

Hello!

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NURSING HOME NEWS



Quarterly QM Data Reports Now Sent Electronically

In November, QSource discontinued the distribution of the nursing home quarterly quality measure data reports in hardcopy form and now sends the reports electronically via QualityNet Exchange.

QualityNet Exchange allows the secure distribution and input of private/confidential data between providers and QSource. Accessing and downloading the reports is similar to accessing email and downloading attachments.

All nursing homes need to register with QSource to use QualityNet Exchange. Registered users will have an Excel spreadsheet version of the report uploaded to their QualityNet inbox.



Fall 2007 Issue of Quality Source Now Available Online

In this issue of *Quality Source*, we introduce you to the new Tennessee Center for Patient Safety and give a recap of the 2007 Tennesseans Improving Patient Safety Conference.

We also discuss a new QSource collaborative between hospitals and home health agencies to reduce acute care hospitalization and one local doctor's success with using an electronic health record (EHR).

[Click here to check out the latest issue...](#)

Quick Links...

If you have any questions or would like to register for QualityNet Exchange, please contact the QSource nursing home team at 800.528.2655 ext. 2663.

HOME HEALTH NEWS

Message from the QSource Home Health Program Manager: Update on ACH on Oral Meds



September data shows that the statewide rate for acute care hospitalization (ACH) increased slightly, while the statewide rate for management of oral medications continued to decrease.

The statewide ACH rate in August was 32.37 percent and in September 32.38 percent.

The statewide rate for oral meds improved from 44.79 percent in August to 45.08 percent in September.

Communicating Effectively with Older Adults about the Flu

The flu season is here and many organizations are promoting influenza vaccination. While the flu vaccine is important for all age groups, it is especially important that seniors age 65 and older get vaccinated. The following are some communication tips on how to encourage seniors to get vaccinated:

- Emphasize that seniors are protecting loved ones, such as grandchildren, by getting vaccinated
- Use images of families or healthcare professionals in your message
- Use community events, such as senior groups or bingo games as a venue for communicating your message
- Get permission to hang posters in an adult community or post flyers on a community bulletin board
- Distribute information through a town or city flyer
- Keep in mind that seniors may have limited eyesight or language

For more information on communicating with older adults, please visit the [National Immunization Technical Assistance Network](#).

In addition, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has published a special edition [MLN Matters](#) article as a comprehensive resource for the 2007-2008 flu season for all healthcare providers.

When to Begin Considering End-of-Life Care

In the lifecycle of a life-limiting illness, there is a point where it becomes apparent that continued treatments are not likely to offer a cure for the patient. If a patient has a chronic illness with repeated hospitalizations and is experiencing a decline in health status, it may be time to begin the transition from curative

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treatment to palliative care.

The home care nurse is in a unique position to help patients and families transition from curative care to palliative care. For more information on end-of-life care, visit [Caring Connections](#).

Set Your 2008 STAR Targets

QSource is asking all home health agencies (HHAs) to set goals for 2008 on the [Setting Targets-Achieving Results \(STAR\)](#) site. In addition to acute care 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 agency targets into STAR is not a contractual commitment; there are no penalties for not reaching targets.

A username and password is required to access STAR accounts. To acquire an agency password, contact the QSource Home Health team: [Betty DeBlasio](#) at 615.574.7200 and [Barbara Meadows](#) at 615.574.7202. Agencies can also contact [Marian Boxer](#) at 800.528.2655 ext. 2638.

ACH Target Achievers

QSource is proud to recognize agencies that have achieved their target rate for acute care hospitalization set by CMS. Click [here](#) to view the featured agencies.

ACH Campaign Intervention Package Available Jan. 2

The 11th Best Practice Intervention Package - [Disease Management](#) - will be available Jan. 2.

This is one of 12 intervention packages that will be provided electronically to HHAs registered for the National Home Health Quality Improvement Campaign. More than 5,357 HHAs have signed up to participate.

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 assist agencies with reducing avoidable hospitalizations. Click [here](#) to learn more about the campaign and register.

Click here for the January [Calendar of Events](#).

HOSPITAL NEWS



Tennessee Center for Patient Safety Statewide Conference and Collaborative Kick-Off Meeting Jan. 30

The Tennessee Center for Patient Safety is hosting a statewide conference and kick-off meeting for its 24-month collaborative to reduce healthcare acquired infections in

hospitals.

Peter Provost, MD, Johns Hopkins physician and international patient safety leader will be the featured speaker along with Chris Groeschel, RN, MPA, MPS, director of quality and safety initiatives for the Johns Hopkins Quality and Safety Research Group.

