AHCA Update
Kathleen Collins Pagels, Executive Director
Monday, March 24, 2014

AHCA Lobby Day- Come One Come All!

In case you have not signed up yet...it is this week - **Wednesday March 26th**! Our big job is to thank our legislators for the smooth sailing (so far) of our Pharmacy Bill, HB 2549 which passed the House unanimously and is on its way to the Senate floor. We also want to discuss inadequate Medicaid rates, and educate our legislators about the need for ALTCS dental benefits! Set up appointments with your legislators and make your voice heard on Lobby Day...[click here](#) for a link to the Lobby Day information!

Please note that there will not be an afternoon hearing on HB 2549 as it passed out of committee last week. So please focus your legislative appointments in the morning if possible. We are aware that many may want to attend the memorial service for Judy Black at 3:00 pm that afternoon and we encourage you to do so.

In Memory of Judy Black

Many of you knew Judy Black, a nursing home administrator of long standing, loved and admired by all. She was married to John Black, also one of our own. Judy had been ill for some time, and fought heroically. She and John were able to spend this last year creating many memories since John retired from AHCCCS. Judy died peacefully at home on Monday, March 17, 2014. She and John were married for 38 years and have two children and two grandchildren. The services will be:

**Wednesday, March 26th at 3:00 pm**
Hansen Desert Hills Mortuary and Memorial Park
6500 E. Bell Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85254

You can also send cards to:
John Black
20121 N. 76th St.
Building 7, Apt # 1020
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

AHCA Comments on Latest Version of DHS Rules

To view our most recent comments to DHS on the latest version of the rules, please [click here](#). Please note that we have submitted several other comments over the past year. This set of comments is focused on the current proposed rules posted. You will need your AHCA login and password to access the rules. If you don't have it, please contact Linda at [ldoescher@azhca.org](mailto:ldoescher@azhca.org) or 602-265-5331.

You can access the rules at [http://www.azdhs.gov/ops/oacr/rules/rulemakings/active/index.php?pg=hci-phase2](http://www.azdhs.gov/ops/oacr/rules/rulemakings/active/index.php?pg=hci-phase2). Scroll to the middle of the page and under the heading "Health Care Institutions (HCI) Licensing Rulemaking (Exempt)" the rules for each provider type will be listed. Click on:

- Article 1 – General
- Article 4 – Nursing Care Institutions (NCI)
- Article 8 – Assisted Living Facilities
- Or any other provider type to review.
The "Online Survey" (Survey Monkey) is available next to each rule to make comments – just click on "Online Survey." Please note that the comments are only open until April 7th and then they will close permanently. The department must file the rules by April 30th. **This will be your final chance to make comments on the rules** that govern assisted living and skilled nursing. The department is influenced by the volume of comments made. Make your voice heard and comment – good or bad. Please contact Sylvia (sylviab@azhca.org) or Kathleen (kcpagels@azhca.org) or 602-265-5331 with questions or to share your comments. **Please take the time to review these very important rule revisions!!!**

**Reminder ... Please Pay Your Dues!**

**Important Dues Reminder Notice From AHCA...**

To remain an AHCA member in good standing, please be advised that it is the policy of the Arizona Health Care Association that for skilled nursing and assisted living member facilities, "payments equal to one third (1/3) of the total annual dues must be paid by 1/31, 3/31 and 6/30." By now the first one-third of your total dues should have been paid. The second one-third payment is due by the end of March. For AHCA Business Affiliate members, payment in full is also due by 03/31. If the dues have not yet been received by AHCA, your status as a member in good standing could be suspended. This means that registration fees for conferences and workshops will be higher. Your membership allows us to continue doing great things as your Association – we need your support, both financially and physically. If you haven't already done so, please send your payment to AHCA as soon as possible. Thank you for your assistance in this important matter! If you have any questions about your status, please contact Linda at 602-265-5331 or ldoescher@azhca.org.

**Important Affordable Care Act Update re: Individual Insurance**

According to healthcare.gov, you can generally buy Marketplace health insurance only during the annual Open Enrollment period. The open enrollment period closes at the end of this month. Upcoming important dates to know include: March 31, 2014: 2014 Open Enrollment ends November 15, 2014: 2015 Open Enrollment starts February 15, 2015: 2015 Open Enrollment ends

It was recently announced that enrollees in the federally-run Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP), who have not yet found new health insurance coverage through the Marketplace, can purchase an additional month of PCIP coverage through April 30, 2014, while they continue their search. However, these individuals must enroll in a new plan by April 15 to avoid any gaps in coverage. If you have any questions relating to the ACA, be sure to check out AHCA/NCAL's ACA website.

