



Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/ Survey & Certification Group

Ref: S&C: 12-42-NH
Revised 08.31.12

DATE: August 31, 2012

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Request to Convey Information: Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes

*****Revised to include additional Stakeholders *****

Memorandum Summary

- **Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes** - In 2012, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched the Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes to promote comprehensive dementia care and therapeutic interventions for nursing home residents with dementia-related behaviors.
- **Stakeholder Letters** - Stakeholders are sending letters to support the Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes.
- **Please Share** - Please share information about these documents as you communicate with facilities in your State and in other appropriate communication media (such as State website).

In 2012, CMS launched the Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes to promote comprehensive dementia care and therapeutic interventions for nursing home residents with dementia-related behaviors. The goals of this initiative include a focus on person-centered care and the reduction of unnecessary antipsychotic medication use in nursing homes and eventually other care settings as well.

CMS is using several approaches to successfully implement this initiative. CMS is developing and conducting trainings for nursing home providers, surveyors, and consumers. We are conducting research, raising public awareness, using regulatory oversight, and public reporting to increase transparency.

In addition, CMS has partnered with national organizations to encourage communication among the national organizations and their members. The American Medical Directors Association (AMDA) and the American Health Care Association (AHCA) have sent letters to their membership or State affiliates this summer. The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (Consumer Voice) sent a press release to their membership indicating their

support for the initiative. LeadingAge has focused on working with and educating their members about the Partnership and its goals and providing support and resources to assist in effecting change.

AMDA's letter sought to educate members about the issues to achieve the goals of the Partnership and encourages nursing home medical directors to join with AMDA and CMS in reducing the unnecessary use of antipsychotic agents by refocusing the interdisciplinary team on a better understanding of the root cause of dementia-related behaviors. The letter further provides medical directors with the tools and resources they might use to achieve this goal. The letter is located on the AMDA website at http://www.amda.com/advocacy/antipsychotic_msg.pdf.

AHCA provided a template letter, along with the facility-specific data, to their State associations. AHCA's State associations were able to provide nursing facilities with the percentage of long-stay residents in their facilities that are currently being prescribed antipsychotic drugs for an off-label use. In addition to the information contained in the sample letter, some State associations may have also provided information regarding State-specific resources available to assist facilities with reducing the percentage of off-label use.

In addition to in-person sessions, LeadingAge developed and posted a presentation, with supporting materials and resources, to discuss steps nursing homes can take to evaluate their use and reduce unnecessary antipsychotic medications; and to describe potential alternatives and how to put change into practical terms. LeadingAge also conducted a live learning webinar, *Improving Dementia Care: Reducing Anti-Psychotic Medications*, providing an overview of the Partnership and its goals, and offering resources and non-pharmacological, person-centered approaches to manage dementia-related behaviors in skilled nursing, assisted living and other settings. LeadingAge's information related to the Partnership is located on their website at http://www.leadingage.org/phillips_antipsychotic_checklist.aspx.

The Consumer Voice has advocated for the appropriate care for residents with dementia, which is important to residents, their families, and advocates. In meeting with former CMS Administrator Don Berwick, MD, and current Administrator Marilyn Tavenner, Consumer Voice advocated for strong leadership from CMS to end the misuse of antipsychotic drugs in nursing homes. On March 28, 2012, Consumer Voice sent a press release to its members applauding CMS's new national initiative. The press release is located on the Consumer Voice website at <http://www.theconsumervoice.org/sites/default/files/nccnhr/campaign-to-end-antipsychotic-drug-use.pdf>

CMS is asking each State Agency to share information about these letters and press release with facilities in the Agency's communications with facilities, and in other appropriate communication media (such as State website).

If you have questions about the letter or CMS' Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Home, please contact Kathleen Wilson at (410) 786-1507 or Kathleen.Wilson@cms.hhs.gov.

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CMS greatly appreciates the assistance from States in this matter.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management