



# Weekly Roundup

...Reporting the state and national long term care news

Please disseminate relevant information to the appropriate department.

- Administration     Nursing     Dietary     Activities     Social Services  
 Rehabilitation     Housekeeping     Maintenance     Laundry

Friday, December 13, 2013

## ANHA NEWS

### New Online Registration Opens for “2014 Legal Compliance for Nursing Homes” Seminar

Please mark your calendars for January 13, 2014, as ANHA will present a seminar entitled “Legal Compliance in Nursing Homes.” This seminar will be held at The Hyatt Regency - Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham. The seminar will begin at 8:30 am and conclude at 4:00 pm. This seminar has been approved for 6 hours of continuing education for nursing home administrators. It has also been approved for 7.2 contact hours for nurses. *Please see the attached flyer for more information. Attendees should check [www.anha.org](http://www.anha.org) approximately one week prior to the seminar to download the handouts.*

## STATE NEWS

### Medicaid Pharmacy Changes Effective January 1, 2014

Effective January 1, 2014, the Alabama Medicaid Agency will:

1. **Limit the number of outpatient pharmacy prescriptions to five total drugs (including up to four brands) per month for adults.** *Children under 21 and nursing home recipients are excluded.* Allowances will be made for up to five additional (10 total) prescriptions for brand and generic antipsychotics, antiretrovirals, and anti-epileptic drugs. In no case can total prescriptions exceed 10 per month/per recipient.
2. **Implement a mandatory three-month maintenance supply program for selected medication classes.** A maintenance supply prescription will only be counted towards the prescription limit in the month in which it is filled, and will be required after 60 days stable therapy.

The selected classes include:

Medication Class	Medications Included
ACE Inhibitors	Preferred generics and brands
Antidepressants	Preferred generics and brands
Angiotensin II Receptor Blockers	Preferred generics and brands
Asthma	Generic montelukast
Beta Blockers	Preferred generics and brands
Calcium Channel Blockers	Preferred generics and brands
Cardiotonic Agents	Generic digoxin
Contraceptives	Oral, vaginal rings, patches only
Diabetic Agents/Supplies	Generic metformin, generic sulfonylureas, OTC insulins, and syringes
Direct Vasodilators	Generic hydralazine
Diuretics	Preferred generics and brands (now includes spironolactone containing products)
Estrogens	Generic estradiol tablets
Lithium	All covered products
Men's Health	Generic tamsulosin
Potassium Chloride	Generic potassium chloride
Statins	Preferred generics and brands
Platelet Aggregation Inhibitors	Generic clopidogrel
Thyroid Replacement	All covered products

3. **Reimburse for agents used to promote smoking cessation** in accordance with mandatory coverage required under the Affordable Care Act. These agents will require prior authorization and the recipient must enroll in the Alabama Department of Public Health Quitline. More information can be found at [www.medicaid.alabama.gov](http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov) under the Pharmacy/DME page.
4. **Cover benzodiazepines and barbiturates (under the PDL) for eligible recipients** in accordance with mandatory coverage required under the Affordable Care Act.
5. **Require prior authorization for payment of generic budesonide (Pulmicort). Brand Pulmicort Respules will be preferred with no PA.** Use Dispense as Written (DAW) Code of 9 for brand Pulmicort Respules. DAW Code of 9 indicates the following: Substitution Allowed by Prescriber but Plan Requests Brand - Patient's Plan Requested Brand Product to be Dispensed.
6. **Update the Preferred Drug List (PDL) to reflect the recent Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Committee's recommendations as well as quarterly updates.**

The updates are listed below:

PDL Additions	
Pulmicort	Respiratory/Orally Inhaled Corticosteroids
PDL Deletions	
Budesonide (generic Pulmicort)	Respiratory/Orally Inhaled Corticosteroids

For additional PDL and coverage information, visit our drug look-up site at <https://www.medicaid.alabamaservices.org/ALPortal/NDC%20Look%20Up/tabId/39/Default.aspx>.

The PA request form and criteria booklet, as well as a link for a PA request form that can be completed and submitted electronically online, can be found on the Agency's website at [www.medicaid.alabama.gov](http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov) and should be utilized by the prescribing physician or the dispensing pharmacy when requesting a PA.

Providers requesting PAs by mail or fax should send requests to:

Health Information Designs (HID)  
Medicaid Pharmacy Administrative Services  
P. O. Box 3210 Auburn, AL 36832-3210  
Fax: 1-800-748-0116  
Phone: 1-800-748-0130

Incomplete PA requests or those failing to meet Medicaid criteria will be denied. If the prescribing physician believes medical justification should be considered, the physician must document this on the form or submit a written letter of medical justification along with the prior authorization form to HID. Additional information may be requested. Staff physicians will review this information.

