



HPCAIA Update

Bi-weekly News for Hospice Professionals in Iowa

December 4, 2009

[Iowa Hospice Data Critical to Lobbying Efforts to Preserve Medicaid Benefit](#)

[HPCAIA Board Meets](#)

[Cahaba Hospice Advisory Group Meets](#)

[NDS State Comparison Report Released](#)

[CMS and Cahaba News](#)

[The Cost of Dying Featured on "60 Minutes"](#)

[Nominations Being Taken for 100 Great Iowa Nurses Award](#)

[ACHC receives Deeming Authority for Hospice from CMS](#)

[Hospice News Network](#)

[HPCAIA Calendar](#)

Iowa Hospice Data Critical to Lobbying Efforts to Preserve Medicaid Benefit

When the Iowa General Assembly convenes in January, legislators will face one of most difficult budgeting years in Iowa's history. The state faces more than a \$1 billion shortfall for the FY 2011 budget meaning that the state will need to find additional revenue or trim more than 15 percent of state spending.

The state had hoped and planned that revenues would begin to level out during the current budget year, FY 2010, however the October Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) projected a much more significant decrease in the state's receipts of -7.9%, which prompted a 10 percent across the board budget cut from the Governor. The REC meets again next week and it's anticipated a continued decline will be reported.

HPCAIA intends to fight for the preservation of the hospice Medicaid benefit but needs data to do so. Please make it a priority to complete this brief survey on the demographics of your hospice. The deadline is now extended to January 1. All submitted data is confidential; only aggregate data will be utilized with lawmakers and other constituents to paint the picture of hospice care in Iowa and why adequate funding of hospice care is critical to patients and families. If only a portion of HPCAIA members participate it will greatly diminish the strength and impact of the data.

HPCAIA Board members will be contacting hospices in their district urging participation. The survey can be completed online at the link below.

[HPCAIA Data Survey 2009](#)

Remember the deadline is extended to January 1.

[Top](#)

HPCAI Board Meets

The HPCAI Board met December 2, 2009 at the HPCAI office. Discussion and action of the Board included:

- Received an orientation regarding a governing board's fiduciary responsibilities and a review of current national and state regulation regarding nonprofit boards.
- Approved October financial report that showed performance ahead of budget.
- Approved a 2010 budget with no changes to the dues formula or in the minimum and maximum provider dues.
- Approved the 2010 strategic plan.
- Received a report on the progress of the HPCAI Data Survey. Board members chose to extend the deadline to January 1 and personally contact non-participating hospices in their district to urge completion.
- Received a federal update including details of both the Senate and House versions of health care reform legislation.
- Received an update on the status of the state budget and concerns regarding the budget for the 2011 fiscal year due to continuing decline in state revenues and the loss of federal stimulus funds that propped up the state's budget this year.
- Approved the 2010 HPCAI Legislative Agenda.
- Received a report on the Cahaba Hospice Advisory Group meeting on November 20. (see article in this week's *Update*)
- Received reports from the Hospice Residence Networking Group and Palliative Care Networking Group.
- Received an education committee report reviewing the Fall Conference. Approved Ames as the location for 2010 and 2011 HPCAI Fall Conferences.

[Top](#)

Cahaba Hospice Advisory Group Meets

Following is a summary of the November 17 Hospice Advisory Group (HAG) conference call led by Cahaba. HPCAI had two representatives participate.

MAC Updates: Nothing new at this time. Decision on CMS protest is supposed to be announced before the first of the year.

Clinicians' Feedback

- Providers seek clinician education and Cahaba would like to continue this education and therefore would like feedback about clinicians' use of the Cahaba Website and self-service technology to guide them in what tools to develop.
- It was suggested that a tool for GIP admissions would be helpful. Cahaba responded that maybe they could develop a quick tool that shows how to document, when to move to lower level of care, etc. Other suggestions followed for clinical education were provided to Cahaba.

Change Request 6440

- Cahaba developed a Webpage that has handouts of presentations, links, and resources. (see article in this week's Update) They are working on an FAQ for this issue and waiting on some clarification from CMS before posting the information. Also, tentatively planning a conference for **January 12, 2010** where they will do a high-level overview.

Comprehensive Error Rate Testing (CERT) Program

- There have been delays in the program and Cahaba is not doing a lot of education in this area because the reports aren't available. Cahaba has seen an increase in the lack of response to the

CERT Program, so providers are reminded to respond to the first CERT request, but also need to respond to additional requests for information.

Data Analysis

- In reviewing its data, Cahaba mentioned there are certain states that are above average in phone calls and Iowa is actually the state that generates the most phone calls. HPCAI representatives on the call were uncertain why Iowa providers would be placing more calls.

The minutes from the November 17 Hospice Advisory Group meeting are attached to this issue of the *Update*, and are also posted on the [Cahaba Web site](#).

The next meeting is April 20, 2010.

