



NDLTCA Newsletter

December 3, 2024

All Members - *All Members*

Assisted Living - *AL*

Basic Care - *BC*

Nursing Facilities - *NF*

NDLTCA Updates



Welcome to Our New Board Members!

All Members

We are excited to announce and welcome two outstanding leaders to the NDLTCA Board of Directors. Please join us in congratulating Deb Fraser, the new Region 2 Regional Director, and Brittany Ness, the new Region 6 Regional Director!

Deb is the administrator at Pemblier Nursing Center, bringing a wealth of experience and a passion for advancing quality care. Brittany serves as the administrator at Luther Memorial Home and Sun Center Assisted Living and a dedicated advocate for long-term care in her community.

Both Brittany and Deb will begin their two-year terms in January 2025, and we are thrilled to

have their expertise and commitment on our board as we continue to support and strengthen the long-term care profession in North Dakota. Welcome, Brittany and Deb!



Congratulations to Kaylene Kitelinger, Administrator at Good Samaritan's at St. Vincent's in Bismarck, on her reelection as the Region IV Regional Director! We appreciate her ongoing commitment to serving in this role and look forward to her contributions in the coming term.

Don't Miss the Membership Meeting – Your Voice Matters!

All Members

Administrators of nursing facilities, basic care, and assisted living—this is your call to action! Join us for the in-person membership meeting on **Wednesday, Dec. 11, at 1:30 PM CST** at the Radisson in Bismarck.

This meeting is critical as we'll be voting on several key items for our legislative platform. These decisions will directly shape our advocacy efforts, and your input is essential.

We can't stress enough how important it is to have everyone there. Don't miss this chance to make your voice heard and help us set the course for the upcoming legislative session. See you there!

Advocacy

Veterans' Assisted Living Bill Awaits Senate Consideration

AL

The National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), along with other organizations advocating for older adults, collectively sent a [coalition letter](#) last week to the U.S. Senate VA Committee Chair and Ranking Member supporting the advancement of [H.R. 8371, the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act](#) during the Lame Duck session. This legislation, which NCAL endorses, creates a pilot program for eligible veterans to receive assisted living care paid for by the VA.

[Read more...](#)

Medicare and Medicaid

CMS Issues ‘Guardrails’ to Improve Medicare Advantage Access and Transparency

All Members

SKILLED NURSING NEWS-by Zahida Siddiqi | November 26, 2024

CMS is taking new steps to improve Medicare Advantage access and transparency, including reforms to prior authorizations and the use of AI tools to deny coverage, as outlined in the 2026 Medicare Advantage and Part D proposed rule.

[Read more...](#)

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Billing Requirement Update

All Members

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota (BCBSND) Medicaid Expansion is informing our NEMT provider community of some newly added billing resources for billing requirements to the [Medicaid Expansion Non-Emergency Medical Transportation \(NEMT\) billing requirements webpage](#) .

Billing the appropriate type of fleet vehicle is important and is paid based on your vehicle enrollment and Medicaid Expansion contract.

Other Medicare Updates

NF

[CMS Updates Guidance for Mandatory Off-Cycle SNF Provider Enrollment Revalidations](#)

[CMS Updates SNF Provider Enrollment Online Database](#)

[CMS Updates Medicare Non-Coverage Notice Forms for SNF Beneficiaries](#)

[CMS Releases Proposed MA Rule Aimed at Improving Beneficiary Access to Care](#)

[Upcoming Webinar: CMS Skilled Nursing Facilities/Long Term Care Open Door Forum](#)

Regulatory

DOJ Pushes For Preliminary Injunction Denial in Nursing Home Staffing Mandate Lawsuit

NF

SKILLED NURSING NEWS-By Amy Stulick | November 25, 2024

In the latest development related to litigation against the federal nursing home staffing mandate, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) is urging a federal judge to deny the injunctive relief requested by 21 state attorneys general and several providers.

[Read more...](#)

OIG Releases Nursing Facility Compliance Program Guidance

NF

The U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) published its [General Compliance Program Guidelines](#) document (GCPG) in November of 2023, with updates to industry specific guidelines to follow in 2024. This week, the OIG published the updated [Nursing Facility Industry Segment Specific Compliance Guidelines](#) (Nursing Facility ICPG). This is the first update to the Nursing Facility ICPG since 2008.

With this update, the OIG has sought to modernize its approach to the compliance program guidelines by using a more user-friendly and accessible format, providing general program guidelines alongside industry specific guidelines, and making the guidance available on its website with interactive links to resources.