**Arizona Gives Day is April 9, 2014**

The Arizona Health Care Foundation is participating in the statewide online donation campaign -- Arizona Gives Day. This is your chance to impact the work of the Arizona Health Care Foundation by going online to azgives.org and donating. Last year, more than 800 nonprofits participated, raising more than $1million!

It's easy to do, just visit azgives.org and click on "Schedule Your Donation Now." A quick search will take you to the Arizona Health Care Foundation’s fundraising page. Our goal is to raise $25,000 to benefit the Foundation's programs, such as the Live A Dream, Academic Scholarships, and others. Any amount is appreciated. Would you take a moment right now and give? The Arizona Health Care Foundation thanks you for your support!

**Infection Control Update**

The Arizona State HAI Advisory Committee met this month and approved a fact sheet for skilled nursing facilities for infection surveillance and prevention of Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) infections.
CRE is a family of bacteria that includes *Klebsiella species* and *Escherichia coli*. These bacteria are difficult to treat because they have high levels of resistance to antibiotics. The fact sheet includes core measures for skilled nursing facilities to follow, information on how these organisms are spread, the risk factors associated with CRE and information on what skilled nursing facilities can do to prepare. Because there is a high rate of mortality with CRE, it is essential that facilities train healthcare personnel on proper use of personal protective equipment, on contact precautions, and hand washing. The fact sheet can be accessed HERE.

Please HELP by Participating in AHCA’s 2013 Staffing Survey
National AHCA is conducting their annual, nationwide staffing survey to examine retention and turnover rates for nursing center employees. The 2013 Staffing Survey is being sent to all nursing centers in the United States. All centers are asked to complete and return the survey by Thursday, May 1, 2014. Individual center responses to the survey will be kept confidential and published results will appear in the aggregate form only. To access the survey online, please go to: www.ahcancal.org/research_data/staffing. Participation in this survey is of benefit to your organization. Reporting your 2013 staffing trends can help your center identify areas of improvement and assist you on your quality journey. AHCA member centers may also be recognized for their staff turnover results through the Association’s 2014 Quality Initiative Recognition Program. In addition, AHCA members can access their individual survey results online through LTC Trend Tracker. Members can compare their staffing data to national and state averages, as well as local peers in aggregate. Individual center data on peers is confidential and not made available to others. Finally, your response helps provide representative and accurate data on our workforce, including creating benchmarks on nursing center staffing at the national and state level. Information from the survey will also be used to develop policy, create quality improvement tools, and advocate to our nation’s policymakers on workforce-related issues. Please email any questions that you may have regarding AHCA’s 2013 Staffing Survey to research@ahca.org.

Assisted Living Nurses Invited to Join Conference Call
Assisted living nurses are invited to join AALNA and NCAL for the first Caring Together call of 2014. The call will be held on March 26, from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm Arizona time. The topic for the call is Staffing for Higher Acuity with speaker Josh Allen, RN, C-AL, President and CEO, Care and Compliance Group. There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion. To join the call please dial 1-888-394-8197 and use code 247577. If you have questions about the call please contact either Josh Allen or Lindsay Schwartz.

NAHCA News and Events

- **Send your CNAs/Caregivers to the NAHCA Conference**
  The National Association of Caregivers (NAHCA) will hold their Annual 2014 NAHCA Conference, at Prairie Meadows June 18-19, 2014 in Altoona, Iowa. This is a great way to encourage CNAs/Caregivers to develop leadership skills, learn clinical best practices, and enhance professional standards. Go to http://nahcacareforce.org/ for more information.

- **NAHCA Awards – Nominate your Caregivers Today!**
  NAHCA recognizes excellence through its prestigious series of awards for outstanding caregivers and their professional achievements and contributions in providing the highest quality of care attainable. The awards, which are bestowed each year at NAHCA’s Annual “Key to Quality” Awards Banquet, recognize exceptional NAHCA members working as caregivers to benefit long term care and improve the quality of life for residents and staff. This year marks the 20th annual “Key to Quality” Awards Banquet. This event will be the “crown jewel” to NAHCA’s Annual Conference and Exposition. The “Key to Quality” Awards Banquet will be held Thursday, June 19th, at 6:30 pm. Don’t miss this opportunity to recognize your caregivers for all their hard work. It is far too important to our profession, and more specifically, to your caregivers. Please submit your nominations for NAHCA’s 2014 awards by April 19, 2014. For award categories, rules, and the application, please click here.
Send in your Steppin’ Up for Quality Information
Did you participate in Steppin’ Up for Quality last month with NAHCA? If so, don’t forget to send your registration, miles, and pledge forms to Dane Henning at dhenning@nahcacareforce.org, fax them to 417.623.2230, or fill them out online at http://www.nahcacareforce.org/steppinup.html. Keep in mind that any pledges over $100 can be billed through NAHCA.

