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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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NURSING HOME NEWS**CMS Launches Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign**

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes is a new coalition based campaign that is reinvigorating efforts to improve

the quality of care and quality of life for those living or recuperating in America's nursing homes. Click [here](#) to learn more about the campaign and register.

Time Is Running Out to Set Your 2007 STAR Targets

Don't forget that time is running out to set your 2007 Setting Targets-Achieving Results (STAR) targets.

Click [HERE](#) to set your 2007 targets or to create a new account. **Don't wait!!**

For further assistance, contact QSource QI Specialists [Beth Hercher](#) or [Mittie Robinson](#)

HOME HEALTH NEWS

**National Influenza Vaccination Week
Nov. 27 - Dec. 3**

**Fall Issue of Quality Source Available Soon**

In this issue, we will share the success stories of Tennessee hospitals that have improved patient safety and quality, non-pharmacological interventions for treating depression and lessons learned from physicians who have implemented electronic health records.

We will also share the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on pay-for-performance initiatives.

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently designated the week after Thanksgiving as National Influenza Vaccination Week. This year, National Influenza Vaccination Week will run Nov. 27 - Dec. 3.



This event is designed to raise awareness of the importance of continuing influenza (flu) vaccination, as well as foster greater use of flu vaccine through the months of November, December and beyond. Read [more](#). Click [here](#) for resources to raise awareness. Click [here](#) for immunization tools.

Home Health Recipe for the Holiday Season

The following are just a few ingredients needed for a smooth and happy holiday season:

- One large helping of dedicated, caring staff members
- Several dashes of patience and glad tidings
- Sufficient on-call staff that has received the flu shot
- Numerous staff automobiles with new batteries and full tanks of gas
- Enough staff to handle referrals on Dec. 22 and Dec. 29 that come in after 2 p.m.
- Brilliant Outcomes and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) interpretation and accuracy on all assessments
- Excellent referral information
- Compliant patients with wonderful caregivers
- Working pagers with new batteries
- Computer software functioning at peak performance
- Fax and Xerox machines with adequate toner
- Prior authorizations received in writing before 2 p.m. on Dec. 22 and Dec. 29
- All psychiatric nurses can appropriately identify Orderline Personality Disorder: the inability to stop calling 1-800 numbers in pursuit of last minute holiday sales
- All case managers are able to recognize Ho-Ho Phobia: a profound fear of rotund, bearded men in red suits and black boots
- Perfect weather and accident free days
- Good Humor and Warm Fuzzies galore
- Less stress and more joy filled moments

Communication Is Key to Solving the ACH Puzzle

Reducing acute care hospitalization (ACH) is very much like solving a puzzle. There are many pieces (strategies) that connect and interlock towards solving (reducing) avoidable ACHs, the most important being communication. Some of the pieces of the puzzle include:

- [Home telehealth](#)
- [Fall prevention](#)
- [Emergent care plan](#)

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Nursing Home STAR Site
Setting Targets - Achieving Results

[Be A STAR!](#)



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Survey**



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- [Physician communication](#)
- [Front-loading visits](#)
- [Medication management](#)

Home Health Immunization Survey

QSource is tasked with assisting home health agencies (HHAs) to incorporate influenza and pneumococcal immunization into the comprehensive patient assessment as part of the 8th Scope of Work.

If you have not already completed the remeasurement survey, please do so by clicking [here](#). Most of you completed the same survey one year ago. We are now requesting your assistance in completing this survey for remeasurement. It is very important that we get every agency to comply. The completed survey should be faxed to [Marian Boxer](#), QSource home health program manager, at 901.761.3786.

For more information, contact Boxer at 800.528.2655 ext. 2638. Agencies can also contact QSource Quality Improvement Specialists [Barbara Meadows](#) at 615.574.7202 or [Betty DeBlasio](#) at 615.574.7200.

Update to Quality Data on Home Health Compare

As of August 31, [Home Health Compare](#) began displaying home health agency (HHA) administrative and quality data. The next update will be Dec. 21.

HHAs are responsible for ensuring that their address, phone numbers and types of services offered are kept up to date. To verify you have the most recent data, the correct date of the update is shown under the measure on the "Quality Graphs" page when a HHA is selected. The dates shown on the "Overview" and "Find Criteria" pages reflect changes to the formatting of those pages and not to the update of the data.

A conversion tool is available that will enable HHAs to calculate the risk-adjusted agency outcome rates that appear on [Home Health Compare](#) using their own Risk-Adjusted Outcome Report and see how those rates compare with current national and state rates. Because quality measures are updated quarterly to reflect more recent data, a new workbook containing national and state outcome rates is released to coincide with each quarterly update. The conversion tool, workbook and instructions can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

**[Home Health Compare](#) is available in both English and Spanish.

Tools and Resources

The [Situation-Background-Assessment Recommendation \(SBAR\) Home Health Package](#) includes an SBAR tool, an SBAR tool for

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a flyer and more.

The [Acute Care Hospitalization \(ACH\) Clinical Resource Kit](#) was created to organize select tools and resources used by home health agencies to reduce ACH.

The [Acute Care Hospitalization \(ACH\) Promotional Package](#) includes educational and promotional materials geared toward educating physicians, all medical professionals and the general public.

The [Home Telehealth Reference 2006/07](#) addresses the need for home health specific teletriage resources. Organizational and professional guidelines are offered as well as teletriage education and documentation standards.

The [Immunization Toolkit 2006](#) is full of valuable sample policies, forms, educational materials, references and more.

HOSPITAL NEWS



Nov. 14 Restraint Teleconference Now Available Online

Due to a clerical error, hospitals received a teleconference invitation that was intended only for nursing homes.

