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April 2006

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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**NURSING HOME NEWS****Mark Your Calendar! Teleconference Series On Depression, Pain Management and Restraint Reduction**

QSource, in conjunction with Quality Improvement Organizations in the Carolinas, Georgia, Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, is hosting a series of conference calls on depression, pain management and restraint reduction. Expert speakers will provide methods to diagnose and treat/reduce pain, depression and restraint use.

Teleconference Dates and Featured Speakers:

- May 10 - Dr. Ira Katz (Depression - Part 1)
- July 18 - Carol Curtis (Pain)
- Oct. 4 - Dr. Ira Katz (Depression - Part 2)
- Nov. 14 - Diana Waugh (Restraint Reduction)

All calls are scheduled for 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. CST / 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. EST. Registration details are forthcoming.

Dr. Courtney Lyder Speaks on Pay-for- Performance and Telemedicine

Come join Dr. Courtney Lyder, professor of nursing, internal medicine and geriatrics at the University of Virginia, for his free seminar on how pay- for-performance and telemedicine will impact your residents' care.

The seminar is April 25 from 10 a.m. until noon CST at the Memphis Public Library located at 3030 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn., 38111. The seminar will take place in Meeting Room C. For more information, contact the library at 901.415.2700.

HOME HEALTH NEWS**Winter 2006 Issue of Quality Source Released**

The Winter Issue of *Quality Source* is hot off the press and filled with articles on everything from managing oral medications to cultural competency.

In this issue, we introduce you to the *Digital Doctor*, inform you of a NHIFT (pronounced nifty) little tool that can assist nursing homes with improving their quality of care and tell you how hospitals will SCIP to improve the quality of surgical care they provide.

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For More Information...

Tips For Reducing Avoidable Acute Care Hospitalizations

The following strategies have been identified by the QSource home health team as being effective in reducing avoidable acute care hospitalizations:



- Strong leadership support that promotes reduction of avoidable hospitalizations
- Strong relationships with referral sources to ensure safe and appropriate transitions of care
- Competency and consistency in OASIS completion
- Monitor, monitor, monitor!

Best Practices

- Risk Assessment Tool at SOC/ROC for every patient to identify patients at risk
- Teach patients self-management of their chronic disease
- Implement and educate patients on an emergent care plan and zone self-management tools
- Front-load and/or match visit intensity to patient needs including phone encounters
- Admit and/or visit patients on weekends
- 100 percent chart audits for unplanned hospitalizations
- Promote telehealth / disease management / patient self-management

New Checklist Helps Home Health Care Providers Prepare For An Influenza Pandemic

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) released a newly developed checklist to help home health providers assess their readiness to respond in the event of an influenza pandemic.

While the checklist was designed as a response to a pandemic influenza, it could be helpful in other types of emergencies. Suggestions include:

- Creating a planning committee to specifically address pandemic influenza preparedness
- Identifying points of contact at local and state health departments, emergency management service providers and other healthcare providers in the community
- Ensuring your plan complements local response plans
- Planning for an increase in patients who require home health care services during a pandemic
- Planning for an increased demand on supplies such as masks, hand hygiene materials, food, medications and other necessities
- Developing a system for evaluating symptomatic personnel before they report for duty
- Identifying the minimum number and categories for nursing staff and other professional personnel necessary to sustain home care services for a given number of patients
- Developing a contingency staffing plan

A copy of the [Home Health Care Services Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist](#) along with other checklists and pandemic planning information is available online.

2006 Telehealth Funding Opportunities

The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Health Information Technology, will be administering Telehome Care grants. If you are interested in competing for these grants, visit www.grants.gov/Apply.

**Cut and paste the link into your browser to enter the site without a user name and password.

Tools and Resources

[Introduction to Home Telehealth](#)

[Home Telehealth to Reduce Hospitalizations](#)

[Home Telehealth Disease Management Series](#)

[About Heart Failure](#)

[Gold Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease](#)

[Diabetes](#)

[Cancer- Pain Management](#)

HOSPITAL NEWS

Hospital Quality Alliance and Reporting Hospital Quality Data for Annual Payment Update Upcoming Preview Information

The preview period for the Hospital Quality Alliance (HQA) and Reporting Hospital Quality Data for Annual Payment Update (RHQDAPU) data is scheduled for April 13 through May 12, 2006. The preview will cover fourth quarter 2004 through third quarter 2005 discharges accepted into the QIO Clinical Warehouse.



CMS refreshes the Facility Characteristics Data on the Hospital Compare Web site using OSCAR/ASPEN system data. To modify facility characteristics, the provider must contact their state OSCAR/ASPEN

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

Nursing Home STAR Site
Setting Targets - Achieving Results

[Be A STAR!](#)



[Tell Us What You Think!](#)

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coordinator in writing. Click [here](#) for your state's OSCAR/ASPEN coordinator contact information.

Preview reports will be accessed through the HQA Preview Reports link located in the reports section of the secure home page of QNet Exchange. For detailed instructions on how to retrieve your HQA preview report, please refer to the [QNet Exchange User's Guide](#).

All RHQDAPU pledged providers receiving full annual payment update (APU), in accordance with Section 501 (b) of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, will be included in the public release of the 10 "Starter Set" quality measures. If these providers are also pledged for HQA, they will have preview data for all 20 quality measures. They may suppress only the additional 10 HQA measures.

HQA-only-pledged providers may withhold publication of data for any of the 20 quality measures. To withhold publication of data, providers must contact the QSource hospital team with their request to withhold and transmit a completed 'Request for Withholding Data from Public Reporting' no later than May 12, 2006.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) intends to refresh Hospital Compare in June 2006.

