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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.)

IN THIS ISSUE OF...

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NURSING HOME NEWS**CMS Launches New Nursing Home Quality Improvement Initiative**

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. Read [more](#).

Save the Dates: National Association for Healthcare Quality Healthcare Quality Week Oct. 15-21

National Healthcare Quality Week is **Oct. 15-21**. National Healthcare Quality Week is sponsored by the National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ) and celebrates the work of quality professionals in healthcare delivery systems to administrators, allied health professionals and the public. Click [here](#) for more information.

Depression Teleconference Oct. 4: Non-Pharmacological Interventions for Depression

QSource, in conjunction with Quality Improvement Organizations in the Carolinas, Georgia, Virginia, Maryland and the District of

**Summer Issue of Quality Source Available**

The summer issue of *Quality Source* features CMS's plans to revise the Medicare quality improvement organization (QIO) program based on reports outlining the program's progress and shortcomings.

In this issue, we will share strategies for improving acute care hospitalization, treating depression and managing heart failure.

We will also share the results of a hospital pay-for-performance demonstration, barriers to electronic health record adoption, and a new national heart care campaign.

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Quick Links...

Columbia, is hosting a second teleconference on depression.

The call is scheduled for Oct. 4 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. CT/2 p.m. to 3 p.m. ET. Click [here](#) to register.

This time, N. Kortner Nygard, PhD, will share strategies on non-pharmacological interventions for depression. Nygard is a licensed clinical psychologist and founder/president of GeroPsych Inc. in Nashville, which provides diagnostic evaluations and psychotherapy to nursing home and assisted living facility residents. He is also vice president of New Senior Concepts and chairperson of the Tennessee Eden Alternative Coalition.

Set Your 2007 STAR Targets

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

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

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

HOME HEALTH NEWS

Save the Date: THA Fall Workshops

Mark your calendar for the following Tennessee Hospital Association (THA) and QSource sponsored fall workshop:

Oct. 4 - Alliance Home Care, 6400 Shelby View Drive, Memphis

Stephen Winbery, MD, PhD, medical director for QSource, will be one of the featured speakers. For questions about the workshop, contact THA at 615.256.8240.

Tip of the Month

The following are common myths and facts about the influenza and pneumococcal vaccines. Use these points to educate staff as well as patients and their families.

MYTH: Vaccines administered to prevent flu and pneumonia actually cause illness.

FACT: The influenza and pneumococcal vaccines are made from inactivated viruses and bacteria and do not typically cause illness.

MYTH: The flu is not a serious disease, so I don't need to worry about being vaccinated.

FACT: Influenza is the most frequent cause of death from a vaccine-preventable disease in this country. Each year, an average of 36,000 deaths and 200,000 hospitalizations are attributable to the flu.

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Information...



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Nursing Home STAR Site
Setting Targets - Achieving Results

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MYTH: I should not get a flu shot because it may not protect me from the current strains of flu.

FACT: Although the vaccine may not be a perfect match for the predominant virus strains circulating each year, getting the vaccine does provide some protection due to cross-reactivity of strains. This means that those who are vaccinated and subsequently exposed to a different strain are less likely to have severe complications (including hospitalization and death), if they contract the flu.

MYTH: I should not give the influenza and pneumonia vaccinations at the same time due to the possibility of increased side effects.

FACT: Both vaccines can be given at the same time (but at different sites and with different syringes) without increasing the risk of side effects.

MYTH: I must get signed consent form patients prior to giving vaccination.

FACT: There are no federal or statewide regulations (except in Maryland) that require home health agencies to obtain signed consent prior to giving vaccinations. However, it is strongly recommended that patients be informed of the risks and benefits and provide their informed consent prior to vaccination.

CMS Fee-for-Service Provider Listservs

There are a multitude of listservs that all providers can subscribe to for up-to-the-minute, accurate news regarding CMS activities. To get the latest Medicare provider payment regulations and up-to-the minute fee-for-service (FFS) provider news, click [here](#).

Tools and Resources

Improvement in management of oral medications was chosen for Tennessee's statewide improvement measure. Here are some great tools to assist you as you work on improving your agency's oral meds rate.

[Resource Binder: Improvement in Oral Medications](#)

[Presentations: Oral Medications](#)

Immunization Resources

[2006 Immunization Toolkit](#)

[2006-07 Flu Gallery](#)

New on MedQIC:

[ACH Clinical Resource Kit](#)

[ACH Promotional Package](#)

[Home Telehealth Reference 2006-07](#)

HOSPITAL NEWS



New Immunization Campaign Kit Available Online

In honor of the observance of National Adult Immunization Awareness Week which was Sept. 24-30, the National Foundation on Infectious Diseases has posted their new [campaign kit](#) online. This campaign kit can be used throughout the year to help in promoting both adult and adolescent immunizations.