[Top](#)

NDS State Comparison Report Released

The state performance comparison of National Data Set (NDS) for 2008 was released December 3 by NHPCO and is an attachment with this week's *HPCAI Update*. Nearly 20 HPCAI member agencies submitted data into the NDS.

The NDS represents a comprehensive compilation of information on hospice operations including who provides care; who receives care; and the range, structure, and quality of hospice services. NDS results can also be employed in state and national leaders' efforts to support hospice needs for growth and legislative change.

Data collection for 2009 will be as important as ever. The NDS 2009 data submission worksheet will be available by February 1, 2010. Every hospice's data enhance the value of the NDS; therefore, **all** hospices (including non-NHPCO members) are urged to join us in the submission process. The more information hospices submit, the better the NDS can meet the hospice community's needs.

NHPCO maintains a dedicated email address (nds@nhpco.org) for questions related to the survey, data submission, or any other part of NDS process should you need individual assistance.

[Top](#)

CMS and Cahaba News

The revised Hospice Payment System Fact Sheet (November 2009) is now available in downloadable format. This fact sheet provides general information about the Medicare hospice benefit including coverage of hospice services, certification requirements, election periods, how payment rates are set, patient coinsurance payments, caps on hospice payments, and additional reporting required on hospice claims. [Click here to access the fact sheet](#).

Frequently asked questions related to Change Request (CR) 6440, "Additional Data Collection on Hospice Claims" are now available at on the Cahaba Web site on the "Change Request (CR) 6440: Additional Data Collection on Hospice Claims" [Web page](#).

[Top](#)

The Cost of Dying Featured on "60 Minutes"

A story on the Sunday, November 22 edition of "60 Minutes" focused on care at the end of life and the cost of dying that escalates when patients are admitted to hospitals and numerous interventions proceed. Featured prominently in the story is Ira Byock, MD, the Director of Palliative Medicine at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, New Hampshire. Dr. Byock has been a consistent advocate for the voice and rights of dying patients and their families. To view the story and for more information, visit the [CBS Web site](#).

[Top](#)

Nominations Being Taken for 100 Great Iowa Nurses Award

The 100 Great Iowa Nurses awards is headed for its sixth year of honoring Iowa nurses whose courage, competence and commitment to patients and the nursing profession stand out above all others.

Each year, nomination packets are sent to hospitals, long-term care facilities, schools and other health-related organizations. Nominations, which may be submitted online, will be collected through **January 1, 2010**. The pool of nominees is narrowed by a panel of reviewers (all past recipients of the honor) from around the state. The 100 final honorees are then selected by a committee of representatives of the sponsoring organizations. Awardees will be honored on May 2, 2010, at the sixth-annual 100 Great Iowa Nurses Celebration in Des Moines.

For more information and online nomination forms, visit the 100 Great Iowa Nurses Web site at www.greatnurses.org.

[Top](#)

ACHC receives Deeming Authority for Hospice from CMS

The Accreditation Commission for Health Care, Inc. (ACHC) has received deeming authority for hospice organizations from the Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). ACHC earned a four year term for hospice deeming authority from CMS. Recognition by CMS means that ACHC has met or exceeded all Medicare and Medicaid certification standards. Providers now have the choice to become Medicare certified hospice providers by choosing ACHC for accreditation.

For more information, contact ACHC at 919-785-1214, customerservice@achc.org or visit achc.org.

[Top](#)

Hospice News Network

Researchers from the Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing and the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University will begin a research project to determine what drives the dying to live long enough to resolve unfinished business. The release says, "In the past, researchers have shied away from approaching dying patients with questions, but among the goals of these projects is to give hospice patients options to participate in research. They also will organize a biomedical research group interested in palliative care that focuses on the patients' and family members' inner strength." (*Case Western Reserve University News Release*, 11/17)

Susan Enguidanos, assistant professor at the USC Davis School of Gerontology, has teamed with Partners in Care Foundation to "create an educational brochure featuring real-life stories about the experiences of African-American families in end-of-life care programs." The article says, "Developed directly from interviews with local community members, the personal reflections describe the initial misconceptions held of hospice and the oftentimes contrasting reality of service." Visit the [USC Davis School of Gerontology Web site](#) for more information. (*USC News*, 11/18)

In Albany, New York, The Community Hospice will premiere its online "Quality of Life, Not End of Life" program on December 10. The Hospice is seeking to increase awareness of its services in an effort to enable people be with their loved ones in the comfort of their homes, not a hospital or nursing home, and has set up a special [social community site](#) to assist in that effort. To view a video news release online, [click here](#). (*Marketwire*, 11/19)

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.

[Top](#)

HPCAI Calendar

- **December 9, 10:30 am**

District 1 Meeting

Buena Vista Regional Medical Center, Kallmer Education Center – Rooms A and B, Storm Lake

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

[Top](#)