



NDLTCA Newsletter

January 27, 2026

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

NDLTCA Updates

Rural Health Transformation Fund Info and Updates

All Members

[Sign up for North Dakota's listserv](#) for RHTP updates to see when the applications are available.

NDLTCA's CH National Affiliate - National Alliance for Care at Home

CH and Adult Residential

[The National Alliance for Care at Home \(the Alliance\)](#) is the leading national voice for providers delivering care across home health, hospice, palliative care, Medicaid HCBS, and home care. Alliance membership connects providers to national advocacy, regulatory expertise, and education that help organizations navigate policy changes, strengthen operations, and support high-quality, person-centered care.

Alliance members also gain access to exclusive professional development opportunities, including the [My Alliance Mentorship Program](#), which connects emerging and experienced leaders for peer learning, leadership development, and career growth. The program helps

strengthen leadership pipelines while fostering meaningful connections across care settings nationwide.

[Learn more about becoming an Alliance member](#)

Informational Session

The NDHA Health Benefits Trust: A Practical Self-Funded Path for Long Term Care, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and All Other Health Organizations

All Members

February 25, 2026 | Noon – 1:30 PM CST

Presented by: Aaron Brennan, Trust Administrator and Matt Nagel, Marsh McLennan Agency

The NDHA Health Benefits Trust is a self-funded multiple employer welfare arrangement created by the North Dakota Hospital Association. The Trust now welcomes Long Term Care organizations, Federally Qualified Health Centers and other healthcare organizations in North Dakota. In this session we will explain how the Trust works, how employers gain more control over plan design, a clearer view of pharmacy spending, and a practical path to steadier benefit budgets. We will walk through how eligibility works, how the Trust is governed, what transition

looks like, and what results current members are seeing.

Who should attend: CEOs, CFOs, and HR.

Format: Live session with Q and A

[Register Now](#)

Regulatory

Partial government shutdown, including a lapse in telehealth flexibilities, is increasingly likely

CH

As of January 25, 2026, the U.S. government is at an elevated risk of a partial shutdown. [The agreement reached last week](#), which included the remaining appropriations bills and health extenders, including telehealth provisions, is now unlikely to pass the Senate this week. If an alternative agreement is not reached, government funding and telehealth flexibilities end on January 30. Home health and hospice, please be prepared for the telehealth flexibilities to end on January 30, as the Alliance recommended last September.

For providers, this may mean reviewing all the F2F encounter due dates within the hospice F2F encounter timeframe, which is 30 days prior to the third or subsequent benefit period. If the due date falls within the 30 day period after January 30 (March 1) and the hospice wishes to utilize telehealth for the encounter, organizations may want to have it completed no later than January 30.

The F2F encounter due date may be more difficult to anticipate in home health. However, if an agency is aware that an encounter will be needed prior to the home health encounter timeframe – 90 days before or 30 days after the start of care – and the physician/allowed practitioner intends to utilize telehealth to complete the encounter, the agency may want to ensure the physician/allowed practitioner and patient are aware of the expiration date of telehealth flexibilities so they can plan accordingly.

Telehealth policies for Medicaid are contingent on the state and not addressed in or impacted by the January 30 deadline.

Thank you to the Alliance for sharing this important update!

HealthCap to Host Free Webinar Discussing Renewed OIG Senior Care Facility Oversight

All Members

HealthCap® is hosting a free webinar on Tuesday, February 17 at 2 p.m. EST

Staying ahead of regulatory expectations is critical for senior living organizations navigating today's compliance landscape. Join this informative webinar that breaks down the Office of Inspector General's latest compliance program guidance for senior care facilities and what it means for your organization. [Read more...](#)

[Register here](#)

1915(i) Office Hours and Provider Trainings & Information Sessions

CH

February's 1915(i) office hours are going to be on the first (February 4) and third (February 18) Wednesdays. For 1915(i) office hours and 1915(l) Provider Trainings & Information Sessions, [click here.](#)

CMS Releases New Online Provider Complaint Form for Medicare Advantage Plans

All Members

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently [released](#) a new [online form](#) for providers to submit complaints about Medicare Advantage (MA) plans. It is important to note that any submitted complaints must be beneficiary-focused for CMS to review.

The form requires information about the complainant, beneficiary, provider, MA plan, a complaint summary, date(s) of service, and claim number. Once submitted, the complaint will be sent to the [Health Plan Management System \(HPMS\)](#) Complaints Tracking Module (CTM). Complaints will enter a queue in the CTM, where CMS will review and triage before assigning a contract number. As the information is submitted directly online, MA plans will not receive the original provider complaint form.

2026 Federal Poverty Level Standards

All Members

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released an informational bulletin with the 2026 Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Standards.

2026 Federal Poverty Level Standards

Workforce

Build your Workforce, Strengthen your Community

All Members

Global Talent is Helping Drive North Dakota's Economy

Employers across North Dakota are facing a clear challenge: there are far more open jobs than people available to fill them. With only 30 workers for every 100 openings, the state needs practical, immediate workforce solutions. Cherokee Federal, Strengthen ND and the North Dakota Global Talent office held an informational webinar on January 14th. They shared the following:

The Global Talent Office are partnering through the Dakota Roots Workforce Fund to meet that need by building targeted, employer-driven pathways.