Last Chance to Book your Hotel Room
Hotel rates are guaranteed only through March 28th for the Spring Leadership Conference hotel, the Tucson Marriott University Park. Reserve your hotel rooms today to receive the special rate of $139 per night plus tax. To make reservations, contact the hotel at 1-866-596-7897 or online by clicking here. Remember to identify yourself as an AHCA Conference participant when making reservations. For questions, contact Brittany Carter at brittanyc@azhca.org or 602-265-5531.

Plan Ahead for NNHW
National Nursing Home Week will be celebrated May 11-17, 2014. This year’s theme is “Living the Aloha Spirit”. To Hawaiians, the word “aloha” has a deeper significance than just a fond farewell. By Living the Aloha Spirit, we show others love and respect and joyfully share life in order to create a better world. Key attributes of the “Aloha Spirit” include patience, kindness, humility and good feelings in caring about others. National AHCA has put together a group of fantastic products that reflects this vibrant theme so that you and your staff can bring Hawaiian joy and happiness to your residents. Visit the online store to view colorful and fun product lines for National Nursing Home Week.

Don’t Miss the Mock Deposition at Conference
Have you ever had to deal with a lawsuit? AHCA will be holding a mock deposition at spring conference to give you insight into successful ways to prevent, prepare, and improve a deposition experience. Three LTC litigation attorneys will be participating in this conference session to give you the full scope of a deposition. This will be a very informative and helpful session. Be sure to sign up for the Spring Leadership Conference, April 28-29, 2014 in Tucson. Hear from local and national experts on hot issues for assisted living communities and skilled nursing facilities. Earn up to 10 CEUs. For more information or to register, please click here.

UAR Webinar Scheduled
AHCA and LeadingAge Arizona will be hosting the SNF Uniform Accounting Report (UAR) Webinar on Monday, April 7, 2014 from 11:00am – 12:00pm (1 CEU). Since this is a webinar, you will be able to attend right from your computer with the cost at $35.00 per connection. All licensed skilled nursing facilities in Arizona are required by law to complete and submit the SNF Uniform Accounting Report (UAR) to the Arizona Department of Health Services on an annual basis. With the 2014 requirement looming... it is time to review the specifics of this requirement to ensure accuracy. This report is the basis for the calculation of your SNF provider assessment payment to the Department of Revenue - it couldn’t be more important! Who should attend? Cost report preparers, SNF Administrators and business office staff who would like to be more knowledgeable. Registration information has been sent to all SNFs. Please click here for more information.

Arizona Health IT Roadmap Released
Arizona Health-e Connection (AzHeC) has announced the publication of Arizona’s Health IT Roadmap 2.0 in collaboration with the Strategic Enterprise Technology office of the State of Arizona. Arizona’s Health IT Roadmap 2.0 (Roadmap 2.0) provides a direction and vision for Arizona health IT and HIE advancements for
the next three years and beyond. An update to Arizona’s first statewide health IT roadmap (called Arizona Health-e Connection Roadmap) published in 2006, Roadmap 2.0 is focused on achieving the Triple Aim of better care, better outcomes and lower costs through collaborative health IT advancement.

The roadmap describes 19 specific, actionable initiatives grouped into five categories or domains. Here is how you can be involved and be a part of Roadmap 2.0 development and success:

- Read and gain a thorough understanding of Roadmap 2.0 which is now available at [http://www.azhec.org/?page=HealthIT_Roadmap](http://www.azhec.org/?page=HealthIT_Roadmap). Or view the At-A-Glance document here: Roadmap 2.0 Summary
- Subscribe to Arizona Health-e Connection’s free monthly e-newsletter, AzHeC Update, that will have regular information on the progress of the roadmap at [www.azhec.org](http://www.azhec.org).
- Let AzHeC know if you have a particular interest in a specific initiative or area of Roadmap 2.0 activity. Contact us at info@azhec.org.
- Attend the community forum, April 2, 2014 or webinar April 3, 2014 ([click here for more information](http://www.azhec.org)).