

## ***Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions*** **Initiative Description and Participation Agreement**

Health Services Advisory Group, Inc., (HSAG) the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Arizona, is launching the next Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) quality improvement initiative. During the next three years, HSAG will work to support Arizona nursing homes to improve health and quality of care for all Medicare beneficiaries.

A major component of this project is the **Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions (HACs) Initiative**, which is focused on dramatically reducing the rates of HACs in nursing homes. Goals of the Initiative, which will be implemented in two phases, include:

- Reducing HACs.
  - Pressure ulcers
  - Physical restraints
  - Falls
  - Catheter-associated urinary tract infections (CAUTIs)
- Increasing influenza vaccination rates.
- Reducing staff turnover.
- Implementing consistent assignment for direct-care staff.

HSAG will collaborate with nursing home providers to realize quality improvements.

Interventions used to achieve these goals may include:

- Educational/technical assistance.
- Facility tracking and reporting.
- On-site facility visits.
- Comparative data reports.
- Facility-specific quality improvement plans.
- Collaboratives known as Learning and Action Networks.

### **How much does it cost to participate?**

There is no charge to nursing homes that participate in the Reducing HACs Initiative. CMS has funded HSAG to facilitate this effort over the course of the 36-month project period. The Reducing HACs Initiative is just one of several projects that HSAG will implement on behalf of CMS over the next three years.

### **Is participation in this Initiative mandatory?**

Participation in Phase 1 of the Reducing HACs Initiative is voluntary and is available to only a limited number of nursing homes. The nursing homes eligible to participate are those that meet one or both of the following CMS criteria based on most recent MDS 2.0 and 3.0 data:

- **Pressure Ulcers:** Nursing homes that have stages 2, 3, and 4 high-risk pressure ulcer rates that are above the 75th percentile of the nursing homes in Arizona and have a rate of  $\geq 11$  percent.
- **Physical Restraints:** Nursing homes that are above the 75th percentile of physical restraint use in Arizona and have a rate of  $\geq 4$  percent.

Nursing homes that meet the above pressure ulcer and/or physical restraint CMS criteria for Phase 1 of the Initiative are encouraged to participate.

Phase 2 of the Initiative is open to ***all*** Arizona nursing homes. Beginning in the fall of 2012, Phase 2 will involve participation in the HSAG-facilitated Learning and Action Network, which will bring together nursing homes statewide to work to reduce pressure ulcers, physical restraints, CAUTIs, and falls; improve influenza vaccination rates; reduce staff turnover; and create consistent assignment for direct-care staff. The Learning and Action Network sessions will consist of face-to-face meetings, Webinars, and teleconferences. The goal is to disseminate best practices between participants and leverage collective knowledge to improve care.

### **What will you gain by participating in the Reducing HACs Initiative?**

- Avoid costly and time-consuming treatment of complications related to HACs.
- Avoid adverse effects associated with HACs including, but not limited to, extended length of stay, costly treatment, and increased debilitation.
- Avoid the costs of survey noncompliance, bad publicity, and potential litigation.
- Gain a good reputation for providing quality care.
- Learn ways to improve care transitions with acute care entities.
- Improve publicly reported measures on Medicare's *Nursing Home Compare* Web site, which can be viewed by the public.

### **How will HSAG assist us in improving our quality measures?**

HSAG is dedicated to working with participating nursing homes to implement proven, evidence-based methods for improvement in the reduction and management of HACs. Although other organizations offer similar programs at significant cost, there is no charge for tuition, materials, or consultative services provided to participants by HSAG.

Participating nursing homes will gain access to the education, training, and tools necessary to improve the quality of care provided to residents. Participants will have an opportunity to learn from nationally known speakers, collaborate with HSAG team members, and share results and lessons learned with participants from other nursing homes.

Throughout the 36-month initiative, at least one HSAG team member will travel to each nursing home as needed to provide on-site consultative services, team support, and instruction. During these visits, the HSAG consultant(s) will assist you and your team to:

- Diagnose process failures.
- Conduct root cause analysis (RCA).
- Apply rapid-cycle improvement (RCI) processes.
- Analyze system improvements.
- Develop and implement mutually agreed-upon improvement goals and quality improvement plans.
- Comply with state and CMS reporting requirements.

