



e-newsletter

Providing healthy, affordable and ethical long-term care to older citizens throughout Maine, New Hampshire & Vermont

Issue 11 – October 2006



Why Quality First?

AAHSA members serve two million people every day. The families we serve should be certain that our

members are providing the highest quality of care and quality of life to the people we serve. Furthermore, markets change, perceptions change and aging-services are changing. It is important for everyone in our field to commit to a public demonstration of quality. We can and will make a difference with our collective and public support for quality in aging services.

AAHSA puts quality first at a time when many stakeholders in aging services often put peripheral concerns first. Congress and the state governments put cost first; federal and state health and housing agencies put rules first; and some consumers put punishment first. Join AAHSA in the Quality First journey, and help our association create the future of aging services.

For more information about AAHSA Quality First, go to www.aahsa.org/qualityfirst.

NNEAHSA Seeks Grassroots Opinions

With the help of Nelson Durgin (Phillips-Strickland House, Bangor, ME), NNEAHSA Staff recently received an RFP from the Maine Health Access Foundation (MeHAF) requesting proposals as part of the Foundation's long-term strategy to improve "patient-centered care." The proposal asks that we convene focus groups or discussions to gather information about experiences, beliefs and preferences for receiving health care services. NNEAHSA developed and submitted a proposal to specifically convene focus groups among the elder population, and was awarded the grant to fund these focus groups.

The focus groups will take place between September 29 and December 1 and you may be contacted by NNEAHSA staff to host a group of 8-12 of your residents to respond to six questions.

Involvement with this Grassroots Opinion process will certainly raise NNEAHSA's visibility, as well as afford us the results of the final report, estimated for completion in January or February of 2007.





To address your operational needs, AAHSA Group Purchasing is available as a free member benefit. Members incur no additional cost to join or participate and can take advantage of the best and most-competitive pricing on over 35,000 products saving members up to 40%. With three participation options, the AAHSA program delivers superior quality and substantial savings that are only accessible to AAHSA members. AAHSA uses their national buying power and clout to bring you affordable, customized products and services designed specifically for your organization.

AAHSA and Lifetime Healthcare Products have tailored a powerful package for our members by allowing them unparalleled product selection along with true wholesale pricing. Lifetime, a Manufacturer Direct Wholesaler, will provide AAHSA members with over 15,000 products and services ranging from durable medical equipment to furniture and specialty products from leading manufacturers such as: Invacare, Apex Dynamics Lifts, furniture giant Thomasville Furniture, Noram Patient Solutions, Support Surface Technologies, and others.

AAHSA uses its national buying power and clout to bring members affordable customized products and services designed specifically for not-for-profit long-term care providers. These programs deliver superior quality, substantial savings and are accessible only to AAHSA members.

AAHSA's Group Purchasing is unique because it:

- Has no enrollment fee; the service is FREE to AAHSA members
- Offers the best and most-competitive pricing on thousands of products
- Is available on both a voluntary and committed-volume basis
- Focuses on senior care and housing products and purchasing patterns
- Publishes *Savings and Solutions*: the Group Purchasing & Shared Services Print Newsletter with cost-containment tips, special offers and problem/solution articles

We encourage you to browse the AAHSA web site to learn more about our partners and programs. Go to www.aahsa.org and click on the Group Purchasing/Shared Services link. If you have any questions, please contact AAHSA Group Purchasing at grouppurchasing@aahsa.org.

Why Join Group Purchasing?

We are dedicated to making products and services available to you that enhance the quality of life of your residents, as well as improve your bottom line. The Group Purchasing and Shared Services Program is developed to provide you excellent service reinforced by personal commitment from our vendors and AAHSA.

Top Five Reasons to Join AAHSA Group Purchasing:

1. Free Member Benefit
2. Exclusive Access to Aggressive and Competitive Pricing
3. Purchases Directly Impact Your Supporting State Association
4. Three Easy Participation Options
5. Receive *Savings and Solutions*, a print newsletter with cost-containment tips, promotions and more...

We encourage you to browse our web site to learn more about our partners and programs. If you have any questions, we encourage you to contact us at grouppurchasing@aahsa.org



Balanced Choices: New Guidelines for a Healthier U.S.

Uncle Sam cares about your health - so much so that every five years various government agencies come together to publish new guidelines to help Americans improve their nutrition and exercise habits. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans are based on the latest scientific findings and are designed to reduce rates of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, certain cancers, and osteoporosis. The 2005 guidelines are hot off the presses, and they are a bit more ambitious than the 2000 edition - but the basic themes will look familiar.

