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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](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.)

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**NURSING HOME NEWS****Providers Use Teams to Fight Pressure Ulcers**

With evidence mounting that the fight against pressure ulcers requires a group approach, providers are increasingly assembling teams to battle these debilitating wounds and avoid potentially fatal infections. Today, it's not uncommon for nursing homes to involve everyone from nurses to laundry workers, nutritionists, and maintenance workers in anti-pressure sore efforts. Such group efforts can cut severe pressure sores acquired in-house by 69 percent, according to a study of a collaborative program involving 52 nursing homes, *FierceHealthcare* reports. [Read more.](#)

**HOME HEALTH NEWS**

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

**Winter 2008 Issue of Quality Source Coming Soon**

In this issue of *Quality Source*, we introduce you to a new movement among the healthcare community to make quality and cost more transparent.

We also discuss the methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) problem in Tennessee and statewide workshops aimed at reducing pressure ulcers in nursing homes.

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According to November 2007 data, home health agencies (HHAs) have shown statewide improvement on both acute care hospitalization (ACH) and management of oral medications. The ACH rate worsened from September to October then improved in November. The rates were as follows: September 32.38 percent; October 32.44 percent; and November 32.31 percent.

The statewide rate for oral meds improved to 45.16 percent in November, which exceeds the state's CMS target rate of 44.68 percent.

### 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.

### HHQI Intervention Packages Available on MedQIC

Free best practice intervention packages were provided monthly through the Home Health Quality Improvement (HHQI) campaign and included educational tools and resources, guidelines, success stories, and best practice education to assist agencies in reducing avoidable hospitalizations. All of these resources are now available on [MedQIC](#) to assist HHAs in keeping their patients at home.

### Study: Racial Differences in Hospice Revocation to Pursue Aggressive Care

Findings from a recent study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* indicate that African American patients were more likely than Caucasian patients to withdraw from hospice to pursue life-prolonging therapies. [Read more](#).

### New Guideline Identifies Those Most at Risk of Falls

A new *American Academy of Neurology* study finds certain neurology patients are at a high risk of unintentional falls and should be screened regularly to help prevent the high number of

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fall-related injuries and deaths in the U.S. each year. [Read more.](#)

### **Good Heart Care Follows Patients Home**

Many healthcare providers are successfully employing a set of interventions to improve congestive heart failure care for patients in the hospital and after discharge, with great results: fewer hospitalizations and re-admissions. [Read more.](#)

### **Tools and Resources**

[Immunization Action Council Standing Orders Protocols for Vaccine Administration \(Update\)](#)

[Patient Personal Health Record Booklet](#)

## **HOSPITAL NEWS**



### **Hospital LQAT Update**

Development of the Hospital Leadership and Quality Assessment Tool (LQAT) continues to progress, with the online tool now being refined through user interviews. Beginning in the spring, interested hospitals will be invited to complete the assessment tool for the next phase of testing. Those scores will be compared with quality measure scores to determine how closely correlated they are.

### **High Performer Webinars Available**

The Texas Medical Institute of Technology is sponsoring free monthly Webinars to help accelerate adoption and performance improvement through the new National Quality Forum-Endorsed Safe Practices.

Each 90-minute Webinar is composed of a 30-minute briefing regarding practices and Leapfrog survey questions, a 30-minute roundtable discussion of implementation issues, and a 30-minute question and answer session.

To register for upcoming Webinars or to access archived sessions, [click here.](#)

### **New Toolkit Helps Hospitals Gauge Community Needs**

A new toolkit from the Association for Community Health Improvement can help hospitals better assess their communities' health needs and respond to the Internal Revenue Service's new reporting requirements for tax-exempt hospitals.

The [online toolkit](#) provides hospitals with task checklists, budget and timeline guides and a description of the skills needed for an effective assessment.

### **February 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.

## PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS

### Registration Now Available for 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 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.

## DOQ-IT RELATED NEWS

### BCBS to Post Physician Cost, Quality Data Online

Beginning in April, BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee will post physician cost and quality information online for its members with private insurance, *iHealthBeat* reports.

The online information will include how much individual physicians charge for various procedures and physician quality ratings based on whether patients received the treatments or tests required for certain conditions. [Read more](#) (registration required).

### EHR Adoption Low Among Small Physician Groups, Survey Finds

The rate of electronic health record adoption remains low, especially among physicians in solo or small group practices, according to the latest data from a nationwide survey, *iHealthBeat*

reports.

The survey found that 14 percent of physicians had adopted a "minimally functional" EHR, or a system that can capture clinical notes, record prescription orders and perform other basic functions. [Read more](#) (registration required).

### Study: Biggest Benefit of Clinicians Using IT

Three-fourths of health IT professionals said that improved quality of care would be the biggest benefit of clinicians using IT, according to a survey by the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society, *iHealthBeat* reports.

Sixteen percent of respondents said improved staff efficiency would be the biggest benefit, while 4 percent cited increased revenue for the health care organization. Just 2 percent of respondents said that the biggest benefit would be making the organization more competitive in the local market. [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 Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy.

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