



NDLTCA Newsletter

January 6, 2026

All Members - *All Members*
Assisted Living - *AL*
Basic Care and Adult Residential - *BC*

Care at Home - CH
Nursing Facilities - NF



NDLTCA Updates

Welcome to NDLTCA Care at Home Providers!

CH

On behalf of the North Dakota Long Term Care Association and all of our members, we are pleased to welcome our new **home health, home care, and hospice members** to the association.

We are glad you are here and look forward to learning alongside you, supporting your work, and strengthening connections across the full continuum of long term care in North Dakota.

This weekly newsletter is one of our primary ways of sharing **important updates, resources, and opportunities** with members. We make a concerted effort to consolidate information into this format so you receive fewer individual emails while still staying informed about issues that matter to your organization.

As you review the newsletter, please note the **small designation under each item title**, which indicates the intended audience:

- **All Members** – relevant across the association
- **CH (Care at Home)** – specific to home health, home care, and hospice providers

This will help you quickly identify content most applicable to your work.

If you have questions, suggestions, or would like to get more involved, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are glad to have you as part of NDLTCA and look forward to working together.

Calling Regions 3 & 5: Cherished Hopes Basket Donations Needed!

All Members

As we prepare for our 49th Annual Convention this May, we are excited to begin collecting baskets for our Cherished Hopes fundraiser. Each year, your creativity and generosity make a meaningful difference for residents across our facilities, and we are counting on you again! We are asking Regions 3 and 5 to contribute themed baskets valued at \$100 or more. Fan-favorite ideas like Self-Care & Relaxation, Wine Night in and Baking baskets are always a hit, but feel free to get creative with themes!

If you plan on donating, please contact Belma at belma@ndltca.org and let her know your basket theme so we can track contributions and ensure a great variety for the event.

Thank you for your continued support, we cannot wait to see the fantastic baskets you come up with!

Rural Health Transformation Fund

All Members

We want to ensure you are aware of—and prepared for—upcoming grant opportunities tied to North Dakota’s **Rural Health Transformation Fund (RHTF)**, which will provide significant funding to rural providers.

The ND Legislature will meet beginning January 21, 2026, in special session to approve the over \$500 million total dollars for the five-year period of the RHTF grant cycle. Once the special session is complete, the NDDHHS will begin the process for accepting applications for the funds.

This email outlines **key things providers need to know now** if you intend to apply.

Overview: RHTF Funding Awarded to North Dakota

North Dakota has been awarded approximately **\$199 million** under the federal Rural Health Transformation Program for the current funding cycle (1st year). These funds will be administered by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and distributed through competitive grants and contracts aligned with the state’s approved Rural Health Transformation Plan (RHTP).

Any additional funding beyond the current cycle will be subject to federal approval, program

requirements, and future determinations.

Timing: When Grants Will Be Available

While final grant guidance is still being developed, DHHS has indicated that grant frameworks, eligibility, and application guidance will be released following required federal and state processes.

Providers should anticipate that:

- Grant opportunities may be released on compressed timelines
- Applications will likely require clear project definitions and readiness
- **Early preparation will be important to compete effectively**

What Providers Should Be Doing Now

If you are considering applying for RHTF funding, it is essential that planning is underway now—not after applications are released.

Providers should be:

- Identifying specific projects or needs (e.g., facility upgrades, technology investments, workforce initiatives, quality reporting infrastructure, service redesign)
- Ensuring projects align with approved RHTP priorities
- Gathering internal data, estimates, and documentation that may be required for an application
- Considering how proposed projects improve sustainability, access, or workforce stability

Critical Coordination Requests

1. Notify NDLTCA Early

If your organization intends to apply for RHTF funding, **please let NDLTCA know: [Complete this brief survey](#)**

- That you intend to apply
- What type of project you are considering and the total funding amount you are requesting.

This allows NDLTCA to:

- Identify shared priorities or trends across providers
- Engage proactively with DHHS on implementation questions
- Communicate with legislators when clarification, support, or alignment may be needed

2. Engage Your Legislators

Providers are strongly encouraged to:

- Inform their local legislators that they intend to pursue RHTF funding
- Explain how the proposed project supports local access, workforce stability, or care quality

Legislator outreach should be:

- Respectful and professional
- Ongoing, but not excessive
- Focused on education and local impact

Consistent, thoughtful follow-up matters—keeping legislators informed without hounding them is key.

Final Takeaway

RHTF funding represents an important opportunity to support rural health and long-term care infrastructure in North Dakota. Providers who are prepared early will be best positioned to respond when grant opportunities become available.

NDLTCA will continue to share updates as more information is released. In the meantime, please reach out if you intend to apply or have questions about alignment with the state plan.

Education

2026 Year-Long Webinar Series: January Webinars

NF

NDLTCA's year-long webinar series kick off this January with three timely, practical sessions designed to help long term care leaders begin 2026 prepared, organized, and confident. Below is a look at what each session will cover:

Survey & Clinical Risk Management

 **January 13, 2026** |  **1:30 PM CT**

Regulatory Updates and Compliance Trends Impacting Facilities in the New Year

Stay ahead of the latest regulatory changes and survey trends affecting long-term care. This session will review key updates, surveyor focus areas, and practical strategies to help your facility maintain compliance and proactively prepare for surveys throughout the year.

 <https://ndltca.swoogo.com/surveyclinicalriskmanagement>

DON Playbook: Skills for Today's LTC Nurse Leader

 **January 20, 2026** |  **1:30 PM CT**

The Daily DON: Organizing Your Time, Tasks, and Team

Designed for current and aspiring Directors of Nursing, this session focuses on organization, time management, and leadership. Participants will explore daily DON responsibilities, effective delegation strategies, and practical approaches to staff engagement and nursing department

oversight.