Not surprisingly, the guidelines encourage Americans to eat fewer calories, make healthier food choices, and exercise more. But there are also some new twists on old themes. Here's a rundown of the nine major areas the recommendations cover:

- **Get the right nutrients, but watch the calories!** Nutrients in the spotlight include vitamin B12 and vitamin D. People over the age of 50 are encouraged to get vitamin B12 in its synthetic form such as a multivitamin (the synthetic form is better absorbed!). Older adults, people with dark skin tones, and people who do not get enough sunlight to make vitamin D should get extra amounts of this very important nutrient from fortified foods and supplements.
- **Manage weight.** For many Americans, this means lose weight. But it also means avoid weight gain over time.
- **Get a lot of physical activity.** The recommendations recognize that physical activity is not only important for physical health but also for psychological well-being. How much is enough? The guidelines recommend 60 minutes on most days of the week with an extra 30

minutes thrown in if you are trying to lose weight.

- **Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables.** A minimum of 2 ½ cups per day is recommended.
- **Reduce bad fats.** That means saturated fats **and** trans fats. Trans fats will show up on all labels (it's the law) by 2006, which should help consumers meet this goal.
- **Choose good carbohydrates.** When it comes to grains and other high carb foods, keep it whole and high fiber! Fruits, vegetables, and whole grains should comprise most of your high carb choices.
- **More potassium, less sodium.** Potassium is abundant in fruits and vegetables and seems to help keep blood pressure at bay. Sodium is an arch nemesis of blood pressure control but not always easy to avoid. Read labels and try to keep your sodium intake to 2300 mg or less per day.
- **Moderate alcohol.** Moderation means the equivalent of 1 alcoholic beverage per day for women and 2 for men.
- **Practice food safety.** Avoid the agony of food poisoning by safe food preparation practices, such as frequent hand washings, cooking to proper temperatures, keeping hot foods hot and cold foods cold, and buying pasteurized milk and juices.

To get more information in greater detail, go to: <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/pdf/brochure.pdf>

Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. Executive Summary. United States Department of Health and Human Services & the United States Department of Agriculture

Program Revenue Data Collection – 2007 Dues

NNEAHSA is still accepting millage forms from member facilities. If you have not sent one in, please do as soon as possible. We want to ensure that your dues are being calculated correctly for next year. For your convenience, you may fax your completed form to 207-773-0101. Email nneahsa@riverwoodsrc.org if you need another form. Thank you for your assistance with this request.

The Culture Change Journey: Making Change Happen!

By: Kenneth Sandberg, COO, The Cedars, Portland, Maine

This is the third article describing our culture change process. If you have not done so, please see read articles in December 2005 and April 2006 of the NNEAHSA newsletter as this is a continuation series.

In order for a culture change to occur, there are fundamental aspects that must occur such as establishing workgroups, developing key employee programs and communication.

Workgroups: Workgroups are a subset of involvement and engagement as referenced in my previous article. Workgroups are interdisciplinary groups of employees who get together for a common goal of addressing an issue and concern and finding solutions that will work.

Employee Programs: Coaching supervision and peer mentoring are considered two critical employee programs to develop and integrate into your facility. It is well known that employees typically leave an organization because of their direct supervisor. It is also widely known that the first 90 days of employment are critical to any new employee. For these reasons, The LEADS Institute has developed two in-depth programs to implement coaching supervision and peer mentoring.

Our organization sent two employees to multiple days of training for both of the above mentioned programs. I can not emphasize the importance of both of these programs in order to support a culture change movement in your facility. (We will be happy to share information with any organization who is interested in more information on these two programs). In turn, these newly trained employees formed workgroups and were charged with the task of introducing these programs to our organization through education and training.

Communication: In addition to the two components mentioned above, a third critical component to support culture change is a good communication system. For this component, we established a third workgroup of employees to help keep the message alive about our culture change. A few examples include: establishing a

communication board, periodic ice cream socials to give updates, and a newsletter.

Assessment Action: As mentioned in previous articles, an organizational assessment concluded how important it was for our own staff to provide consistent care (as opposed to agency staff). For this reason we established a workgroup we call our 100% Staffing Workgroup.

The 100% Staffing Workgroup is dedicated to making sure we have a culture that promotes employee retention. "To build a strong core of regular employees through improved recruitment and retention" The 100% workgroup has lots of rich information to work with. The Workgroup solicited information from all employees about what they would like to see changed. It is their task to sift through this information and establish a 3-month work plan to tackle issues raised. One key component needed for success was to involve staff by conducting learning circles (a component of engagement and involvement). Learning circle is a meeting technique that encourages quiet people to speak, talkative people to listen, and everyone to share in making decisions. Participants observe, interpret, and experience not only their own feelings about an issue but also broaden their perspectives by considering the many viewpoints around them. Learning Circles are most effective when they become a way of life in the nursing home and everyone takes turns facilitating (Lavrene Norton, "The Power of Circles: Using a Familiar Technique to Promote Culture Change," Journal of Social Work in Long-Term Care, 20 (3/4) (2003).

We have recently finished our first round of learning circles on each of our units. One of the first issues raised was that workload was heavy on some of our units. Management immediately reassessed staffing patterns to deal with this issue and concern.

The Journey Continues: We are currently at a critical stage of our culture change program. We are a little more than a year into it, and still working on fundamental issues. Ideally we want to be further along in our process, but have to remind ourselves that this is a journey!