Although live calls are reserved for nursing homes, hospitals are more than welcome to download recorded calls from our Web site.

Restraints along with previous topics addressed in the Super 7 Conference Series--pressure ulcer prevention and treatment, person-centered pain care and depression--are available for download by clicking [here](#).

Reminder: FY2007 Annual Payment Update

As a requirement of the FY2007 Annual Payment Update (APU) Notice of Participation that your chief executive officer/administrator signed, your hospital must submit the "Full Measure Set" to the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) Warehouse beginning with 3Q-2006 discharges. These discharges are due into the Warehouse by Feb. 15.

For a complete listing of the 21 measures that comprise the "Full Measure Set," click [here](#) and select "Discharges 07/01/06 and 09/30/06."

Important Points:

1. Make sure that your hospital abstracts all the necessary data elements for all the measures for all the clinical topics for which you have patients.
2. Make sure that your vendor is set up to properly transmit your data "flagged" to show that ALL measures are being submitted. For example, even if your hospital does not

perform Percutaneous Coronary Intervention for heart attack patients, your data must still be "flagged" for this measure so that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) can see that your intention is to submit all the measures for every patient population. The Warehouse will take care of noting that you did not have any patients in the denominator for this particular measure. This same scenario and rationale is true for all of the clinical topics.

3. Make sure that your hospital submits the proper number of cases for each topic. You must be mindful of your billing data and assure that the correct number of cases are submitted to the Warehouse.
4. If your hospital has more than the minimum required number of discharges per topic and is choosing to submit a sample of those discharges, your vendor must also "flag" the data as being a sample. CMS will be comparing the number of cases in your billing data with the number of cases you submit to the Warehouse and will deem your hospital deficient in submitted volume if you don't submit the proper number of cases or if there is no "sample flag" set. Remember that one of the new APU requirements will be for you to eventually "attest" to the completeness and accuracy of your Warehouse submissions each quarter. Click [here](#) and select "Download Version 2.0" for the document detailing the sampling requirements for 3Q-2006.

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SCIP Teleconference Now Available on MedQIC

The Nov. 2 teleconference, "Breaking Down SCIP Physician Barriers," is now available on [MedQIC](#). The presentation was designed for physician champions and other physicians who speak on SCIP. It addresses many of the common barriers they may encounter in the field.

PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS

State Health IT Group Names Leaders

Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen and Vermont Gov. Jim Douglas will lead the recently formed State Alliance for e-Health and guide states' health



information technology (IT) efforts, iHealth Beat reports. Read [more](#).

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AHRQ Issues Electronic Preventative Care Tool for Physicians

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) recently released a free tool to help primary care physicians recommend preventative services to their patients.

The Electronic Preventative Services Selector delivers the latest preventative care recommendations from the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force via a personal digital assistant (PDA) or desktop computer. Doctors can input a patient's age, gender and behavioral risk factors, such as whether they smoke, to generate a report for the patient. The tool can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Save the Date: EMR Road Show March 28

Mark your calendars for the 2007 Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Road Show March 28. The one-day event provides user-based education on EMRs for specialty and family practice physicians.

The event will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in downtown Nashville. Registration details are forthcoming. Bookmark our [Events and Registration](#) page to check for details as they become available.

Technology Helps Cut Patient Wait Times

Hospitals and physician offices nationwide are beginning to address the issue of long wait times by changing scheduling systems and adding technology such as online test results and pagers, iHealth Beat reports. Read [more](#).

Physician Voluntary Reporting Program

As part of its overall quality improvement efforts, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched the [Physician Voluntary Reporting Program \(PVRP\)](#) on Jan. 1. This new program builds on Medicare's comprehensive efforts to substantially improve the health and function of our beneficiaries by preventing chronic disease complications, avoiding preventable hospitalizations, and improving the quality of care delivered.

Under this voluntary reporting program, physicians who choose to participate will help capture data about the quality of care provided to Medicare beneficiaries.

For more information about how to participate in PVRP, contact [Gayle McRae](#) at 901.273.2619.

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](#)!

Cultural Competency Module Training

The Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (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 continuing medical education credits in the process. Nurses can earn 10.8 continuing education units upon completing the course.

Physicians are asked to complete Theme 2 first because it assesses Language Access Services, and then proceed to Themes 1 and 3. Upon completion of the modules, notify our physician office team to receive a free gift. Click [here](#) to register. Free marketing materials to promote Cultural Competency Training to hospital staff are available by clicking [here](#).

DOQ-IT RELATED NEWS

Study: Small Practices Trail in IT Adoption

Physicians in smaller practices do not adopt health information technology (IT) at the same rate as physicians in larger practices, according to a Center for Studying Health System Change study, iHealth Beat reports. Read [more](#).

More Americans Going Online for Health Information, Study Finds

Almost 45 million U.S. consumers visited their health insurers' Web sites in the last year, which is twice as many as in 2004, according to the results of an annual health data study by Manhattan Research, iHealth Beat reports. Read [more](#).

Study: Lack of Standardized Tools, Processes Impair Clinicians' Communications

Paper-based systems and a lack of standardized tools and means for communication have hindered communications between

physicians and nurses with patients and colleagues, according to a study by the Spyglass Consulting Group, iHealth Beat reports. Read [more](#).

MEDICARE NEWS

State Beneficiary Provider Appeals Lower Than Expected



The Benefits Improvement and Protection Act (BIPA) of 2000 gave Medicare beneficiaries the right to appeal a provider's decision to terminate services in certain care settings, but according to national data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the percentage of appeals from Tennessee beneficiaries is lower than expected when compared to some other states. Read [more](#).

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