

# A CALL TO ACTION:

## RAISING AWARENESS FOR REDUCING ADVERSE EVENTS IN NURSING HOMES



### SUMMARY OF THE CAMPAIGN

In February of 2014, the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (OIG) released their report, [\*\*\*Adverse Events in Skilled Nursing Facilities: National Incidence Among Medicare Beneficiaries \(OEI-06-11-00370\)\*\*\*](#). The OIG's findings in the report included that one out of three Medicare beneficiaries experienced an adverse or temporary harm event in their first 35 days of a skilled nursing facility stay. The results of these events ranged from extending a resident's stay to causing the resident's death. Additionally, the OIG determined many of these events were likely or clearly preventable.

In response to this report, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and its contractor, Abt Associates, launched a year-long campaign entitled *Call to Action: Raising Awareness for Reducing Adverse Events in Nursing Homes*. The campaign began with an in-person kick-off meeting that included a diverse set of nursing home stakeholders who came together with the goal of creating strategies and actions among CMS and its partners to raise awareness of and reduce adverse events in nursing homes. Following the in-person meeting, Abt hosted quarterly webinars which presented an opportunity for campaign participants to take a deep dive into selected topics. These webinars included presentations on:

- The *Quality Prescribing Campaign*, a coalition for education, training and advocacy for appropriate prescribing of high-risk medications including anticoagulants, antidiabetic medications, and opioids

- The *National Nursing Home Quality Care Collaborative*
- The role of consultant pharmacists in reducing adverse events in nursing homes
- The use of secure, HIPAA-compliant technology to report adverse events
- The *National Action Plan for Adverse Drug Event Prevention* <http://health.gov/hcq/pdfs/ade-action-plan-508c.pdf>
- Presentations from nursing home providers who implemented antibiotic stewardship and alarm reduction interventions in their nursing homes resulting in reductions in adverse events

#### CMS CONTINUES TO ADDRESS ADVERSE EVENTS IN NURSING HOMES

In July, 2015, CMS released a [\*\*\*policy memo\*\*\*](#) addressing medication-related adverse events in nursing homes and made publicly available its Adverse Drug Event Trigger Tool. CMS collaborated with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to create a tool based on the OIG report findings, intended to assist surveyors as they investigate medication related adverse events and evaluate facility systems for preventing adverse drug events related to high-risk medications. Use of the draft tool is not mandatory, but may aid surveyors as they assess compliance around medication issues and may also be useful as a risk management tool for providers.

Additionally, CMS is developing news briefs devoted to understanding and reducing adverse events. These news briefs are designed for nursing homes to print out and make available to their staff. Topics covered will include information and strategies for addressing the three types of commonly occurring adverse events in nursing homes: medication, care, and infection related events.

Lastly, CMS is happy to announce that an Adverse Events tab has been added to the Nursing Home QAPI webpage. Visit this webpage to get more information on adverse events in nursing homes, including links to the OIG report, as well as CMS' Adverse Drug Event Trigger Tool, News Briefs, and other resources and tools, as they become available. Click here for the QAPI webpage: <http://go.cms.gov/Nhqapi>.

#### CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

CMS invites anyone interested in reducing adverse events to participate in the Medicare Learning Network (MLN) Connects National Provider Calls, which have been expanded to include QAPI and adverse events topics. This expansion of topics will enable Call to Action participants to share the work of the campaign among a wider audience of nursing home stakeholders. For more information, and to sign up to receive notifications of upcoming MLN Connects Calls, please visit <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/NPC/index.html>.