The conference will take place Jan. 30 at Sheraton Music City in Nashville. The course is \$75 for the first registrant and \$50 for each additional registrant. Click [here](#) for more information.

AHRQ Hospital Patient Safety Survey Results Now Available

The WebEx, "Reassessment Results from the AHRQ (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality) Hospital Survey on Patient Safety" featuring Dr. Katherine Jones, University of Nebraska Medical Center, is available [online](#).

Study Finds IT Facilitates Medication Reconciliation

Implementing a change process that involved information technology (IT) at one hospital led to significantly fewer errors and an increase in medication reconciliation across units, according to a recent study, *Modern Healthcare* reports.

Three teams consisting of consultants and medical staff at 512-bed Forrest General Hospital, Hattiesburg, Miss., were able to reduce transcription errors from 58 percent to 10 percent and the number of unreconciled medications from 38 percent to 10 percent in two months. Read [more](#).

December MedQIC Update

A comprehensive list of resources on topics ranging from immunizations to heart care to quality improvement is now available on MedQIC. Click [here](#) to see what's new.

Tools and Resources

[AHRQ Patient Safety Network](#)

[Rural Health Annotated Bibliography](#)

[Rural Health Quality Improvement](#)

PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS

HIMSS Regional Mid-Year Summit Feb. 7

The Tennessee and Arkansas chapters of the Health Information Management Systems Society (HIMSS) are hosting a summit on health information technology adoption. The summit will consist of a panel discussion and several speakers, including Jeff Rose, MD, Ascension Health.



The summit will take place Wednesday, Feb. 7 at the FedEx Institute located at the University of Memphis from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Early registration is \$75 through Jan. 21 and \$99 through Feb. 6. It is open to HIMSS members and non-members.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

Changes to 2008 PQRI

The Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) is the first step toward linking Medicare health professionals' payments to quality, which is consistent with Medicare's ongoing transformation from passive payor to active purchaser of high-value health care.

Physicians are asked to submit Category II CPT codes and modifiers on claim forms to capture clinical outcomes for patients with chronic conditions and for preventive measures.

Eligible professionals who choose to participate will gain experience in capturing and submitting data on quality of care as well as receive additional payment of up to 1.5 percent of their Medicare allowable charges. There are no penalties for non-participation.

In 2008, practices will have the ability to test their electronic medical record (EMR) system or disease registry system on five specified measures in addition to sending claim data. There are 119 measures that make up the 2008 PQRI list. More information is available [here](#).

CMS has developed a [tip sheet](#) to assist eligible professionals participating in PQRI with reporting accuracy.

A summary of PQRI provisions in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule is available [online](#).

Registration Is Now Available for Tennessee Prescription Safety Program Spring Seminars

The Tennessee Prescription Safety Program is a two-year pilot program designed to reduce the misuse and abuse of Schedule II prescriptions in Tennessee through education and new technology.

Prescription safety program seminars are being held throughout the state to educate physicians, family nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and dentists about medical, legal and regulatory issues on proper prescribing practices. Click [here](#) for more information.

FREE Resources from QSource

The Diabetes Road Map is available in English and Spanish. The 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.

Also, the "EHR Under Construction" brochure and poster is available for practices implementing an electronic health record (EHR) system.

To place an order for either, click [here](#) or call 800.528.2655 ext. 2664.

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

Electronic Messages Help Coordinate Care, New Research Shows

Electronic clinical messaging among providers could cost the U.S. health system tens of millions of dollars annually, but the technology also saves millions of dollars by streamlining care coordination, *iHealthBeat* reports.

Researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center presented these findings after completing a study of more than 20,000 electronic messages exchanged among 578 physicians and staff in a disease management program for patients with diabetes and high cholesterol over a seven-month period in 2003. Read [more](#) (registration required).

Poll: Most Adults Say EHR Benefits Outweigh Privacy Risks

Nearly two-thirds of U.S. adults believe that the benefits of electronic health records outweigh the privacy risks, according to a recent opinion poll, *iHealthBeat* reports.

Three-quarters of the survey's 2,153 respondents said they agree that patients would receive better care if doctors and researchers were able to share information more easily through electronic systems. Read [more](#) (registration required).

MEDICARE NEWS

New Medicare Preventive Services Quick Reference Chart



A new Medicare preventive services quick reference information chart on the Initial Preventive Physical Examination (IPPE) is available [online](#).

"The ABCs of Providing the Initial Preventive Physical Examination" (also known as the "[Welcome to Medicare](#)" Exam) is a two-sided chart that can be used by Medicare fee-for-service physicians and qualified non-physician practitioners as a guide when providing the IPPE.

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

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