Policy questions concerning this provider notice should be directed to the Pharmacy Program at (334) 242-5050. Questions regarding prior authorization procedures should be directed to the HID help desk at 1-800-748-0130.

### **Seniors Taking Action Today (STAT)**

Seniors Taking Action Today (STAT) is an exciting new program sponsored by the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Arthritis Program. STAT provides an opportunity for nursing home employees to be trained and certified as Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program (AFEP) leaders, and for nursing home residents to participate in AFEP courses. AFEP is an evidence-based, low-impact physical activity program proven to reduce pain and decrease stiffness. AFEP covers a variety of activities focusing on areas such as gentle range-of-motion, endurance-building, relaxation and more. The training and certification are FREE to all participating nursing homes. Additionally, the staff will receive a toolkit containing an exercise DVD, exercise equipment and educational resources to be used during resident classes. Program applications are available now. If interested, contact Samille J. Jackson, at (334) 206-5658 or 1-800-252-1818. *STAT is made possible through a grant provided by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.*

## Medicaid Annual Renewals

Some of you who assist families to submit nursing home applications have asked for a heads up on annual renewals that are coming due each month. Beginning in next week, facilities will begin to receive a letter addressed to the *Medicaid Application Counselor* that contains a list of the residents in the facility whose annual renewals are coming due the next month. **Please make sure that letter goes to the staff member who tracks and monitors Medicaid eligibility and assists families with applications and renewals.** The application counselors may assist the family in gathering any information needed to submit the annual renewal; remind family sponsors that Medicaid is up for renewal; or assist in other ways to ensure continued eligibility and care.

## Medicaid Update - Expedite Online Web Portal

Members of the Alabama Nursing Home Association have been meeting regularly with Medicaid for over a year on ways to improve the current Medicaid Nursing Home Eligibility process. As a result of our joint efforts we have the following to report:

Expedite Online Web Portal:

1. Remember to attach documents to the applicable page of the expedite application. If you are waiting until you get to the signature page to attach all documentation for the entire application, the system won't know that you have submitted the appointment of representative form. If you indicate in the status of a page that a form is attached, make sure you attach the applicable form to that page.
2. Status matters! "Saved" status just means you have saved it in the queue to return to later. "Submitted" status means you have submitted the application to Medicaid for processing.
3. You may attach more than one appointment of representative form. It may be a good idea to attach one for the nursing home and another signed by a family member. That way there won't be confusion about who submitted an application on behalf of the patient.
4. Internet Explorer version should be IE-9 or newer.
5. If you have an old operating system, you may have to use work-arounds or update the operating system.
6. If you are submitting for more than one nursing home facility, remember that you will need multiple facility codes so that Expedite will route the application to the appropriate Medicaid District Office. You may want to have different user names to keep up with the different facilities, e.g. first initial of your name, last name, and short name for nursing facility.
7. For more information please visit the Medicaid website at [www.medicaid.alabama.gov](http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov), click "Apply for Medicaid", then "Expedite On Line Nursing Home Application System". You may also try this link: [http://medicaid.alabama.gov/CONTENT/3.0\\_Apply/3.5\\_Expedite.aspx](http://medicaid.alabama.gov/CONTENT/3.0_Apply/3.5_Expedite.aspx). ANHA encourages you to utilize this tool and submit applications via the EXPEDITE System.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Congressional Update

Here are three Congressional updates from the American Health Care Association that are of interest to nursing homes:

## **The Budget**

For the first time in several years, it looks like Congress may pass a budget. Congressman Ryan and Senator Murray have succeeded in putting together a budget deal that will go to a vote in the House.

This budget deal would:

- End the need to pass continuing resolutions every few months and instead fund the government through the end of next year;
- Lift portions of the defense sequester next year;
- Lift portions of the limits on spending by various agencies.

The proposal does not eliminate the two percent sequester cut to all Medicare providers that went into place earlier this year.

Congress would pay for the budget deal by:

- Increasing Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) fees from \$2.50 to \$5.00 per ticket;
- Making changes to federal pensions;
- Extending the sequester, currently scheduled to end in 2021, through 2022 and 2023.

The practical impact to nursing homes is that our two percent cut would continue in 2022 and 2023. However, there are no immediate pay-fors from our sector.

## **Doc Fix**

Separately, there have been negotiations for a short-term doc fix that would extend for three months until March 31, 2014. The post-acute care sector is currently not the pay-for in this short-term doc fix. The cost for the three month doc fix is \$8.2 billion, paid for in the following ways:

- Rebasing disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments to save \$4 billion;
- Establishing stricter criteria for Long Term Acute Care Hospitals (LTACHs) to save \$3 billion;
- Other miscellaneous savings of \$1.2 billion.

