



NDLTCA Newsletter

July 14, 2026

All Members - *All Members*
Assisted Living - *AL*
Basic Care and Adult Residential - *BC*
Care at Home - *CH*
Home Health - *HH*
Nursing Facilities - *NF*

Quality



Congratulations to Our 2026 Silver National Quality Award Recipients!

All Members

The North Dakota Long Term Care Association is proud to recognize four outstanding member communities that have earned the **2026 AHCA/NCAL Silver – Achievement in Quality Award**.

Congratulations to:

- **Benedictine Living Community – Dickinson**
- **Eventide Heartland Care Center – Devils Lake**
- **Eventide – Jamestown**
- **Richardton Health Center**

Achieving the Silver National Quality Award reflects a continued commitment to quality improvement, strong leadership, and exceptional care for residents. This national recognition represents countless hours of dedication by each organization's staff and leadership team.

We congratulate these communities on this outstanding accomplishment and thank them for their continued commitment to advancing quality long term care across North Dakota.

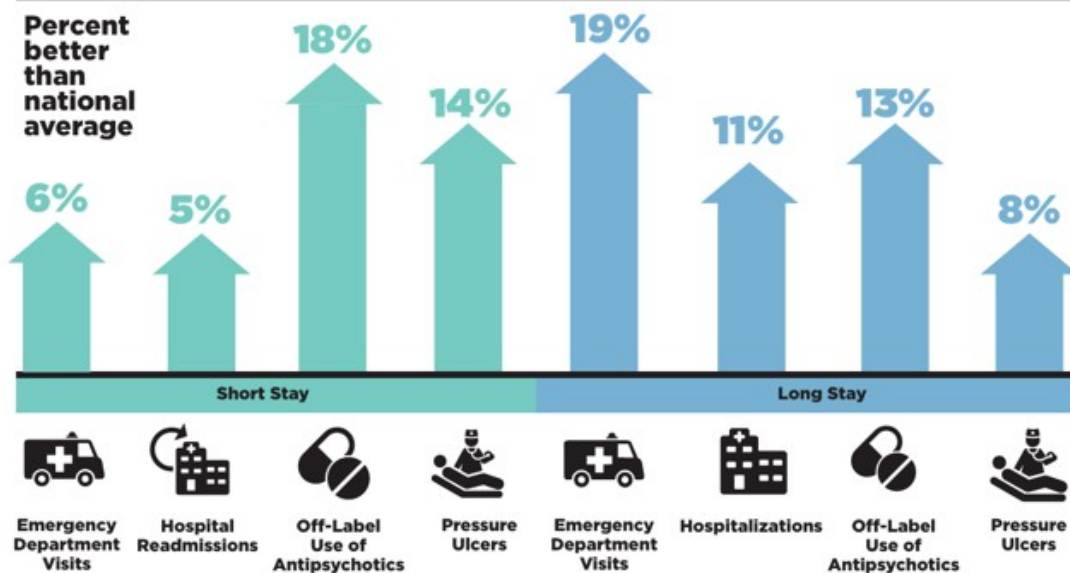
Gold Recipients will be announced August 7th!

Why the Quality Award Journey Matters: Evidence Based Clinical Outcomes with Clinical Excellence

All Members

- **Better resident outcomes:** Silver and Gold Quality Award recipients consistently perform above national averages on important quality measures, including fewer hospitalizations, emergency room visits, pressure ulcers, and readmissions.
- **Improved quality of care:** These organizations demonstrate measurable improvements in resident care, including more appropriate use of antipsychotic medications and fewer hospital stays.
- **A culture of excellence:** The Quality Award process brings staff together around continuous improvement, strengthens teamwork and accountability, and demonstrates a commitment to providing high-quality care.

Quality Performance Measures ⁱ



i. Quality performance data from CMS Care Compare and LTC Trend Tracker. Measures reflect data through 2025 Q1. Performance difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) for all measures

Baldrige Quality Award Program Dates

NF, AL, and BC

- Application Packets & Criteria Series Launch- July 14th
- Quality Award Portal and Intent to Apply Launch- August
- INTENT TO APPLY Deadline- November 12, 2026-Submit an Intent to Apply to receive discounted pricing and access to exclusive applicant resources.
- Application Deadline 8:00 PM ET- January 21, 2027
- Visit [AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program](#) to learn more or attend the kick-off webinar on July 30 at 2 pm CT [Register Here](#).

Help Shape North Dakota's Healthy Aging & Fall Prevention Efforts

All Members

The University of North Dakota School of Medicine & Health Sciences is organizing a statewide **Healthy Aging/Fall Prevention Coalition** and is seeking healthcare professionals interested in contributing their expertise.

The coalition will meet virtually and focus on advancing policies, systems, and environmental changes that improve the health, safety, and quality of life of older North Dakotans. Given that fall prevention remains a key quality measure and an ongoing priority for long-term care providers, this may be a valuable opportunity for members to help shape statewide initiatives and share the long-term care perspective.