 <https://ndltca.swoogo.com/donplaybook>

TEAM MDS! Insights & Coaching for Quality Coding & PDPM Success

 **January 27, 2026 |  1:30 PM CT**

PDPM Precision (Part 1)

Kick off the TEAM MDS series with an in-depth review of the PDPM reimbursement model. This session covers the PT, OT, and SLP components, highlights key training and process considerations, and reinforces the importance of MDS and ICD-10 coding accuracy for reimbursement success.

 <https://ndltca.swoogo.com/teammds>

 **Flyers and detailed schedules are available on each registration home page.**

Invest in your team and set your organization up for success in 2026 with expert-led education you can apply right away! If you have any questions, please reach out to **Belma at belma@ndltca.org**.

HHS Updates

HHS Staff Update - Sarah Aker

All Members

Sarah Aker, the ND Medicaid Director has accepted a position with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), where she will be working in the Waivers department. As a result, she will be leaving her role in North Dakota state government.

We appreciate the time she spent in state service and wish her well as she transitions into her new federal role.

Medicaid State Plan Changes for Jan. 1, 2026

NF

Effective for dates of service on or after January 1, 2026, North Dakota Medicaid will be providing a 3.2% inflationary increase for all Nursing Facility services. In addition, North Dakota is transitioning to a new classification system titled ND PDPM, to more accurately reflect residents' health and care needs. Medicaid expenditures for these services are expected to increase \$20 million for a 12-month period. [Read more...](#)

Medicaid Provider Updates

All Members

Find the most recent updates to Medicaid policies [here](#).

In or Out: The Hospice, Medicare Advantage Conundrum

CH

By [Jim Parker](#) | January 2, 2026

Opposition to a Medicare Advantage hospice “carve-in” remains strong in the field, though some say the lack of one creates a serious gap in the MA program. [Read more...](#)

Home- And Community-Based Crisis Prompts Provider Innovation

AL, BC, CH

By [Morgan Gonzales](#) | December 26, 2025

The home- and community-based services industry has changed drastically over the last decade, from different payer mixes to new service line opportunities.

To navigate Medicaid budget cuts and other uncertainties, providers must adjust operations, improve data collection and tell compelling stories to advance the industry, according to experts on a recent Home Health Care News [webinar](#). [Read more...](#)

Workforce

ND HHS promotes student loan repayment programs for health professions

All Members

NEWS: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VIEW THIS RELEASE ONLINE: hhs.nd.gov

BISMARCK, ND (JANUARY 5, 2026) - Nearly 75% of rural counties in North Dakota are designated primary care shortage areas. One key strategy to become the healthiest state in the

nation involves increasing access to health care by building a strong health care workforce – especially in rural areas.

To address rural workforce needs, North Dakota Health and Human Services (HHS) helps qualifying health care professionals connect with job opportunities where they can receive student loan debt relief while caring for underserved populations in North Dakota. HHS is accepting applications beginning Monday, Jan. 5, through Saturday, Feb. 28, from qualifying health, behavioral health and dental health professionals. [Read more...](#)

AHCA/NCAL Launches New Workforce Campaign, ‘Caregivers For Tomorrow’

NF, BC, AL

The campaign sets out to advance meaningful policy solutions, to strengthen and sustain the long term care workforce, through streamlining career pathways and fostering environments where caregivers can thrive. [Read More](#)

Partner Associations

 **Nominate Your DON for North Dakota’s Nurse**

Administrator of the Year!

NF, BC, AL

Do you know an outstanding Director of Nursing who leads with compassion, inspires their team, and makes a difference every single day?

Now's your chance to celebrate them! The North Dakota Directors of Nursing Administration (NDNADONA) is **accepting nominations** for the 2026 Nurse Administrator (DON) of the Year Award, to be presented at the NDLTCA 49th Annual Convention Awards Gala on Wednesday, May 6.

[Click here for the nomination form](#)

Deadline: January 15, 2026

Submit to: agoergen@good-sam.com

Nominate Your CDM for ND ANFP Certified Dietary Manager of the Year!

NF, BC, AL

Do you know an outstanding CDM who excels in customer service, attitude, professionalism, volunteerism, and teamwork?

Now's your chance to celebrate them! The **North Dakota Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals (ND ANFP)** is accepting nominations for the **2026 Certified Dietary Manager of the Year Award**, to be presented at the **NDLTCA 49th Annual Convention Awards Gala on Wednesday, May 6.**

[Click here for the nomination form](#)

Deadline: January 31, 2026 *(this has been changed from previous announcement)*

Submit to: zimbelmanmelanie@yahoo.com

Nominate Your Social Worker for LTCSWND Social Worker of the Year!

NF, BC, AL

Do you know an outstanding Social Worker so goes above and beyond?

Now's your chance to celebrate them! The **Long Term Care Social Workers of North Dakota (LTCSWND)** is accepting nominations for the **2026 Social Worker of the Year**, to be presented at the **NDLTCA 49th Annual Convention Awards Gala** on Wednesday, May 6.

[Click here for the nomination form](#) *NOTE: the guidelines and form have been updated. Past winners that won five or more years ago are eligible to be nominated once again.*

Deadline: January 31, 2026

Submit to: kgustavson@stanleyhealth.org

Be sure to renew their membership with LTCSWND. **Here is a link to the form,**

<https://ndltca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Membership-Form-2025-updated.rtf>



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

