

A Progress Report from the Front

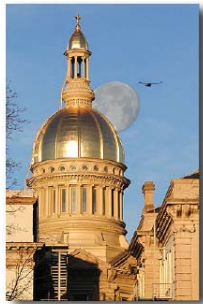
Many HCANJ members are trying to figure out their next move given the inevitable arrival of Managed Care on the residential long term care scene. Governor Christie's administration has semi-officially moved the implementation date for managed care oversight of the Aged, Blind and Disabled (ABD) institutionalized beneficiaries, which includes nursing facility and assisted living facility residents, from July 1, 2012 to January 1, 2013. This change was necessitated by the complexity of transitioning over 30,000 beneficiaries from fee-for-service to managed care.

The Administration has formed a Steering Committee to guide the transition process and from that group formed four workgroups, Provider Transition, Quality and Monitoring, Assessment to Appeals, and Assuring

Access, to examine the myriad policy issues, process changes and new systems that will be necessary to make a successful transition. Each of these four groups, which number from 20-30 people representing government, industry and consumer interests, has been meeting weekly for the last month with the aim of making recommendations to the Steering Committee by sometime early in May. Meanwhile, New Jersey has yet to receive formal approval of its Section 1115 Waiver (the Comprehensive Waiver) from CMS despite the assurances from all parties that "approval is imminent".

HCANJ has representatives on the Steering Committee and all four workgroups who attend each meeting and offer input to the workgroups

(Continued on Page 4)



News from the State House

HCANJ focus on FY 2013 State Budget and Managed Long Term Care

Since mid-March, the Legislature's primary focus has been reviewing Governor Christie's FY 2013 State budget proposal. Officials from the various executive branch departments have appeared before the budget committees in both houses to explain their individual budget requests and respond to questions about programs under their jurisdiction. These hearings continue into May, culminating with a revenue update on May 23 and 24, respectively, before the Assembly and Senate budget committees. That is when the real work of crafting budget legislation begins.

(Continued on Page 2)

Have you sent your letters urging the Governor, Commissioner of Human Services, and your legislators to restore nursing home funding???

If you have not yet sent your letter, please visit the link below and send your letters TODAY!

We must urge the Governor, Commissioner Velez, and the Legislature to restore the level of funding for nursing home reimbursement as much as possible to the FY 2009 level AND eliminate the rate corridor that penalizes those facilities caring for sicker residents.

Please send your letter TODAY!!! It will take no more than a minute to complete.

The link is:

<http://capwiz.com/ahca/nj/issues/alert/?alertid=61186351>

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Camera-ready advertising is accepted for Health Care Update. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Rates: Full Page \$500, Half Page (horizontal or vertical) \$300, Quarter Page \$175.

As a Membership service, classified advertisements of 75 words or less for positions wanted or available can be placed without charge by HCANJ members for two consecutive months.

For further information contact Pattie Tucker by phone at 609-890-8700 or via e-mail at pattie@hcanj.org.

REMINDER: 2012 AHCA/NCAL Awards Program

Through the Volunteer of the Year, DDD Hero of the Year, and NFP Services of the Year awards programs, the American Health Care Association and the National Center for Assisted Living honor those individuals who are dedicated to improving the quality of lives of residents and their surrounding communities.

Eligibility details, selection criteria, and submission requirements are detailed in the following nomination packets for each program:

Developmental Disabilities

Hero of the Year:

<http://www.hcanj.org/emails/2012DDHeroNomination.pdf>

Not-for-Profit Services of the Year:

<http://www.hcanj.org/emails/2012NFPNomination.pdf>

As always, the New Jersey nominees for the AHCA/NCAL Volunteer of the Year awards will be the winners of last year's HCANJ Volunteer of the Year awards.

The deadline for AHCA receipt of all nominations is Monday, May 21, 2012. Nominations will be coded and sent to a judging panel of long term care community members.

Honorees will be recognized at AHCA/NCAL's 63rd Annual Convention and Expo, October 7-10, 2012, in Tampa, Florida.

If you have any questions or comments, please email or call Claire Navaro at cnavaro@ahca.org or 202-898-6317.

"Works of Heart" is back

Once again, HCANJ will sponsor "Works of Heart," a program designed to shine a spotlight on the artisans who call New Jersey long term care facilities their homes.

Works of art created by residents of HCANJ member facilities will be chosen to be featured in our 2013 HCANJ wall calendar and will also be displayed during the 2012 HCANJ Annual Convention and Trade Show in Atlantic City. The calendar will be distributed to the artists, HCANJ member long term care facilities, state legislators, and our Congressional Delegation in Washington, DC. The calendar will serve as the program for our Annual Awards Program and will be distributed to those in attendance at the Annual Awards Luncheon during which the original pieces of art will be displayed.

Information and the entry form can be found at:

<http://www.hcanj.org/emails/WorksofHeart.pdf>

The deadline for all entries is May 30.

HCANJ Focus

(from Page 1)

Although there has been no formal action on legislation over the past month, HCANJ has been working diligently on two issues crucial to our members: the FY 2013 State budget and managed long term care.

On the budget front, HCANJ is promoting a much-needed increase in funding for nursing home reimbursement in the FY 2013 budget and eliminating the five dollar win-loss rate corridor contained in the Governor's budget proposal. Our message is simple. First, the \$75 million cut in nursing home reimbursement in the current budget has wreaked havoc on facilities' finances. Second, the five dollar win-loss corridor is unfair to facilities that were promised higher reimbursement under the new rate setting system for spending more money to care for sicker residents.