If you or someone on your team is interested in participating, please contact the coalition coordinator, Sue Thompson, M.A Thompson, susan.thompson2@und.edu for more information.

Education



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Hybrid CNA Training Program

All Members

CNAonline.com has developed a HYBRID nurse assistant training program based on the AHCA “How to be a Nurse Assistant” Curriculum to help address the workforce challenges and frontline staff shortages.

The curriculum meets all federal guidelines and is adapted for ND state-specific requirements.

For more information on the CNAOnline Hybrid program and/or to schedule a demo, please contact [Hope Janssen](#).

Peggy Hosted an Informational Webinar – October 16:

[Recording – October 16, 2024](#)

[Handout – PPT](#)

Find all of the resources you need [here](#).



Caring for the Caregiver - Caregiver Summit

August 20, 2026 | 9 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. CT

Registration now open! Join us in person, at a local watch party site or virtually.

2026 Caregiver Summit

All Members

You are invited to the 2026 Caregiver Summit, a **free, one-day event on August 20, 2026**, featuring education, research, and practical tools for caregivers and professionals across the lifespan. Our keynote speaker is Dr. Joseph E. Gaugler, PhD, presenting on Navigating the Caregiving Career: Trajectories and Transitions.

In-person registration: <https://2026caregiversummit.eventbrite.com>

Please register early. Any registrations received after August 13 will not be eligible for a meal onsite.

Virtual registration: <https://hhsnd.site/CS2026>

This Summit is approved for Social Worker, Occupational Therapist, and Physical Therapist continuing education hours. Nurses may also apply contact hours toward NDBON licensure renewal requirements if content is appropriate to nursing.

Regulatory

CMS Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program Reporting Requirements

All Members

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has released a [Federal Register notice \(91 FR 41039; July 6, 2026\)](#) outlining the information collection requirements for the Rural Health Transformation (RHT) Program. CMS is seeking public comment on the reporting requirements that states must meet to maintain eligibility for RHT funding, including data collected from sub-awardees. These reporting requirements will shape how CMS evaluates rural transformation progress nationwide. The notice describes:

- Quarterly and annual reporting obligations for State awardees and sub-awardees
 - Required data elements tied to program milestones, performance metrics, and fund expenditures including:
 - Programmatic milestones: progress on transformation plans, governance, partnerships, and implementation
 - Performance and evaluation metrics: access, quality, outcomes, patient experience, workforce, and system redesign indicators
 - Financial reporting: expenditure tracking, use of baseline funds, and documentation of performance-based funding impacts
 - How CMS will use submitted data to recalculate each state's technical score and determine annual workload (performance-based) funding
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New GAO Report on Federal Spending and Medicaid Coverage in Assisted Living

AL and BC

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently released a new report, [Assisted Living Facilities: Information on Federal Spending and Medicaid Coverage](#).

The report includes several key findings:

- Assisted living facilities serve as a residential alternative to in-home care and nursing homes for individuals needing assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), such as eating and bathing.
 - Federal Medicaid and Medicare spending for services delivered in assisted living totaled at least \$12 billion in 2024, though GAO notes this is likely an undercount due to data limitations and inconsistent provider definitions.
 - Medicaid: At least \$3.5 billion in federal Medicaid spending for assisted living services, including ADL support and other services such as physical therapy.
 - Medicare: \$8.5 billion in traditional Medicare spending for services delivered in assisted living settings (e.g., hospice), though Medicare does not cover assisted living services themselves.
 - Other federal programs (HUD, VA) may help beneficiaries cover certain costs, including room and board, but spending levels are unknown.
 - 44 states cover assisted living services through Medicaid for older adults and people with disabilities; 29 of these rely on HCBS waivers that allow enrollment targeting and participant caps.
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Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Provider Revalidation for QSPs

CH

North Dakota Medicaid is sharing information about the state's upcoming 24-month provider revalidation strategy, developed in response to a request from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The strategy supports program integrity and helps prevent fraud, waste and abuse within Medicaid services.

QSPs have been identified as a provider type requiring enhanced oversight because of factors including:

- Use of independent caregivers
- Differences in credentialing
- Limited external oversight
- Challenges verifying services provided in home and community-based settings

Revalidation timeline

January 2027 through June 2028

Effective Jan. 1, 2027

- NPIs will begin to be required for all QSPs.
- Individual enrollment and affiliation will be required for employees of QSP agencies.
- Revalidation cycle will change from every five years to every three years.

Training and educational materials will be available before implementation to help providers understand the new requirements and complete enrollment and revalidation successfully.

Questions?

Email info@ndqsphub.org or call 701-777-3432. Leave a voicemail if needed, and a QSP Hub staff member will return your call within two to three business days. Email is the fastest way to

receive assistance.

Additional guidance and resources will be shared as implementation approaches.

