. Choices and preferences met
6. Personal assistance needs met
7. Home-like atmosphere
8. Healthcare needs met
9. Staff’s respect for resident

Top 10 rankings are based on correlational analyses between responses to a “Recommendation to others” survey item and other individual survey items.

Source: Assisted Living Resident and Family Satisfaction Surveys conducted in 2009 by My InnerView
New Alliance Seeks To Expand Quality Measures For All Settings

The Long-Term Quality Alliance (LTQA), a new stakeholder group created to develop “person-centered” quality-of-care measures for all long term care settings, including assisted living, has begun work on identifying quality indicators.

“Over the next few months, LTQA will begin identifying key quality indicators and related evidence-based practices that will improve the quality of life of all persons receiving long-term services and supports, regardless of setting,” says Doug Pace, LTQA’s executive director. “Assisted living residences will certainly be one of the focus areas since there is such a rich diversity of services that allow people to age in place with dignity.” LTQA hopes to shift the current quality initiatives focused on clinical measures delivered in nursing facilities to a set of evidence-based quality indicators incorporating the consumers’ perspective that will apply to all long term care settings.

Two key priorities include issues related to the health care reform legislation debate:
- How to improve care coordination or transitions in care; and
- How to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions.

Other LTQA key priorities include:
- Identifying which performance measures and evidence-based practices offer the most promise for assessing and improving quality of care and quality of life for people receiving long term care;
- Recommending ways to apply available measurement and performance improvement strategies in high-priority areas such as care coordination; and
- Achieving tangible improvements in care through pilots, demonstrations, technical collaboration, and other efforts.

LTQA consists of 30 group leaders, including AHCA President and Chief Executive Officer Bruce Yarwood, former Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Administrator Mark McClellan, and Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Director Carolyn Clancy. These members will help identify the relevant quality benchmarks.

Data Collection For Federal Health Center Assisted Living Study Begins In April

The National Survey of Residential Care Facilities, a national study of assisted living and residential care communities, is scheduled to start the data collection phase in April 2010.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is conducting this new study to provide national estimates of these places and their residents, according to NCHS.

NCHS has contracted RTI International to collect information through in-person interviews about the characteristics of assisted living and residential care communities and the people who live there. NCHS reports that about 2,250 assisted living communities—representative of all U.S. regulated residential care and assisted living providers with four or more beds—will be interviewed for the study. Within each residence, a random sample of three to six residents will be selected depending on the number of beds. In-person interviews will be conducted with directors and caregivers, not with residents.

The information assisted living directors and caregivers provide will be held in the strictest of confidence, and only summary data will be made publicly available. All published information will be presented in such a way that no individual community, staff member, or resident can be identified. Results from this study will be presented separately by bed size (four-10 beds, 11-25 beds, 26-100 beds, and more than 100 beds). The information collected through this study will be invaluable for planning and organizing assisted living and residential care services in the future, and NCHS seeks your support in making this possible. By participating in this study, you can ensure that you and other similar assisted living and residential care places are well-represented in the study.

To learn more about this study, please visit the Web site at www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsrcf.htm.
The American Health Care Association (AHCA) and the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL) are pleased to invite you to our Congressional Briefing, June 8-9, 2010, in Washington, D.C.

Accommodations for this event will be at the beautiful and convenient Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill, a few short blocks to congressional offices.

To register for Congressional Briefing visit: cb.ahcancal.org.
For more information, email: congressionalbriefing@ahca.org.
Additional questions? Please call 202-842-4444.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Sponsored by MEDLINE
2010 Census Procedures Outlined For Assisted Living And Other Long Term Care Communities

Visit Web Page For Details & Updates

NCAL and AHCA have worked closely with the U.S. Census Bureau to help ensure that the 2010 census process goes as smoothly as possible for assisted living residents and providers. AHCA/NCAL has created a Web page to assist members through the census process. The Web page is available on NCAL.org under the What’s New section. The link is titled, “2010 Census Procedures Outlined for LTC Facilities.” NCAL encourages all members to visit the site and take note of the highlights.

During the census’ validation phase, completed Oct. 23, 2009, assisted living facilities, residential care facilities, and intermediate care facilities for individuals with mental retardation (ICFs/MR) are classified as either “housing units” or “group quarters,” depending on the response from a representative of the facility.

**Housing Units Enumeration**
In facilities classified as “housing units,” each resident will receive a 2010 census questionnaire in the mail and will be asked to mail back the completed form.

**Group Quarters Enumeration**
If the facility was identified and classified as “group quarters,” then the following applies.

During the advance visit phase lasting through March 19, 2010, providers will meet with a Census Bureau worker to discuss how the process works and prepare for enumeration.

During the enumeration phase, beginning April 1, 2010:

- A Census Bureau worker will accept “administrative enumeration,” when counting group quarters, if the facility representative determines that this is the best procedure to use for their residents. In this case, the facility generates a list of all the individuals in the facility, and the census worker will develop a system of patient identification numbers from that list.
  - If the resident in the facility is capable, they fill out the census form themselves.
  - If the resident is incapable, the enumerator completes the form using administrative records, not medical records.
  - No facility classified as group quarters should feel compelled to use its own staff to complete the enumeration process. If a facility chooses to self-enumerate, the Census Bureau will provide staff training.

When a census worker is scheduled to arrive at your community, be aware of the following information:

- Ask to see the worker’s badge to ensure the worker is from the Census Bureau (see Census Bureau badge image available on Web page).
- Rest assured that census information is confidential and protected by law.
- Census data are used only for statistical purposes and are public only after 72 years (see d31_100308_Confidentiality Notice on Web page).
- None of the information requested by the Census Bureau is protected health care information under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (see Facility Manager Access Letter__Health Care on Web page).

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Dora Durante from the Census Bureau at dora.b.durante@census.gov or (301) 763-9371; or Dianne De La Mare at ddelamare@ahca.org.
Apply For National Quality Awards Today

The deadline for Silver and Gold levels of the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award applications is March 31, 2010.

The Quality Award program has three progressive step levels: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. Facilities must achieve an award at each level to progress to the next level. The deadline for applying for the Bronze level of the Quality Award was Feb. 26, 2010. If your community has earned a Bronze or Silver you are eligible to apply for the next level. Consider applying today.

Applications are judged by trained examiners who provide feedback on opportunities for improvement to support continuous learning. Applicants must be AHCA or NCAL members in good standing to be eligible to participate.

Visit AHCA.org or NCAL.org for full eligibility requirements and to download an application packet.