New on MedQIC:

Immunizations

[Toolkit: 2006 Immunizations](#)

Rural Health

[Presentation: Improving Patient Safety Culture-What Works in Rural Hospitals](#)

SCIP

[Presentation: Preventative Antibiotics in Colon and Rectal Surgery: Discontinuation Within 24 Hours After Operation](#)

Transforming Organizational Culture

[Presentation: Performance Pays: Reliable Care Costs Less and Saves Lives](#)

Proposed Rule to Expand Quality Reporting Is On Display, Open for Public Comment

A proposed rule for the hospital outpatient prospective payment system (OPPS) for calendar year 2007, issued Aug. 8 by CMS includes a proposed expansion of quality measures for hospital reporting of quality data for the fiscal year (FY) 2008 inpatient prospective payment system (IPPS) annual update. The proposed rule is open for public comment through Oct. 10. Read [more](#).

Remaking American Medicine: Healthcare for the 21st Century Set to Begin Airing Oct. 5

Drawing on unprecedented access to health care institutions across the nation, the series will present innovative solutions being undertaken by providers, patients and their families to transform healthcare quality. The four one-hour programs are scheduled to air on PBS on Oct. 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 10 p.m. (check local listings). Click [here](#) for more information.

PHYSICIAN OFFICE NEWS

Blue Cross, Caremark to Boost E-

prescribing

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee and Caremark Rx have enhanced Caremark's electronic-prescribing program with hopes to increase physician adoption of the technology across the state. The two companies worked to launch iScribe in Tennessee two years ago, offering free iScribe software that required physicians to install or download the program themselves. More than 60 physicians used the program, reports Modern Healthcare.



U.S. Health Care Quality Rates Low, Report Finds

The U.S. has the highest infant mortality rate and lowest life expectancy rate for residents older than age 60 among almost two dozen industrialized nations worldwide, iHealthBeat reports. Read [more](#).

Immunization News

More Than 100 Million Doses of Influenza Vaccine Expected to Be Available This Year

The CDC recently announced that influenza (flu) vaccine manufacturers are expecting to produce and distribute more than 100 million doses of influenza vaccines in the U.S. between now and early January 2007. Read [more](#).

The [National Immunization Program](#), a component of the CDC has the latest national information about vaccine supplies and provides guidance to healthcare providers who are facing vaccine shortages.

The CDC's [2006-07 Flu Gallery](#) contains educational materials for use during the upcoming influenza immunization season. The Gallery contains print materials such as flyers, posters and brochures. The materials are available in color or black and white, and English and Spanish.

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](#)!

DOQ-IT Vendor List

The vendors listed below have signed a DOQ-IT letter of intent to declare their intention to meet program expectations. They have successfully demonstrated the ability to report on the 35 DOQ-IT ambulatory clinical quality measures and output the data to the DOQ-IT clinical warehouse.

Current vendors as of June 26, 2006:

[A4 Health Systems](#)

[Misys Healthcare Systems](#)

[NextGen Healthcare](#)

[Sapphire Enterprises](#)

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

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 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. If interested, click [here](#).

DOQ-IT RELATED NEWS

American Health Information Community Focuses on State Efforts

The American Health Information Community (AHIC) recently highlighted state health IT efforts and released national electronic health record adoption rates, iHealthBeat reports. Read [more](#).

Study: Medical Technology Extends Life Expectancy

A study published in the current issue of the New England Journal of Medicine finds that investments in medical technologies, including health IT, over the last 40 years have extended the life expectancy of U.S. residents by nearly seven years, iHealthBeat reports. Read [more](#).

Survey: Convenience, Efficiency Drive EHR Adoption

Efficiency and convenience are the primary drivers of electronic health records (EHR) adoption in physician offices, according to a new survey, reports iHealthBeat. Read [more](#).

MEDICARE NEWS

Save the Date: Conference Call with Long-Term, Acute-Care Hospitals



The Hospital Payment Monitoring Program (HPMP) Quality Improvement Organization Support Center (QIOSC) will conduct a conference call with long-term, acute-care hospitals on Oct. 17 at 2 .p.m. ET/1 p.m. CT. The HPMP QIOSC has mailed invitations to applicable hospital systems.

Norwalk Named Acting Administrator for CMS

HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt has named CMS Deputy Administrator Leslie Norwalk as acting administrator for the agency, Modern Healthcare reports. Norwalk on Oct. 15 will replace Dr. Mark McClellan, who resigned on Sept. 5, reports iHealthBeat. Read [more](#).

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