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QSource-TN-Taskall-2007-04

July 2007

**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](http://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.)

**IN THIS ISSUE OF...**

- NURSING HOME NEWS
- HOME HEALTH NEWS
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- PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS
- DOQ-IT RELATED NEWS
- MEDICARE NEWS

**NURSING HOME NEWS****U.S. Sen. Grassley Praises Advancing Excellence Campaign**

In a letter to the American Health Care Association, U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley praised the "Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes" campaign and its broad coalition of supporters. [Read the](#)

[letter...](#)**It's Not Too Late to Register for the "Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes" Campaign!**

There are approximately 5,383--or almost one-third of the nation's 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.

**Set Your 2008 STAR Targets**

Don't forget to set your 2008 Setting Targets-Achieving Results (STAR) targets.

Click [HERE](#) to set your 2008 targets or to create a new account. Don't wait!!

**The Spring 2007 Issue of Quality Source Now Available Online**

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.

[Click here to read the latest issue of Quality Source...](#)

**Quick Links...**[Visit QSource Online](#)[Newsletter Archive](#)[Contact Us](#)

For further assistance, contact QSource QI Specialists [Beth Hercher](#) 800.528.2655 ext. 2640 or [Mittie Robinson](#) 800.528.2655. ext. 2642.

**Reminder: Tools and Resources Available on QSource Web Site**

The QSource Nursing Home team has a host of free, archived calls on topics ranging from consistent assignment to falls management and restraint reduction. Click [here](#) to visit the Tools and Resources page.

**HOME HEALTH NEWS**  
**Message from the QSource Home Health Program Manager:**  
**We Have Just Two Short Months to Improve Our Avoidable ACH Rates!**



With the release of March data, Tennessee home care agencies showed a slight improvement and held on to our place as 47th in Acute Care Hospitalization (ACH) by moving from 32.76 percent in February to 32.73 percent in March. Tennessee's target rate is 30.25 percent. While we still are more than 2 percentage points from our target, we haven't given up, and we hope you won't either!

Statewide, our score for Improvement in Management of Oral Medications continues to improve. Our target for this outcome was 42.11 percent, and you already have exceeded this with a March score of 43.99 percent! Congratulations to each one of you who has worked so hard to keep this score improving. We have done it for Oral Meds; we can do it for ACH as well.

**ACH Campaign Intervention Package Available July 2!**

The fifth Best Practice Intervention Package [-Teletriage-](#) will be available July 2. This is one of 12 intervention packages that will be provided electronically to home health agencies registered for the National Home Health Quality Improvement Campaign. More than 5,216 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 the July Calendar of Events.

Note: The 70-minute audio recording of the June 20 HHQI National Campaign teleconference is now available by clicking [here](#).

[More About Us](#)

For More Information...



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

**Nursing Home STAR Site**  
 Setting Targets - Achieving Results

[Be A STAR!](#)



**Tell Us What You Think!**

**Complete The Readership Survey**



**Join our mailing list!**

## Save the Dates: Upcoming July Teleconferences

July 17, noon to 1:30 p.m. CT - "Legal and Ethical Issues for Pay for Performance" presented by Elizabeth Hogue Esq.

July 26, 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. CT - Hospital Discharge Planners and home health agencies will share interventions they have used to improve patient care across settings.

\*Handouts and call-in information will be available soon!

## 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.

## 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 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 username 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](#) 615.574.7202. Agencies can also contact [Marian Boxer](#) at 800.528.2655 ext. 2638.

## Home Health Immunization Survey

QSource is tasked with assisting home health agencies to incorporate influenza and pneumococcal immunization into the comprehensive patient assessment as part of our current contract requirements.

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.

## HOSPITAL NEWS



### **Release of "Dry Run" Hospital-Specific Reports for 30-Day, Risk-Adjusted Hospital Mortality Measures for Pneumonia Announced**

CMS has begun the process of uploading the dry run version of the Hospital-Specific Reports (HSR) on the 30-day mortality measure for pneumonia (PN) to QualityNet Exchange. The upload process is expected to take five to seven business days. An email message will be sent to inform hospitals of the completion of the file uploading process; this email will mark the beginning of the 30-day Question and Comment period regarding this "dry run" version of Hospital-Specific Reports.

Each hospital's report will be placed in the QualityNet Exchange inbox of that hospital's designated user with the "QIO Clinical Warehouse Feedback Reports" role. The reports display hospital-specific mortality rates reflecting care of Medicare patients, age 65 and older, with a principal discharge diagnosis of PN, based on July 2005-June 2006 Medicare fee-for-service claims. All hospitals that were open between July 2005-June 2006, had eligible pneumonia cases, and currently have QualityNet Exchange users will receive HSRs.

The 2005-2006 mortality rates that are contained in these "dry run" reports will not be posted publicly on the [Hospital Compare](#). The "dry run" is intended to allow hospitals to preview the report format and the type of information it contains.

