



e-newsletter

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

NNEAHSA Annual Conference Scheduled: Larry Minnix to Deliver Keynote

We are pleased to announce that AAHSA President and CEO Larry Minnix is confirmed as the keynote speaker for NNEAHSA's 14th Annual Conference to be held on June 5-7, 2007 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Nashua, New Hampshire! This conference promises some great educational programs, a broad and extended trade show, the annual fund-raising golf tournament, and, of course, ample opportunities for networking. Be sure to mark your calendar and plan to join your colleagues where NNEAHSA brings AAHSA to its members. You can make your hotel reservations by calling the Crowne Plaza Nashua (www.crowneplazanashua.com) directly at 603-886-1200. The room rate for the conference is \$129. Watch your email and the website (www.nneahsa.org) for more information in the coming weeks. We hope to see you there!

NNEAHSA Launches New Website

We are proud to announce that NNEAHSA has launched a brand new website! The address is www.nneahsa.org. This site will provide useful information for our members, including a listing of facility and business members, NNEAHSA's Calendar of Activities and upcoming educational programs. With time, the website will also include legislative updates from the advocacy team in each state, and a job board where members can post employment opportunities at no charge.

The site is still under development and we welcome any suggestions you may have to make this a useful tool and resource.

NNEAHSA Announces New Business Members

We are pleased to announce that NNEAHSA has gained some new Business Members for 2007:

Cain Brothers (www.cainbrothers.com) is an employee-owned investment banking and financial advisory firm that focuses exclusively on the medical services and medical technology industries. Cain Brothers has one of the largest teams dedicated to the health care industry on Wall Street, with 50 bankers and traders who possess experience in all facets of the industry.

The firm's client base is primarily composed of non-profit and investor-owned health care service providers, third party payors medical technology companies, and companies that provide services to the health care industry.

DermaRite Industries (www.dermarite.com) is a manufacturer of quality and cost-effective personal care, skin care, and wound care product and continues to bring solutions for nursing homes and hospitals. As a manufacturer, DermaRite helps you manage costs, improve outcomes and reduce risk.

Geriatric Medical (www.geriatricmedical.com) is the medical supply distributor that's dedicated to getting you the medical supplies you need when you need them. A locally-owned, third generation family business since 1945, Geriatric Medical promises exceptional customer service, a complete range of name-brand and generic products, and savings.

Upcoming Education

- ❖ **Property Managers & Environmental Services Program** – March 28th at the Sheraton Harborside Hotel in Portsmouth, NH (see program attached to this newsletter for more details).
- ❖ **Leadership Conference & NNEAHSa Annual Meeting** – March 29th at the Sheraton Harborside Hotel in Portsmouth, NH (see program attached to this newsletter for more details).
- ❖ **Marketing Professionals Networking Group** – April 27th at The Park Danforth in Portland with a Fair Housing presentation by Judith Miller.
- ❖ **Annual Conference & Trade Show** – June 5-7 at the Crowne Plaza in Nashua, NH

...FROM AAHSA...

Register for AAHSA's Future of Aging Services Conference

Innovation Meets Action...

Attend AAHSA's Future of Aging Services Conference March 19-21 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC. Find out how you can implement practical strategies to address challenges and create a sustainable aging services future. Be the provider of choice in your community! Arrive a day early and attend our Leadership Summit, where you can explore the latest leadership theories with your staff and other providers like you.



And don't miss Chris Matthews... In an era of tightening budgets, shifting demographics and changing consumer needs, our legislators must create public policies that positively transform the way America cares for and serves its elders. And as not-for-profit aging-services providers, we are uniquely positioned to help them do it!

Clearly, if we are to successfully partner with policy makers to foster innovative solutions for our field, grassroots advocacy on the part of all AAHSA members is both a prudent business practice and a genuine stewardship responsibility. But where do we start?

Chris Matthews, a renowned journalist, presidential speechwriter and best-selling author, has a nose for news in our nation's capitol. He has spent the past 35 years here covering everything from peace talks to presidential elections. As the host of MSNBC's *Hardball with Chris Matthews*, he knows what makes Washington tick—and he'll share his "inside the beltway" insights to better prepare you for making a difference on Capitol Hill, in your districts and with your elected officials.

And that's not all! You can choose from more than 25 education sessions and a series of technology workshops designed to help you make the most of your work for older adults. Don't miss out! Read more about the program and [register](#) now.

AAHSA Announces New Advocacy Staff

Steve Maag, Director, Assisted Living & Continuing Care: Steve was formerly a partner in the Seattle law firm of Ryan, Swanson and Cleveland for 18 years and has represented many of our CCRC, AL and NH members in his specific areas of expertise, including reimbursement, facility and professional licensure, fraud and abuse, corporate compliance, transactional issues, managed care contracting and survey/certification, among others. He has been a popular speaker at many of our state and national meetings on these same topics and has represented the Washington Association of Homes and Services for the Aging on the AAHSA Legal Committee since 1990. As is true of all the AAHSA Legal Committee members, Steve has been very generous in his assistance to the Advocacy Staff over the years. Before entering private practice, Steve had practical experience with two membership associations as Deputy Director for Governmental Affairs at the Washington State Health Facilities Association and as Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs for the Washington Health Care Association.