July 2026 QSP update

CH

[July 2026 QSP Update](#)

New and Updated Regulatory Resources

NF

[Past Noncompliance: How to Build Your Case](#)

[Abuse and Neglect Webinar Series- With Examples of PNC](#)

[Survey Tip: F689 and Past Noncompliance](#)

[Past Noncompliance Tip Sheet](#)

§483.80 Infection Control Food Borne Illness Resources:

[AHCA/NCAL Clinical Scenario: Food Safety](#)

[Food Safety Clinical Scenario Teaching Tool \(student\)](#)

§483.70 Administration [Survey Tips – F842 Resident Records](#)

Life Safety Survey [AHCA Life Safety Survey Preparedness Resource May 2026 Final.pdf](#)

Informed Consent for Medications: What Nursing Homes Need to Know [Read more...](#)

Advocacy

AHCA/NCAL Updates

AL, BC, NF

The AHCA/NCAL Board of Governors recently met to discuss current federal advocacy efforts and regulatory developments affecting long term care providers. Below are several highlights of interest to North Dakota members:

Medicare Advantage Advocacy Continues

AHCA/NCAL continues to prioritize Medicare Advantage reform. Congressional leaders are considering legislation that would improve prior authorization transparency and accountability. During the upcoming congressional recess, AHCA/NCAL is encouraging members to host facility visits with members of Congress to demonstrate the real-world impact Medicare Advantage delays and denials have on resident care.

Federal Deregulatory Rule Expected

CMS is expected to release a significant deregulatory proposed rule later this summer. While details have not yet been released, AHCA/NCAL anticipates the proposal may include relief in areas such as NHSN reporting requirements, certain Civil Money Penalty (CMP) policies, and other administrative burdens that providers have identified through previous federal Requests for Information.

Quality Measure Star Rating Recalibration

CMS has updated the Five-Star Quality Rating System quality measure thresholds. Because quality performance has improved nationally, approximately 20% of nursing homes could see a reduction in their quality star rating despite maintaining the same level of performance. This reflects a recalibration of national benchmarks rather than a decline in quality.

- July 2026 Five-Star Rating Preview Reports should be available in the iQIES system the week of July 20th. New ratings should be public on July 29th.
- LTC Trend Tracker and Your Top-Line (2026-Q3) in early August will summarize the impact and be a resource to communicate with payers and referral partners.
- [Five-Star Intensive on Strategies to Improve Ratings at Delivering Solutions 26](#) in Boston
– Sunday Oct 11, 1-4pm ET

HHS Rule Requiring Acquisition of Accessible Medical Equipment

HHS requires Medicare, Medicaid, and other HHS-funded providers to have:

- At least one accessible exam table (if exam tables are used)
- At least one accessible weight scale (if weight scales are used)

AHCA Recommendations to CDC and HHS

COVID-19: Recommend updating the guidance related to return-to-work for staff and isolation for residents.

Enhanced Barrier Precautions: Recommend discontinuing universal EBP.

NHSN: Recommend discontinuing the mandatory NHSN reporting requirements for LTC facilities.



Latest News

All Members

- [North Dakota could pay millions for high SNAP error rate](#) *(ND Monitor)*
- [North Dakota AI committee releases agenda for first meeting next week](#) *(ND Monitor)*
- ND lawmakers react to halted Capitol grounds construction [project that ran out of money](#) *(ND Monitor)*

- [Fargo Democrats back independent House candidate after incumbent's death](#) (ND Monitor)
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Upcoming Legislative Calendar

All Members

Wednesday, July 15

- 9am - Health Care Committee ([Details](#))
 - 9am - Artificial Intelligence and Data Center Committee ([Details](#))
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Workforce

TPS for Haitian and Syrian Nationals & Other Workforce Updates

All Members

USCIS provided an update on the Employment Authorization Document expiration date for both Haitian and Syrian Nationals.

- [Update on Termination of Temporary Protected Status for Haiti \(Release: July 10, 2026\) | E-Verify](#) July 10th date is now July 24th (Haiti)

- [Update on Termination of Temporary Protected Status for Syria \(Release: July 10, 2026\)](#)
now July 17th (Syria)
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Workforce Development Opportunity

All Members

The XR for VR Project is a federally funded initiative that strengthens North Dakota's workforce and helps remove barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities by showcasing real examples of competitive integrated employment. We are highlighting 10 organizations in North Dakota who are currently demonstrating competitive integrated employment in the workplace.

Participation is free, and we are seeking additional North Dakota employers to become filming partners, especially organizations in the healthcare and long-term care sectors. Filming must be

completed by the end of August and typically requires 6–12 hours of preparation before filming day at the organization's facility.

Learn more about the XR for VR project at Bismarck State College's website:

<https://bismarckstate.edu/academics/xrforvr/>

Click on the image above to view an example video of a filming partner or click here: [Filming Partner Example Video](#)

Please let Nikki nikki@ndltca.org know if you have interest in being part of this project.



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