

Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions **Project Description and Participation Agreement**

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

A major component of this initiative is the **Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions (HACs) Project**, which is focused on dramatically reducing the rates of HACs in nursing homes. Goals of the project, 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-California 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 Project. CMS has funded HSAG-California to facilitate this effort over the course of the 36-month project period. The Reducing HACs Project is just one of several projects that HSAG-California will implement on behalf of CMS over the next three years.

Is participation in this project mandatory?

Participation in Phase 1 of the Reducing HACs Project 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 California and have a rate of \geq 11 percent.
- **Physical Restraints:** Nursing homes that are above the 75th percentile of physical restraint use in California and have a rate of \geq 4 percent.

Nursing homes that meet the above CMS criteria for Phase 1 of the Project are encouraged to participate so they can access the support, tools, and resources to improve their pressure ulcer and physical restraint rates.

Phase 2 of the project is open to ***all*** California nursing homes. Beginning in early 2013, Phase 2 will involve participation in the HSAG-California-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 Project?

- 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-California assist us in improving our quality measures?

HSAG-California 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-California. 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-California team members, and share results and lessons learned with participants from other nursing homes.

Throughout the 36-month project, at least one HSAG-California 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-California 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-California in the past have achieved significant improvements in quality care measures. In the past three years, these nursing homes have achieved an aggregate of 61.42 percent relative improvement in their publicly reported physical restraint quality measure and an aggregate of 25.62 percent relative improvement in their publicly reported chronic-care, high-risk pressure ulcer quality measure.

If you join the Reducing HACs Project, you agree to:

- Actively participate in the Project 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-California on-site visits to maximize quality improvement strategies.
- Apply evidence-based tools for the reduction/management of HACs.
- Work with HSAG-California staff to create an action plan tailored to the needs of the participating nursing homes to reduce HACs.
- Actively participate in HSAG-California-facilitated Learning and Action Network meetings, Webinars, and conference calls.

- Share best practices and lessons learned with HSAG-California 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-California 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 Project?

Please have your nursing home administrator and director of nursing sign and return the completed Reducing HACs Project Participation Agreement.

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

Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions Project **Participation Agreement**

The below-listed entities are voluntarily entering into a partnership agreement to participate in the ***Reducing Healthcare-Acquired Conditions (HACs) Project***, which will commence August 1, 2011, for a period of 36 months. Please indicate your intent to participate with Health Services Advisory Group of California, Inc., (HSAG-California) by completing, signing, and returning the Participation Agreement by October 14, 2011 to:

Thomas E. Carter, MA, MSPH, CPHQ, RAC-CT
Program Director, Nursing Home Patient Safety
700 N. Brand Boulevard, Suite 370
Glendale, CA 91203
Fax: (818) 409-0835

Yes, _____ agrees to participate with HSAG-California in the Reducing HACs Project. Both parties agree to the conditions outlined in the first four pages of this document.

No, _____ DOES NOT agree to participate with HSAG-California in the Reducing HACs Project. Reasons why:

Print Name of Nursing Home

Name of Quality Improvement Organization(QIO)

Print Name of Nursing Home Administrator

Print Name of QIO CEO

Nursing Home Administrator Signature and Date

QIO CEO Signature and Date

Print Name of Director of Nursing

Director of Nursing Signature and Date