The purpose of the compliance guidelines is to help nursing facilities identify their own risks and implement an effective compliance and quality program to reduce those risks. **The guidelines are voluntary and non-binding, meaning they do not represent a regulatory requirement.** The OIG also notes that the guidelines are not one-size fits all and must be tailored to the unique nature of each facility.

The OIG develops compliance program guidance as “voluntary, nonbinding guidance documents to support health care industry stakeholders in their efforts to self-monitor compliance with applicable laws and program requirements.” These include CPGs directed at 11 different sectors of the health care industry, one of which is nursing facilities.

In the [Nursing Facility ICPG](#), OIG has paid special attention to four risk areas. Within each risk area, the OIG explains the relevance of the topic, cites the requirements of participation (RoP) or

other applicable laws that relate to that topic area, and provides recommendations for mitigating those risks. The four risk areas are as follows:

- Quality of Care and Quality of Life
- Medicare and Medicaid Billing Requirements
- Federal Anti-Kickback Statute
- Other Risk Areas

AHCA recommends members review the [Nursing Facility ICPG](#) with special attention on risk areas that are relevant to their operations. AHCA is also working on additional educational training to support members' understanding and application of these guidelines.



Prioritize Resident Safety During the Holiday Season

NF

The holiday season is upon us! Staff and residents are preparing for it by planning holiday meals and activities, as well as putting up festive decorations. Regardless of how you celebrate the holiday season in your facilities, now is a good time to remember to continue to practice good

safety measures when it comes to holiday decorations.

NFPA 101 Section 19.7.5.6 outlines that combustible decorations are prohibited unless certain criteria are followed. Decorations such as natural trees or wreaths made with natural materials and candles should not be used in the facility. Combustible decorations may only be permitted if they are flame retardant or when they are in limited quantities such as to prevent the hazard of fire development and spread. Other safety tips include:

- Use only UL listed holiday lights and wiring
- Avoid visually blocking egresses, exit signage, or any fire safety equipment (pull stations, fire extinguishers, and sprinkler heads)
- Avoid hanging decorations from sprinkler heads
- Inspect holiday lighting for frayed or exposed wires
- Ensure the use of extension cords is temporary (if allowed), and the extension cord is UL approved, grounded and meets the conditions noted in NFPA 99 Section 10.2.4

In addition, monitor any decorations that friends, family or residents bring in. Ensure that electrical items are UL listed, not heat producing or involve open flames. Plants such as poinsettias, holly and mistletoe can be toxic and some residents may have allergies to these plants, so follow any facility protocol when dealing with these plants. Ensure that holiday decorations do not impede the exits to resident rooms. Educate your residents and families to your policies about holiday decorations. By following these measures, you can keep your holiday season merry and bright!

Education



Looking for educational opportunities or CE credits?

All Members

Check out AHCA/NCAL's online learning platform, [ahcancalED](#), where you'll find a wide range of resources designed for all disciplines in long-term care. These opportunities will help you develop new skills, advance your career, and support the success of your organization. **As a member of NDLTCA you are a member of AHCA/NCAL so you get member rates for the education.** You will need to log in to receive the member rates. If you have trouble logging in, contact educate@ahca.org and they will walk you through logging in and/or creating an account.

NDLTCA Education Page

All Members

Visit our Education Page on our website to see more opportunities for you and your teams: <https://ndltca.org/education/>

Workforce

DHS to Supplement H-2B Cap with Additional Visas for FY25

All Members

On November 15th, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in consultation with the Department of Labor (DOL), announced that it expects to make an additional 64,716 H-2B temporary nonagricultural worker visas available for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, on top of the congressionally mandated 66,000 H-2B visas that are available each fiscal year. These additional H-2B visas represent the maximum permitted under the authority provided by Congress and are identical to the additional temporary visas provided in FY 2024.

DHS, in coordination with DOL, has authorized supplemental cap numbers in FY 2017, FY 2018, FY 2019, FY 2021, FY 2022, FY 2023, and FY 2024 in accordance with the time-limited statutory authority granted for each of those fiscal years by Congress. More details can be found on the DHS site [here](#).

Post a Job on Our Website

All Members

[North Dakota Long Term Care Association | Career Opportunities \(ndltca.org\)](https://www.ndltca.org/career-opportunities)

If you would like to post a job opening for your facility, please contact Stacy Irey at 701.222.0660 or email stacy@ndltca.org



Contact us at 701-222-0660 or email Nikki at nikki@ndltca.org or Peggy at peggy@ndltca.org.