



# HPCAIA Update

*Bi-weekly News for Hospice Professionals in Iowa*

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August 28, 2009

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### **HPCAIA Fall Conference Approaches**

Mark your calendars now for October 27 – 29, 2009 and plan to attend the HPCAIA Fall Conference at the Scheman Building in Ames. The 2009 Fall Conference offers three general sessions, 24 breakout sessions and a pre-conference workshop, along with the trade show and many excellent networking opportunities.

#### **Pre-Conference Workshop**

#### **Leadership and the Interdisciplinary Group: Overcoming Organizational Challenges in a Time of Change**

As the government debates health care reform, hospice and end-of-life care have moved from being an after-thought to the front burner of mainstream health care. From the debate on reform also comes emphasis on costs, waste and concerns regarding the viability of the Medicare Trust Fund. For hospices, this translates into a level of scrutiny greater than ever before. This scrutiny is accelerating with financial consequences that threaten a hospice's sustainability.

This intensive workshop will review the challenging landscape of hospice scrutiny with a focus on what hospice leadership needs to know and do to operate a compliant, high quality hospice program. Going beyond regulations and looking through the lens of payment scrutiny, how can hospice leadership engage a holistic, mission-driven IDG to participate in the challenge of doing what is required in order to get paid while retaining what is essential about patient-driven end-of-life care.

This full-day pre-conference workshop will be held on Tuesday, October 27 at the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center. More detailed information, along registration information, will be included in the Fall Conference brochure which will soon be arriving in your mailbox.

#### **Honored Volunteer Recognition**

Due to the success of last year's event, the Honored Volunteer Recognition Ceremony will again be held at Hilton Coliseum. This very special recognition will feature Mike Pace as the emcee and a special thank you message for our volunteers from motivational speaker Steve Siemens. The ceremony is Thursday, October 29 from 11:15 am to 12:30 pm.

Honored volunteer nomination information and forms went out in the mail this week.

## Keynote Speakers and Education Sessions

The 2009 Fall Conference will feature three keynote speakers. Kicking things off on Wednesday, October 28 will be Dr. Moses Altsech, professor of marketing at Edgewood College in Madison, WI. Dr. Altsech has worked extensively with hospices in Wisconsin and Minnesota and has created a Strategic Marketing Toolkit. His keynote and education session will help you focus your efforts on marketing and branding your hospice.

Other education sessions on Wednesday will include RAC Readiness, a session by Don Schumacher on health care reform and how it will impact hospice and palliative care, fundraising strategies for hospice and palliative care organizations and alternative pain management options.

Thursday's opening keynote will focus on partnering with long term care facilities. Dr. Daniel Maison, Chief Medical Officer of Treasure Coast Hospice in Stuart, FL will discuss strategies to help foster the essential partnerships between hospice and palliative care organizations and long-term care facilities to provide the best possible care for patients. Other education sessions on Thursday include pet therapy, advocacy 101, palliative care decision-making and critical conversations.

The closing keynote will be presented by Steve Siemens. He will focus on "Stayin' UP in and Upside Down World" and send everyone back to their communities to face life with excellence, passion and enthusiasm.

This will definitely be a Fall Conference you don't want to miss!

If you have any questions regarding the 2009 HPCAI Fall Conference, please contact [Stacey Nay](#) at 515-243-1046.

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## Changes in Hospice Wage Index and Physician Certification Requirements

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued the final rule updating the Medicare hospice wage index, and incorporating changes to the physician certification requirements. Last year CMS implemented a phase out of the Budget Neutrality Adjustment Factor (BNAF) to the hospital wage index. In February of this year, legislation was adopted eliminating the BNAF phase out for FY 2009 only.

In response to comments, CMS is implementing a more gradual phase-out of the BNAF to the wage index over a seven year period, and a 10 percent reduction in FY 2010. The rule also states that CMS is moving forward with its plans to collect additional data from hospices to advance its goals for increasing the accuracy of hospice payments.

The following table provides Iowa hospice wage indices for FY 2010:

Core Based Statistical Area	FY 2010 Hospice Wage Indices
Ames	1.0014
Cedar Rapids	0.9415
Council Bluffs	0.9966
Davenport	0.8904
Des Moines	1.0065
Dubuque	0.8846
Iowa City	1.0010
Sioux City	0.9411
Waterloo	0.8962
Rural	0.9293

In addition to updating the wage indices, the rule makes changes to the physician certificate requirements. Specifically:

- The physician must include a brief narrative explanation of the clinical findings that supports a life expectancy of 6 months or less as part of the certification and recertification forms, or as an addendum to the certification and recertification forms.
- If the narrative is part of the certification or recertification form, then the narrative must be located immediately prior to the physician's signature.
- If the narrative exists as an addendum to the certification or recertification form, in addition to the physician's signature on the certification or recertification form, the physician must also sign immediately following the narrative in the addendum.
- The narrative shall include a statement under the physician signature attesting that by signing, the physician confirms that he/she composed the narrative based on his/her review of the patient's medical record, or if applicable, his or her examination of the patient.
- The narrative must reflect the patient's individual clinical circumstances and cannot contain check boxes or standard language used for all patients.