(Continued on Page 4)



Upcoming Recognition Dates

MAY

Better Hearing and Speech Month
 Employee Fitness and Health Month
 Healthy Vision Month
 National Arthritis Month
 National American Stroke Month
 National Osteoporosis Prevention Month
 National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
 Older Americans Month

6 - 12

National Nurses Week

13 - 19

National Nursing Home Week



Celebrating the Journey

8 - 14

National Hospital Week

14 - 18

National Women's Health Week

12

Florence Nightingale's Birthday (1820-1910)

18

National Employee Health & Fitness Day

14

Arthritis Walk

25

National Senior Health & Fitness Day

JUNE

15 - 22

Nursing Assistants' Day & Week

11 - 17

National Men's Health Week

22 - 28

Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Wk.

3

Cancer Survivors' Day

15

Prostate Cancer Awareness Day

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

14th Annual State Assisted Living Conference

Sheraton Eatontown Hotel
Eatontown, NJ

Tuesday, May 8, 2012

Education hours approved:
NJ CALA and NJ LNHA - 7 hrs.

Education hours pending:
Nursing - 7 hrs

This year's conference is scheduled for one day only. Featured speakers include Department of Health and Senior Services Commissioner Mary E. O'Dowd, and James W. McCracken, Ombudsman for the Institutionalized Elderly.

Also on the schedule is Carl Gould of the Gould Organization who will speak on leadership during times of crisis. Carl is a dynamic speaker who has much to share with attendees. You do not want to miss his informative and interactive presentation!

Information is available on HCANJ's website at <http://www.hcanj.org/education.asp>
For further information, please call Carol Rogers - (609) 890-8700.

Deadline for enrolling in
Advanced Standing
for Assisted Living is Approaching

The enrollment period for the Advanced Standing program for assisted living facilities ends May 18, 2012. This is a firm deadline. A facility that does not apply for the program by that date may participate in the program next year, but will not be able to participate in 2012.

Advanced Standing is a voluntary program developed in collaboration with the Department of Health and Senior Services that requires facilities to adhere to all federal, state and local regulations as well as meet quality benchmarks.

For more information on the program go to

<http://hcanj.org/advanced-standing.htm>

or call the Health Care Association of New Jersey Foundation at 609-890-2789.

Progress Report

(From Page 1)

recommendations. Our members provide expertise and experience that informs the deliberations and where necessary offer the “industry position” on key policy questions that arise during discussions. The workgroups are very diverse. This writer’s observation is that most parties involved are there making a good faith effort to ensure that the conversion to an MCO environment is a success.

For those not directly involved in the process it is incredibly frustrating to have to try and plan for the next year without any indication about how policies are developing and what the actual program will look like on January 1st. Many HCANJ members are clamoring for some inkling of news from the workgroups and information about how the change will affect them specifically. Not a week goes by that I don’t personally get phone calls about the proposed 2013 budget, the facility-specific rate and what kind of position the caller will be in under the new MCO program. “How can I negotiate with hospitals and MCOs using the anemic Medicaid rate that I now have?” is a question that I hear more frequently than any other. All legitimate questions are easy to answer in broad terms, but incredibly difficult to answer specifically as they relate to formulating a business plan for the next 9 months. As I wrote in these pages in January, patience and planning will pay off but that advice is cold comfort to small, single facility owners who see what they think is the writing on the wall and wonder where they will fit in to the new long term care system post-January 2013.

If change and uncertainty make you uncomfortable, or just plain scare you, then you are likely very uncomfortable and scared right about now. The good news is that you are not alone; in fact you are in the majority. Your understanding of the volatility of the situation is an indicator of your depth of knowledge. Just knowing that you don’t have all the answers will aid your decision-making.

Former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld made the following observation about the difficulty of gathering intelligence, “The message is that there are known knowns; there are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns; that is to say there are things that we now know we don’t know. But there are also unknown unknowns.” That observation kind of sums up where we are today with the plan for implementing MCO-driven LTC come January. Hopefully we will have a lot more answers before we move to implementing a new system. In the meantime, it’s what you don’t know you don’t know that will be the biggest threat to survival. When HCANJ has concrete answers to your questions, you will be the first to know.

HCANJ Focus

(from Page 2)

The level of reimbursement that facilities receive now is less than what it was in FY 2009 and the shortfall between what it costs to provide care and what Medicaid reimburses now averages \$46 a day for each resident. It is getting hard for facilities to survive. Some have called to inquire about closure notification requirements or to ask if there is anyone looking to buy a nursing home. Some are even in, or are contemplating, bankruptcy. The \$10 million that the Governor proposed putting back in the FY 2013 State budget (that is \$5 million state dollars) is not enough. We need another \$50 million more, or \$25 million in additional state funds and no rate corridor.

Legislative budget leaders and staff have been very receptive to the need for more funding and elimination of the win-loss rate corridor. But with so many factors that influence the final budget legislation, HCANJ continues to press our case hard. Members must continue to do the same.

What happens to nursing home funding in the FY 2013 State budget is especially crucial as we transition to managed long term care. When the time comes to negotiate rates with managed care organizations, facilities would be at a distinct disadvantage coming to the table with rates that are less than what they received three years ago.

This is one reason why HCANJ has been a vocal participant in weekly managed long term care workgroup discussions. Facilities are already on fragile fiscal footing. If the transition to managed care is not very carefully planned and does not go as smoothly as everyone hopes, the safety net that cares for 28,000 very sick, frail and elderly persons could collapse.

Much work remains with both the State budget and the transition to managed long term care. Along with these issues, HCANJ will soon be active once again on legislation. In a couple of weeks the legislature returns from budget recess to again take up consideration of bills.