Nursing homes that have worked with HSAG in the past have achieved significant improvements in quality care measures. In the past three years, these nursing homes have achieved an aggregate of 84.7 percent relative improvement in their publicly reported physical restraint quality measure and an aggregate of 20.7 percent relative improvement in their publicly reported chronic-care, high-risk pressure ulcer quality measure.

**If you join the Reducing HACs Initiative, you agree to:**

- Actively participate in the Initiative during the entire 36-month duration.
- Commit to quality improvement of the following HACs: high-risk pressure ulcers, physical restraints, falls, influenza vaccination rates, and CAUTIs. The participating nursing home will also focus on reducing staff turnover and creating consistent assignment for direct-care staff.
- Work to reduce high-risk pressure ulcers and/or physical restraints starting August 2011.
- Prepare for and actively participate in regularly scheduled HSAG on-site visits to maximize quality improvement strategies.
- Apply evidence-based tools for the reduction/management of HACs.
- Work with HSAG staff to create an action plan tailored to the needs of the participating nursing homes to reduce HACs.
- Actively participate in HSAG Learning and Action Network meetings, Webinars, and conference calls.
- Share best practices and lessons learned with HSAG and other Learning and Action Network participants.

- Participate in the *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* National Campaign, specifically by submitting monthly data to the Campaign Web site for staff turnover and consistent assignment.

### **Will members from our team have to travel to attend Learning and Action Network meetings?**

Members from each participating nursing home will be required to attend periodic Learning and Action Network meetings, which will be held at strategic locations throughout the state to minimize travel requirements. The first meeting will be held in early 2013. During the meetings, teams will work on their individual HAC reduction and management care processes, learn and share with mentor nursing homes, and receive training on quality improvement processes.

### **Will my nursing home have to join the *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* National Campaign?**

In order to meet the CMS goal of reducing HACs by 40 percent in nursing homes over the next three years, HSAG asks that all participating nursing homes join the Campaign and submit monthly data on staff turnover and consistent assignment. HSAG will provide free technical support for navigating the *Advancing Excellence* Campaign Web site for data submission.

### **How can we sign up for the Reducing HACs Initiative?**

HSAG requests that Corporate Senior Management *and* the Administrator sign the attached **Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions (HACs) Initiative Participation Agreement** form as a demonstration of the facility's commitment to the Initiative.

Participants in Phase 1 of the Initiative must meet eligibility criteria set by CMS. Phase 2 of the Initiative is open to all nursing homes in Arizona.

**Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions (HACs) Initiative Participation Agreement**

As part of the U.S. Department for Health and Human Services (HHS) Steering Committee, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has helped develop the National Quality Strategy with three broad aims: (1) better health care, (2) better health for people and communities, and (3) affordable care through lowering cost by improvement. As part of the first aim, CMS has focused on several areas to reduce HACs in our nursing homes. To be successful, the National Quality Strategy must also be supported on state and local levels. Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) in each state help lead this work with state and local partners. Participants can join the strategy to work on as many HAC topics listed below as desired. Please indicate your intent to participate with HSAG by completing, signing, and returning this Participation Agreement form by September 15, 2011, to:

Joseph M. Bestic, NHA, BA  
HSAG Director, Nursing Home  
3133 E. Camelback Road, Suite 300  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
**Fax: (602) 241-0757**  
**E-Mail: [jbestic@hsag.com](mailto:jbestic@hsag.com)**

**Please check the applicable programs you wish to participate in. You may choose as many as you wish:**

- Reduce high-risk pressure ulcer rates (to begin by October 31, 2011)
- Reduce the use of unnecessary physical restraints (to begin by October 31, 2011)
- Join the Learning and Action Network (to begin fall 2012)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Organization (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Provider Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip

**I have verified the above information, read the Initiative Description outlined by HSAG, and by signing below, declare our commitment to participate in the Reducing HAIs Initiative.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Executive Name and Title (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Organization Executive Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Ellen Dalton, PhD, MBA, RN, CHCA  
HSAG Chief Executive Officer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date