What Cherokee and Our Partners in North Dakota Offer

Proven Success, Ready to Scale: Since the start of our partnership, we've submitted nearly 150

qualified candidates and supported more than 60 successful hires for North Dakota employers. We're now working with 14 partners across 11 rural communities in healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality and service. With prescreened candidates ready to be referred, we're building a steady pipeline that's helping local businesses grow and communities thrive.

[READ MORE.....](#)

Plus additional links to other documents from the webinar: [Cherokee Federal -Dakota Roots Workforce Fund](#), [EnGen ND Outreach for Employers](#), [EnGen and GTO Grant](#), [NE ND Relocation Guide](#).

Ryan Mickelsen, Administrator at SMPH St. Aloisius in Harvey, has about a six-month relationship with Cherokee Federal that has been successful to this point. He is mentioned in the presentation.

If you're interested in connecting one on one with **Cherokee Federal**, the main point of contact is: Kerri Babin kerri.babin@cherokee-federal.com

Also, here is the link to **EnGen** [North Dakota Global Talent Office — EnGen - Language upskilling platform](#), and a link to the GTO grant we discussed.

Global Talent Office Grant:

<https://www.commerce.nd.gov/workforce/global-talent-office/global-talent-office-grant-program>

Immigration Policy & H-1B Visa Updates

All Members

ND Global Talent Office held an informational webinar on January 7th. *Unfortunately, recording was not available.*

If you're interested in connecting one on one with Jonathan Grode, the main presenter, for your free consultation, his contact information is: Jonathan Grode jgrode@gands-us.com

Jonathan serves as the U.S. Practice Director and Managing Partner for Green & Spiegel. [Canadian Immigration Lawyers | Corporate Immigration Toronto | Green & Spiegel](#)

The Global Talent Office plans to host another informational session like this at our Global Talent Summit later this year – stay tuned!

Quality

Quality Award Deadline Extension

NF, BC, AL

AHCA/NCAL has been made aware of a nationwide Microsoft system outage that occurred on January 22, 2026. This outage may have affected some members' ability to submit their AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award applications. To ensure that all members have the opportunity to submit their Quality Award applications and payments, we are **extending the submission deadline one week to Thursday, January 29, 2026, at 8:00 p.m. ET**. Starting on Monday, January 26, members can log into the [Quality Award Portal](#) and complete their application submission.

The AHCA/NCAL team is committed to ensuring every member has the time and opportunity needed to complete and submit their application. Thank you for your continued dedication to quality improvement and your pursuit of excellence.

A few helpful reminders:

- Not all applicants have been affected, and many applications have been received. To verify that your application has already been submitted, you can do one of the following:
 1. Confirm that you received a confirmation email titled “2026 AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Application and Payment Confirmation” from donotreply@smartsimple.com.
 2. Log into the [Quality Award Portal](#), select Current Applications and confirm the status of your 2026 application is “Submitted.”
- All applications and payments must be submitted through the [Quality Award Portal](#).

If you encounter any problems with the portal, our [Quality Award Portal Resource Center](#) provides a variety of help documents. You’re also always welcome to reach out to our [Quality Award team](#) with questions.

Insurance

Update for BCBS Network Providers

All Members

Several nursing facility providers meet twice a year with the BCBS team. This year we are scheduled for **March 30th and October 19th**. The agenda includes updates around all of their senior market, including commercial, Medicaid Expansion and NextBlue Medicare Advantage. These are very informal, virtual meetings allowing time for feedback and discussion. BCBS truly appreciates the providers along with their perspectives and insights, as do the providers that participate.

Interested in joining? Reach out to Nicole Pesta, nicole.pest@bcbsnd.com

News for Medica Network Providers

All Members

Check out the latest news from Medica, [click here](#).

Sponsor Recognition

Happy National Activity Professionals Week from our Bronze sponsor, the Compliance Store!

All Members

At the Compliance Store, this year's theme for National Activity Professionals Week is "Beyond the Ordinary." This can be viewed through various lenses. Maybe it means your level of creativity and activity planning are exceptional (which we already know they are!), or that you continue to expertly modify your person-centered approach to reflect the ever-changing landscape and resident demographics of long term care.

Whatever this theme means to you, we hope that our library of **Activities Tools & Templates** makes running and organizing the facility Activities Department a little easier. We offer a variety of resources including forms and assessments, activity plans and calendars, care plans, job descriptions, instructional guides that provide an MDS overview and an activities related F-tag chart, volunteer forms, as well as an Activity Professionals Binder Basics, which contains a

“how-to” framework for initiating and maintaining a meaningful activities program. As an integral part of the interdisciplinary team, we want to help set up Activity Professionals for success!

The Compliance Store salutes all of the Activity Professionals that work tirelessly to boost the spirits of residents across the country. You put your heart and soul into giving our most vulnerable citizens joy and happiness. We hope that you enjoy the week set aside in your honor, and we thank you for all you do. Access the Compliance Store, [click here](#).

Thank you for your sponsorship!



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