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Hello!

Welcome to Quality Source E-News, a monthly online supplement to the quarterly Quality Source magazine published by QSource. For more information about QSource or to view our printed publication online, visit www.qsource.org. (Note: This publication is best viewed online in HTML format. To view it in this format, please change the settings in your e-mail.)

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The Spring 2007 Issue of Quality Source Available Soon

In this issue, we will share culture change success stories in both nursing home and home health settings, and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's "5 Million Lives" campaign.

We also discuss the National Provider Identifier (NPI) and how it affects Medicare providers, and lessons learned from physicians who have implemented an electronic health record.

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NURSING HOME NEWS**NPI Compliance Date Approaching!**

There are two months left to implement the National Provider Identifier (NPI) into business practices prior to the compliance date of May 23. All Medicare providers and healthcare providers who transmit

health information electronically in connection with any of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standard transactions are required to obtain an NPI.

Failure to prepare could result in a disruption of cash flow. If you have not obtained your NPI by now, you should do so immediately to begin the implementation and testing process. Click [here](#) to read more about the NPI and how to apply.

It's Not Too Late to Register for the "Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes" Campaign!

There are approximately 3,238 nursing homes participating in "Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes," a new coalition-based campaign focused on improving the quality of care and quality of life for those living in America's nursing homes. Click [here](#) to learn more about the campaign and register.

Surveyor Training Webcast May 14

For More Information...



The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is hosting a series of Webcasts to train surveyors on new topics. These Webcasts give nursing homes the opportunity to learn the same information survey agencies receive training on.

On May 14, CMS is hosting "From Institutional to Individual Care Part III: Clinical Case Studies in Culture Change." The Webcast provides information to survey agencies about innovative changes in medical and nursing care policies and practices in nursing homes in relation to culture change. To view the free Webcast, click [here](#) (registration required). You may also view the session live or archived and watch at your convenience.

[Find out more about DOQ-IT](#)

Nursing Home STAR Site
Setting Targets - Achieving Results

[Be A STAR!](#)



HOME HEALTH NEWS

Statewide ACH Rate Continues to Improve

QSource is pleased to announce that Tennessee's statewide acute care hospitalization (ACH) rate improved by .14 percentage points during a one-month period. From November to December 2006, the rate decreased from 32.66 percent to 32.52 percent. Our statewide goal is 30.25 percent by August 2007. Click [here](#) for tools and resources for reducing ACH.



Tell Us What You Think!

Complete The Readership Survey



ACH Target Achievers

QSource is proud to recognize agencies that have achieved their target rate for acute care hospitalization set by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Click [here](#) to view the featured agencies and learn more about the site.



ACH Campaign Intervention Package Available April 2!

The second [Best Practice Intervention Package - Emergency Care Planning](#) - will be available April 2. This is one of 12 intervention packages that will be provided electronically to home health agencies (HHAs) registered for the National Home Health Quality Improvement Campaign. More than 4,700 HHAs have now signed up to participate in the campaign.

The intervention package includes educational tools and resources, information sharing, best practice education and individual agency reports with data not available through Outcome Based Quality Improvement (OBQI) reports. These resources will assist agencies with reducing avoidable hospitalizations. Click [here](#) to learn more about the campaign and register if you have not already done so. Click [here](#) for Hospitalization Risk Assessment Poster.

2007 STAR Targets

QSource is asking all agencies to set goals for 2007 on the [Setting Targets-Achieving Results \(STAR\)](#) site. In addition to acute care

Home Health STAR Site
Setting Targets - Achieving Results

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hospitalization and improvement in management of oral meds, agencies are encouraged to set targets for any or all of the other publicly reported measures. Putting your targets into STAR is not a contractual commitment; there are no penalties for not reaching your targets. This site also provides access to valuable information on OASIS.

You will need your user name and password to access your STAR account. To acquire an agency password, contact the QSource Home Health team: [Betty DeBlasio](#) 615.574.7200 and [Barbara Meadows](#) 615.574.7402. Agencies can also contact [Marian Boxer](#) at 800.528.2655 ext. 2638.

Tips for Taking Medicines Safely

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has provided a comprehensive medication checklist for agencies to share with patients. The [checklist](#) is available in video and print.