Please be aware that the HSR files now contain protected patient-level data. Due to this inclusion, sending HSRs or information containing patient identifiers in the body of an email message (to [mortalitymeasures@coqio.sdps.org](mailto:mortalitymeasures@coqio.sdps.org), your QIO, or any other entity) would violate HIPAA regulations and is strictly prohibited. QualityNet Exchange is the only CMS-approved means of transmitting protected patient-level data electronically.

Copies of your HSRs are being distributed to your state QIO as an informational resource. For any file-related issues (e.g., retrieving or opening files, misrouted files, etc.), please contact the QualityNet [Help Desk](#) at 866.288.8912. For help in interpreting the data or other content of the Hospital-Specific Report, contact [Colorado Foundation for Medical Care](#).

Information and updates about this initiative will be posted periodically to [QualityNet](#) under the "Hospitals" section. Providers are encouraged to visit the site periodically for the most current information.

**Save the Date: Fourth Annual Patient Safety Symposium  
Sept. 5**

Mark your calendars now for Tennessee's Fourth Annual Patient Safety Symposium Sept. 5. This one-day session focuses on patient safety issues and topics. Hear special guest speakers and attend the awards luncheon.

The symposium will take place at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel in downtown Nashville. Online registration details are forthcoming, so save the date and watch for additional information.

### **June MedQIC Update!**

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

## **PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS**

### **2007 PQRI Toolkit for Providers Now Available!**

The 2007 PQRI Toolkit includes valuable resources to assist eligible professionals in the successful integration of PQRI measurement into their practice. The toolkit includes the newly released 2007 PQRI Measure Finder Tool, which allows users to search for applicable measures based on a single code or a combination of codes.



CMS suggests that eligible professionals review and discuss the following materials with their staff. Click [here](#) for the toolkit.

Note: A replay option of the June 27 PQRI call is now available through July 4. The call-in number is 800.642.1687, passcode 3686768. Handouts are available by clicking [here](#).

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### **OMH Releases Online "Health Care Language Services Implementation Guide"**

The Office of Minority Health (OMH) recently released the "Health Care Language Services Implementation Guide," an interactive Web-based learning tool designed to help healthcare professionals plan, implement and evaluate language access services within their organizations. The guide is available at no cost to healthcare providers by clicking [here](#).

## **FREE Health IT and Care Management Resource Available**

The Doctor's Office Quality-Information Technology (DOQ-IT) University is an interactive, Web-based learning environment available to physician practices. DOQ-IT University offers learning tools to facilitate the adoption and application of health information technology and care management strategies. Click here to visit [DOQ-IT University](#) (registration required). Click [here](#) for registration instructions.

## **"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](#).

## **Spanish Diabetes Road Maps Now Available!**

The Spanish version of the Diabetes Road Map is now available. 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. The Diabetes Road Map is also available in English.

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.

## **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**

### **Bipartisan Group Introduces Health IT Bill Into Senate**

Bipartisan legislation was recently introduced in the Senate that includes increasing the adoption of information technology (IT) among health providers who treat low-income patients and providing grant funds for IT projects, iHealthBeat reports. [Read more](#) (registration required to view article).

### **IT Adoption Key Factor in Healthcare Reform, Report Finds**

The Center for American Progress recently released a report detailing how health IT can transform the U.S. healthcare system,

iHealthBeat reports. [Read more](#) (registration required to view article).

### **Health IT Coordinator Touts Progress, Cautions About Limited Time**

Given the significant progress made during the past three years, most U.S. residents could have access to an interoperable electronic health record by 2014 National Health IT Coordinator Robert Kolodner said at a health information technology (IT) conference in Washington, D.C., recently, iHealthBeat reports. [Read more](#) (registration required to view article).

### **New Group To Help Physicians Acquire, Use Health IT**

The Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and the Association of Medical Directors of Information Systems have partnered to form a new membership community for physicians to help them adopt and use health information technology (IT), iHealthBeat reports. [Read more](#) (registration required to view article).

### **Medicare Pilot Program to Test PHRs**

CMS, in conjunction with four health plans, will provide Medicare beneficiaries with personal health records (PHRs) to better manage their health, iHealthBeat reports. The records will automatically be updated with Medicare data, and CMS will evaluate the pilot to determine which features beneficiaries prefer and how to encourage seniors to use. [Read more](#) (registration required to view article).

## **MEDICARE NEWS**

### **Hospital Discharge Resources Now Available!**

Beginning July 2, 2007, hospitals must deliver a revised version of the "Important Message from Medicare" to inform Medicare beneficiaries who are hospital inpatients about their hospital discharge appeal rights. Notice is required for both Original Medicare beneficiaries and those enrolled in Medicare health plans. Beneficiaries who choose to appeal the discharge decision will also receive a more detailed notice.



QSource is requesting that you provide your organization's contact information by completing the [Hospital Discharge Appeals Contact Information](#) form. Click [here](#) to learn more about the hospital discharge appeals process and available resources.

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.

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