For more information or questions, visit the [QNet Exchange Hospital Community](#) or contact a member of the QSource hospital team via e-mail or by calling 1.800.528.2655 for

[Judy Weddle](#) ext. 2613

[Lesley Hays](#) ext. 2616

[Stacy Jowers](#) ext. 2615

Claims-Based Mortality Measures Possibly Added to Hospital Compare Web Site

There is a good chance that new claims-based 30-day mortality measures for acute myocardial infarction and heart failure will be added to the Hospital Compare Web site in the future since they were endorsed for public reporting by the National Quality Forum.

The measures were developed by Harlan Krumholz, M.D., and his team at Yale University on contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Krumholz is a professor of medicine, epidemiology and public health.

Click [here](#) to read summaries of each measure.

Free Audio Conference on Electronic Incident Reporting

The Premier Safety Institute is hosting a free audio conference titled *Impact of Adverse Events: Results from Tufts- New England Medical Center Study Using Electronic Incident Reporting*.

This presentation will review the types and rates of events reported by acute care hospitals using an electronic reporting system. Faculty will also discuss the future of incident reporting, including public reporting and claims costs.

The conference is free and scheduled for April 12 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET / 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. CT. Click [here](#) to register.

PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS

QualityNet Exchange Adds Physician Community

A new online physician office community located on the QualityNet Exchange (QNet Exchange) Web site will provide access to physician-focused quality initiatives sponsored by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).



Some of the new physician office secure features of QNet Exchange include: measure maintenance and data submission processes, user administration, physician office reports and reports viewer.

Click [here](#) to visit the physician office community on QNet Exchange.

Sign Up for DOQ-IT

The Doctor's Office Information Technology (DOQ- IT) project has been a tremendous success and QSource is currently providing free electronic health record (EHR) assistance to more than 200 practices.

Under the contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), QSource is to work with 6 percent of the adult primary care physicians in Tennessee. QSource is currently accepting applications for support. Click [here](#) to register for free EHR assistance and consulting from QSource.

EHR Resources & Tools Available Online

In the process of looking for an 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](#)!

Message Board Available to Physicians

Many healthcare providers have asked for a way of sharing information, asking questions and having

discussions with other Tennessee healthcare providers on various medical topics. Users of the QSource Web site now have the opportunity to do just that with new message capabilities.

Physicians interested in implementing an EHR are the first to have access to the message board. You will need to register to use the board and you may post messages and comments as frequently as you like.

If interested in joining the Physician Office/DOQ-IT message board, [click](#) here.

Cultural Competency Module Training

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) is recommending that physician offices across the nation become more culturally competent in the care they provide to patients with diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, language and culture.

To do this, physicians are encouraged to complete an online Cultural Competency course and receive up to nine CMEs in the process. Nurses can earn 10.8 CEUs upon completing the course.

Physicians are asked to complete Theme 3 first because it assesses the staff and practice, then proceed to Themes 1 and 2. Upon completion of Theme 3, notify our physician office team to receive a free gift. If interested, click [here](#).

Need Translated Health Materials?

Treating Hispanic patients and need translated health information? Free online resources in many languages available at:

[Women's Health Information](#)

[Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)

[Washington State Department of Health](#)

[Multicultural Health Communication Service](#)

DOQ-IT RELATED NEWS

Federal Health IT Leaders Meet With Bill Gates

Health information technology (IT) executives from the Military Health System, the Veterans Health Administration and the Bush administration met with Bill Gates and other Microsoft executives on March 15 to discuss the government's progress in implementing electronic health records, Government Health IT reports.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Canadian Province Will Invest More Than \$100 Million In Electronic Health Record System

Alberta, Canada, will invest more than \$100 million in an electronic health record (EHR) system that provides authorized physicians and pharmacists with immediate access to patients' records and drug purchase history, according to iHealthBeat.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Electronic Health Record (EHR) Resources

[The Knowledge Library](#)

[Provider's Edge](#)

MEDICARE NEWS

Mediation/Alternative Dispute Resolution: A Component to the Medicare Beneficiary Complaint Response Program

The Medicare Beneficiary Complaint Response program ensures that complaints are examined to determine if clinical quality of care problems exist. When problems are identified, quality improvement efforts are undertaken. In addition to the traditional medical case review approach to resolving complaints, the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) can now offer mediation as an alternative. Mediation is a form of conflict resolution that brings two or more parties together to discuss their issues with the assistance of one or more impartial third parties (the mediators).

Click [here](#) to read more.

Health Options Hotline

This site offers information about health options available to Tennesseans coming off TennCare and also provides resources to others who may not have health insurance.

Establishing health options for Tennesseans is an ongoing process focused on both the immediate needs of people transitioning from TennCare and the longer-term need to support a statewide infrastructure of programs and resources to support the uninsured.

Please check back often for updates and information about new programs and additional resources, or call the Health Options toll-free hotline at 1.888.486.9355.

Click [here](#) for more information.

"Welcome to Medicare" Exam Reimbursable to Providers

Did you know that the one-time *Welcome to Medicare* physical exam is one of the few reimbursable preventative services available to providers? This exam includes a thorough review of the patient's health, education and counseling about certain screenings and shots, and referrals for other care. The exam must be performed within six months that a patient has Medicare Part B.

For more information, click [here](#).

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Releases "2005 State Snapshots"

The *2005 State Snapshots* are dashboards of healthcare quality measures. The *Snapshots* include detailed, customized tables for each state. The data provides an understanding of healthcare quality in each state, including strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

Click [here](#) to read more.

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web: <http://www.qsource.org>

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