Tools and Resources

The [Massachusetts Coalition for the Prevention of Medical Errors](#) has developed a free consumer guide that encourages patients to become "part of the health care team" along with their physicians, nurses, and pharmacists, to prevent medication errors. The brochure is available in English and Spanish.

The [Acute Care Hospitalization Workbook](#) was created as a guide to assist home health agencies in developing agency processes for the implementation of key strategies for reducing avoidable hospitalizations and emergent care.

[Visiting Nurses Association of America Clearinghouse](#) provides home care managers and clinicians with the most innovative chronic care "best practices" from Visiting Nurse Agencies across the country - quickly, easily and at no cost.

[Fall Prevention Center for Excellence](#) identifies best practices in fall prevention and offers fall prevention programs for older people who are at risk of falling.

[Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#) supports, conducts, and disseminates research that improves access to care and the outcomes, quality, cost and utilization of healthcare services.

HOSPITAL NEWS



CMS "Options Paper" on Value-Based Purchasing Plans

In this "Options Paper," the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) states how it currently envisions its pay-for-performance/Value-Based Purchasing (VBP) program for hospitals. In the paper, CMS states that VBP does not apply to Critical Access Hospitals, and further indicates

that it proposes to replace Reporting Hospital Quality Data for Annual Payment Update (RHQDAPU) with VBP. Click [here](#) to download the 40-page paper.

More about VBP is available in the [Federal Register Notice](#).

National ROSC Conference Call Series Continues

The National Rural Health Association and Hospital Interventions Quality Improvement Organization Support Center (HIQIOSC) are sponsoring a series of free, educational conference calls from experts around the country. These experts will share research findings, and highlight successful strategies for improving patient safety culture in rural hospitals.

On April 4, Ann Cook, PhD and/or Helena Hoas, PhD, with the University of Montana, National Rural Bioethics Center, will present "Advancing Patient Safety in Rural Hospitals."

The call will take place from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET/1 p.m. to 2 p.m. CT, and registration is not required. The dial-in number is 800.261.8738, and handouts are posted at the [National Rural Health Association](#) site.

March MedQIC Newsletter

The MedQIC Monthly Newsletter provides information to new and existing MedQIC audiences through articles and feature stories. The newsletter provides information about the MedQIC Web site in general, its core features and new highlights. Read [more](#).

A comprehensive list of topics ranging from heart care to rural health to quality improvement are now available on MedQIC. Click [here](#) to view the new resources.

PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS

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CMS Establishes 1.5 Percent Bonus Payment through PQRI

On Dec. 20, 2006, the President signed the Tax Relief and Health

Care Act of 2006 (TRHCA). Section 101 under Title I authorizes the establishment of a physician quality reporting system by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). CMS has titled the statutory program the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI).

PQRI establishes a financial incentive for eligible professionals to participate in a voluntary quality reporting program. Eligible professionals who successfully report a designated set of quality measures on claims for dates of service from July 1 to Dec. 31, 2007, may earn a bonus payment, subject to a cap, of 1.5 percent of total allowed charges for covered Medicare physician fee schedule services.

On March 27, CMS hosted the first in a series of provider conference calls for PQRI. An audio replay will be available over the next 14 days. To access the recording, call 888.348.4629 and enter passcode 549030#. A transcript of the call will be posted to the [PQRI](#) site. In addition, the PowerPoint presentation for the call is available. For more information, visit [PQRI](#) or [Medicare Learning Network](#).

QSource Physician Office Team Hits the Road

The QSource Physician Office team will be exhibiting during the month of April.

- April 18-20, Tennessee Medical Group Management Association (TMGMA) conference in Gatlinburg. To find out more about this conference, contact [Melissa Wilson](#) at TMGMA, at 866.739.6462.
- April 28-30, Tennessee Primary Care Association in Memphis. To learn more or to register for this conference, click [here](#).

"Welcome to Medicare" Exam Available

The Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) expanded Medicare's menu of preventive benefits by covering an initial preventive physical examination. This benefit, also referred to as the "Welcome to Medicare" visit, is an excellent way for new Medicare beneficiaries to get up-to-date on important screenings and vaccinations, as well as to talk with their healthcare provider about their medical history and how to stay healthy. Read [more](#).