Maine Membership Meeting Update

The second Maine membership meeting was held on Tuesday, September 26th 2006 with representatives from five organizations. The agenda included the following:

1. An advocacy overview by Maine Lobbyist Craig Nelson emphasized the importance of making connections to our state legislators. Included in this presentation was a recap of our lobbying efforts in the past legislative session.
2. A discussion of our legislative priorities for the coming sessions.
3. A presentation by Craig Nelson regarding expanded legal and regulatory opinions.
4. A presentation by AAHSA on the Shared Services and Group Purchasing program.

The information presented in items 1, 2 and 3 were sent to the Maine members prior to the meeting. If you would like to receive a copy of these documents, please notify Sheila at the NNEAHSA office, and she will forward them to you. If you have any questions regarding any of these items, please do not hesitate to call Craig Nelson or any member of the Maine Legislative Committee.

We were fortunate enough to have an AAHSA representative participate in our meeting via conference call with a presentation of the AAHSA Group Purchasing and Shared Services program. Since AAHSA represents providers across the country, they have amassed great buying power. It is up to each and every one of us to make sure we are maximizing their established contracts. The first step is to ensure you are signed up. Be on the lookout for additional information sent to you by NNEAHSA.

NNEAHSA Welcomes New Business Member



Assisted Living Providers, Not For Profit Institutions, Municipalities, Financial Institutions

Depend on our resources to provide superior:

**Feasibility Analysis ▲ Financial Structuring ▲ Proposal and Grant Preparation
Project Management ▲ Portfolio Analysis ▲ Asset Management**

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Specialized solutions for affordable and senior housing

Employment Opportunity

Bangor Nursing & Rehabilitation Center: A 60-bed SNF/LTC facility is currently seeking applications for an experienced **NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR**. Successful candidate must have a current Maine Nursing Home Administrator's license, be conversant with both Medicare and MaineCare reimbursement and have experience with sub-acute rehabilitation. BNRC offers excellent benefits, including health, life, dental, 401(k), holidays, vacation benefits and a competitive salary. **Please send resume to:** Ken Huhn, President, BNRC Board of Directors, 103 Texas Avenue, Bangor, ME 04401, Phone: 207-947-4557



nneahsa
northern new england association
of homes and services for the aging

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS:

Thursday, October 26, 2006
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Registration @ 8:30 a.m.)

What's New? The Latest Marketing Trends & Practices

Presented by: Nancy Moore, Atlantic Retirement Group

Our consumer is changing... They are better educated about senior housing options and they have very high expectations. As a result, our approach to sales and marketing needs to change too. This session will be an interactive discussion on:

- What's changing in the marketplace and what are the opportunities?
- What are consumers looking for?
- How communities need to prepare for this new customer.
- How effective is your sales and marketing plan and will it position your community for future success?
- Competitive strategies on how to distinguish your community.

You will walk away from this session with strategies to adapt sales and marketing activity, and concrete steps to develop your own "community audit" to determine if your community is ready for the future.

Thursday, November 2, 2006
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Registration @ 8:30 a.m.)

Compensation & Benefits Strategies

Presented by: Deborah Gallant, D. Gallant Management Associates

Today's volatile business environment demands productivity and profitability. This program is designed to assist you in making sure that you are receiving the maximum return from your human resources investment. Not only will you become familiar with current compensation/ benefit issues and strategies, but you will learn how to evaluate the adequacy of your organization's existing wage/salary/benefits program, and how to develop a state-of-the-art compensation/benefits system. Particular attention will be paid to the development of incentive-driven programs that tie variable compensation to individual and corporate performance. We will also discuss some of the innovative new benefits being offered today to recruit and retain the best employees.

This program will be interactive with group discussion and exercises designed to enhance applicability back into the workplace after the workshop.

Both programs will be held at:
Sheraton Harborside, 250 Market Street, Portsmouth, NH

Registration Form:

Please check which program(s) each person will attend:

October 26: Marketing

November 2: Compensation

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

October 26: Marketing

November 2: Compensation

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

October 26: Marketing

November 2: Compensation

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

COMPANY INFORMATION:

Facility: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Registration Fees:

NNEAHSA Members: \$125 for one program or \$200 for both

Non-Members: \$175 for one program or \$300 for both

Send one person from your company to one program, and send someone else to the other and still receive the discount!

NNEAHSA Member – \$125 for One Program

Non-Member – \$175 for One Program

NNEAHSA Member – \$200 for Both Programs

Non-Member – \$300 for Both Programs

Payment is due with registration. Make checks payable to "NNEAHSA"

Check Enclosed

Credit Card (please complete the following):

Credit Card No: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Cardholder Name: _____

Billing Address: _____

Security Code From Back Of Card: _____

For more information, please contact:

**Sheila Deringis • NNEAHSA • 75 Pearl Street • Portland, Maine 04101
Phone: 207-773-4822 • Fax: 207-773-0101 • Email: NNEAHSA@riverwoodsrc.org**