This narrative must be composed by the physician performing the certification or recertification and not by other hospice personnel. In the case of the initial certification, either the attending physician or the hospice medical director must compose and sign the clinical narrative.

The final rule is published in the [August 6, 2009 Federal Register](#).

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## Hospice Residence Networking Group Meeting Sept. 1

The Hospice Residence Networking Group will be meeting Tuesday, September 1, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Education Center at HPCAI Offices in Des Moines. Topics covered in the meeting will include staffing and acuity, as well as sharing information from a recent state survey of a hospice residence facility. Complete the attached form and return as soon as possible.

For more information or to register, contact [Amber Fisher](#) at 515/283-9361.

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## Developing Leaders for the Future

Do you have someone in your organization that's recently moved into a managerial role? Do you have a staff member who shows great promise for becoming a manager in the future? Are there individuals in your hospice that have been managing and leading for some time and would benefit from a "refresher" course or two?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, IHA can help. Now in its 9th year, the Iowa Hospital Association (IHA) Health Care Leadership Series has been designed to help new managers get started – or restarted if they have been managing and leading for some time – by providing skills and knowledge key to building success. Research shows managers are the primary factor determining an employee's desire to work for an organization. Therefore, this series exists to develop critical leadership skills and competencies with the overarching objective of increasing retention of committed, quality staff.

On October 13 IHA will launch the 2010 IHA Health Care Leadership Series. The series offers six programs over six months that cover finance and legal issues critical for managers to know as well as practical human relations skills such as building trust, holding staff accountable and conflict resolution.

Individuals can take single courses or participate in the entire series and receive the IHA Health Care Leadership Certificate. **HPCAI members are invited to participate at the reduced IHA member rate.**

Forward the attached brochure to staff in your organization that should enroll and direct them to the IHA Web site [www.ihaonline.org](http://www.ihaonline.org) for online registration. If you'd like a brochure mailed, contact Crystal Peters at IHA [petersc@ihaonline.org](mailto:petersc@ihaonline.org); 515/288-1955, ext 331.

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## Hospice News Network

### Article Calls for Improvement in Palliative Care in Nursing Homes

“Suffering in Silence: Addressing the Needs of Nursing Home Residents”, in the current *Journal of Palliative Medicine*, examines the need for palliative care programs in nursing homes. Author R. Sean Morrison, MD, says “considerable improvement is needed” in the quality of health care provided in nursing homes. He writes that “outside of hospice, long-term care institutions have the highest percentage of patients in need of palliative care than any other health care setting in the country.” Further, he adds, “Recent estimates suggest that up to 80% of nursing home residents could benefit from palliative care.”

Morrison cites a number of serious challenges facing US nursing homes. “At the same time, however, and integrated into all of these issues, finding ways to integrate the core principles and practices of palliative care—including the critical elements of advance care planning, establishing goals of care, pain and symptom management, and transition management can contribute to the improvement of care for all residents—not just those who are at the end of life.” He suggests several ways to make this integration happen:

- \* The rapid dissemination of existing successful models of nursing home palliative care. The article cites a recent Center to Advance Palliative Care report that discussed four such models.
- \* “We need ongoing health services and clinical research to identify and develop best palliative care practices for nursing home residents who differ from the traditional palliative care population because of their high prevalence of cognitive impairment, frailty, functional limitations, and multiple co-morbidities.”
- \* There must be “investments in palliative care resources, technical assistance, social marketing, and distribution of available knowledge specific to nursing homes.”
- \* The reimbursement and regulatory climates in which nursing homes exist must be changed “to ensure that nursing home residents receive appropriate high quality health care.”

*(Journal of Palliative Medicine, 2009;12(8):671-672)*

*HNN is sponsored by Glatfelter Insurance Group that provides property and liability insurance for hospices and home healthcare agencies through their Hospice and Community Care Insurance Services division. Ask your insurance agent to visit their website at [www.hccis.com](http://www.hccis.com).*

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## Member News

The seven year dream of staff, board members and donors of the Iowa River Hospice has become a reality. Iowa River Hospice opened a brand new 13,500-square-foot facility in Marshalltown earlier this summer and is now serving patients and their families. It features six patient suites, a family room, a children's room and a chapel, as well as administrative offices for the agency in the lower level. Marilee Lawler serves as executive director of Iowa River Hospice. The hospice has been in existence for more than 26 years and serves Marshall, Tama, southern Harden and Grundy counties.

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## **HPCAI Calendar**

**September 23**

**Parkin Memorial Lecture on Aging, Dr. Diane E. Meier, *University of Iowa, Iowa City***

**October 27**

**HPCAI Fall Pre-Conference, *Gateway Hotel and Conference Center, Ames***

**October 28 – 29**

**HPCAI Fall Conference, *Scheman Building, Ames***

**November 5**

**District 3 Meeting, *Cedar Valley Hospice, Independence***

To add items to the HPCAI Calendar, send information to [Stacey Nay](#).

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