FREE Physician and Patient Resources Available!

The Diabetes Road Map is a pocket-size booklet in which patients can keep track of daily blood sugar readings and readings performed during doctor's visits. The Diabetes Road Map is currently available in English and will soon be available in Spanish.

The "EHR Under Construction" brochure is available for practices implementing an electronic health record (EHR).

To place an order for the Diabetes Road Map or "EHR Under Construction" brochure, click [here](#) or call 800.528.2655 ext. 2664. (Note: The Spanish Diabetes Road Map will be shipped once available.)

EHR Resources & Tools Available Online

In the process of looking for an electronic health record (EHR)? Don't know where to begin? QSource offers a variety of online resources and FAQs for physician offices wanting to understand an EHR. You can find it [here](#)!

DOQ-IT RELATED NEWS

Federal IT Standards Panel Develops Possible Privacy Requirements

The Healthcare Information Technology (IT) Standards Panel recently said its security and privacy work group has assembled a list of possible privacy requirements for three "use cases" chosen by the Department of Health and Human Services and approved by the American Health Information Community, iHealthBeat reports. Read [more](#).

IT Survey Results: Many Looking to Spend

Group practice leaders responding to the 17th annual "Modern Healthcare/Modern Physician Survey of Executive Opinions on Key Information Technology Issues" are looking to spend more on healthcare information technology (IT) in the near term than they are currently spending, but how much more is widely variable, Modern Physician reports. Read [more](#) (registration required).

Online Course to Train Physicians Treating TB

The World Medical Association recently began piloting an online training course for physicians as part of efforts to improve the diagnosis and treatment of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, iHealthBeat reports. Read [more](#).

Legislation Could Ease Burden of IT Adoption for Small Practices

Small medical practices need legislation that would provide tax credits, deductions, grants or loans to help cover the expensive initial and ongoing costs to use health information technology (IT) systems, according to a panel at a House Small Business Regulations, Healthcare and Trade Subcommittee hearing recently, iHealthBeat reports. Read [more](#).

MEDICARE NEWS

NPI Compliance Date Approaching!

There are less than four months left to implement the National Provider Identifier



(NPI) into business practices prior to the compliance date of May 23. All Medicare providers and healthcare providers who transmit health information electronically in connection with any of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standard transactions are required to obtain an NPI.



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Update on Important Message from CMS! Notification of Hospital Discharge Appeal Rights

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has posted a [Web page](#) where information and updates on the revised notification process will be posted including notices and instructions as they are finalized.

The "Important Message from Medicare" underwent a 60-day public comment period that closed on March 6, 2007. At that time, the notice was revised based on comments and consumer tested in two cities. In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Paperwork Reduction Act Process, the Important Message will go through a 30-day public comment period in early April. CMS expects to publish a final version in late May.

The Detailed Notice went through a 60-day public comment period in April 2006. The notice was revised and will go through a 30-day public comment period along with the Important Message from Medicare in early April. The final version of the Detailed Notice is expected to be published in late May.

CMS will also post Qs and As on the Web site in the near future. Providers should check the Web site often for updates.

"PEPPER Data: An Opportunity for Improvement" Webinar April 17

Don't miss your last chance to attend a live Webinar on hospital best practices using Program for Evaluating Payment Patterns Electronic Report (PEPPER). The Webinar provides practical information for hospitals looking to enhance their compliance efforts.

This free, educational seminar features a short-term, acute care hospital that has been successfully using PEPPER in its compliance activities. Compliance officers and utilization, health information management, and coding professionals are invited to attend.

The Webinar will feature Sandra L. Hudak, BSN, RN, clinical quality advisor, and Sandra L. Beatty, BSN, RN, documentation assistant practitioner, from Columbus Regional Hospital in Columbus, Ind.

This final Webinar will take place April 17, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET/1 p.m. to 2 p.m. CT. The event is free of charge but space is limited. Click [here](#) to read more and register.

This material was prepared by QSource, the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Tennessee, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. 8SOW-TN-Taskall-2007-06

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