AHCA is evaluating the LTACH language, and believes that if this passes it could result in additional post-acute volume to members that are currently providing services in markets with LTACHs.

## **Therapy Caps**

The three month extension of the doc fix also extends the therapy cap exception for three months. More exciting is the possibility of both a permanent doc fix and a permanent lifting of the therapy caps. Both the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee are going to take up these issues. Both are likely to approve permanent doc fixes, leaving the pay-for discussion for next year. The hope is that when Congress comes back in January and puts together acceptable pay-fors and get this passed, and these issues will be over, once and for all. AHCA is also pleased that the Senate version includes significant relief in the manual review process of claims over \$3,700.

# FACILITY NEWS

## **New Home for Facility News**

The Alabama Nursing Home Association has created a new website to promote news from our member facilities. The website is [www.news.anha.org](http://www.news.anha.org). This website will keep you up to date on news and allow you to easily share the news on Facebook, Twitter and other platforms.

Items posted this week include:

- ANHA Elects New Region I Director
- Students Host Christmas Prom for Nursing Home Resident

Please contact John Matson at the Association office at (334) 271-6214 or [jmatson@anha.org](mailto:jmatson@anha.org) if you have any questions or want to share your good news.

# OTHER NEWS

## **Promoting Positive Behavioral Health: A Non-pharmacologic Toolkit for Senior Living Communities**

The “Promoting Positive Behavioral Health” toolkit can help nursing homes better address resident behaviors without the use of medications. The toolkit was prepared by the Commonwealth Fund and the Hartford Foundation. For more information on the toolkit, visit <http://www.nursinghometoolkit.com/>.

## **Emergency Preparedness Training Video**

ANHA has become aware of a recently completed video specific to emergency preparedness in nursing homes & assisted living facilities. It is intended for in-service training and orientation of staff that work in such facilities, and was designed to be engaging in a story-like format; with preparedness messages conveyed throughout the story. This is something you might want to use in your facilities. The video link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD7u4n0OdJI>

## **Mark your Calendar for AHCA’s Nutrition Webinar Series!**

The American Health Care Association (AHCA), along with Brenda Richardson, MA, RDN, LD, CD, a known leader in the field of dietetics and works with business development/relations for Dietary Consultants, Inc., will be presenting a series of nutrition related webinars for those in the long term care field. Join them for important updates and information impacting your centers and patients. Get your pressing questions answered.

Webinar Schedule:

- Jan. 21, 2014: Nutrition and MDS 3.0
- <http://webinars.ahcancal.org/session.php?id=11612>: 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. CST
- Feb. 18, 2014 Current Best Practice Standards for Nutrition in Long Term Care (<http://webinars.ahcancal.org/session.php?id=11614>): 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. CST

## What's New at the 2014 AHCA Quality Symposium

It's one of the busiest times of the year, so don't delay. Before the holiday rush kicks in, register for the Quality Symposium, and cross one thing off your end-of-the-year list of things to do. The registration deadline is January 10, 2014.

### *NEW Education Sessions Added*

A terrific line-up of educational and networking opportunities makes this one of the best long term care events of the year. Three clinically-focused sessions designed specifically for nursing attendees have been added. These sessions will discuss the care practices and services that are targeted areas for quality improvement. In addition, new sessions have also been added for assisted living providers. And, on Tuesday, February 11, a celebration luncheon will be held recognizing those centers around the country that have accomplished multiple Quality Initiative goals.

The symposium will kick off with five, four-hour intensives (included with registration) that offer attendees the opportunity to dive into critical issues facing long term and post-acute care providers. With more than 20 education sessions available, two general sessions, a poster gallery, and lots of opportunities for professional networking, you won't want to miss this event!

Join the American Health Care Association for the 6th annual Quality Symposium: Quality Is Our Business Solution on February 10-12, 2014, at the New Orleans Marriott in New Orleans, LA. Registration is available online at:

<http://www.ahcancal.org/events/qualitysymposium/Pages/Registration.aspx>.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
December 13	ANHA Region IV Act/SS Auxiliary Meeting RSVP: Janice Garrett (256) 362-4197	Golden Corral Oxford	12:00 p.m.

### Alabama Nursing Home Association

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Links:

Alabama Nursing Home Association <http://www.anha.org>

AL Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators <http://www.alboenha.state.al.us>

AL Dept. of Public Health <http://www.adph.org>

CMS <http://cms.gov>