Peter Notarstefano, Director, Home and Community-Based Services: Peter comes to AAHSA after 19 years with AAHSA member Catskill Regional Medical Center in Harris, New York. He has a Masters in Gerontology from the College of New Rochelle. His experience involved various roles, including directing geriatric assessment, case management, adult day services, home health, and volunteer services, as well as experience at other facilities as Director of Recreation. Peter was a founding board member of the Sullivan/Delaware New York Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. His experience gives him not only a strong background in reimbursement, regulation and operations but also a lot of "walking around sense" when it comes to what works when setting up HCBS programs. He will be very helpful in assisting members to think through business strengths and barriers when considering home-and community-based services, how state and local regulations will affect their plans, and how federal legislation can support expansion of these services.

Nursing Home Survey and Certification Task Force Begins Work

At the initial meeting of AAHSA's Survey and Certification Task Force, AAHSA members from eighteen states explored current issues raised by the operation of the survey, certification and enforcement system and potential solutions. The task force reached consensus that the problems with the present system stem not from the OBRA '87 statute itself but from the way it has been implemented by CMS; that the system must be transformed to encourage resident-centered care, with enough flexibility to accommodate the changes that are now occurring in the long-term care system; that we must involve a variety of stakeholders, including consumers, in the transformation of the system; that there must be a better working relationship between providers and regulators, with joint training and more education for survey staff; that poor performers must not be protected; and that meaningful Quality First is essential. One of the most important accomplishments expressed by participants at the end of the meeting was the feeling of hope and energy that change can be accomplished. The task force will get together again on March 21 and 22 to continue developing strategies for legislative and administrative advocacy to transform the present regulatory system.

President Bush submitted his FY2008 budget proposal to Congress on Monday, February 5th calling for significant Medicare cuts through reduced payment updates to SNFs and a freeze on reimbursement to home health care providers. It also calls for serious cuts in Section 202 housing funding. AAHSA is preparing Contact Congress letters in opposition to whatever cuts are proposed. We expect to see the budget documents at about noon on the Office of Management and Budget website, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/>.

...OTHER NEWS...

Physician Quality Reporting Initiative Announcement

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is pleased to announce that the 2007 Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) webpage is now available. On December 20, 2006 the President signed the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006 (TRHCA). Section 101 under Title I authorizes the establishment of a physician quality reporting system by CMS. CMS has titled the statutory program the 2007 Physician Quality Reporting Initiative.

PQRI establishes a financial incentive for eligible professionals to participate in a voluntary quality reporting program. Eligible professionals who successfully report a designated set of quality measures on claims for dates of service from July 1 to December 31, 2007, may earn a bonus payment, subject to a cap, of 1.5% of total allowed charges for covered Medicare physician fee schedule services. This newly established webpage will be updated regularly, so check it often for timely and reliable information from CMS.

For more information on 2007 PQRI, visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/PQRI/01_Overview.asp#TopOfPage on the CMS website.



Balanced Choices: A Healthy Jolt of Java

Move over green tea, and make room for coffee as the next healthy hot beverage. Not only does coffee not deserve its bad press, it actually has some impressive health benefits. Over the past several years, researchers have shown that coffee does not increase the risk of heart disease, hypertension or ulcers. Still other researchers have shown that coffee may help reduce the risk of diabetes and Parkinson's disease. Add to that the potential reductions in headaches and a boost to endurance exercise, and coffee takes on the aura of a genuine health drink!

Coffee contains a lot of caffeine, and much of the new research shows that it's the caffeine that may be providing some of the health benefits. However, coffee also contains high amounts of phytochemicals and antioxidants – those health-boosting components found in fruits and vegetables – and these could also be responsible for coffee's new healthy image.

Diabetes: Several studies have shown a relationship between drinking coffee and a lower risk of Type II Diabetes. Researchers think this risk reduction may be related to substances in coffee known as quinides that make the body's cells more responsive to insulin – the hormone that helps keep blood sugar low. But much more research is needed to find out exactly how coffee may affect diabetes.

Parkinson's & Alzheimer's Disease: Researchers think the caffeine in coffee and other caffeinated beverages may help lower the risk of Parkinson's Disease, a progressive neurological disease that causes sufferers to have tremors, slow movement, and loss of balance. The evidence supporting caffeine's role in reducing risk is so strong, that researchers are currently developing Parkinson's medications that contain caffeine! The regular consumption of coffee may also have a protective effect against Alzheimer's disease. Again, researchers think this protective link is due to the caffeine.

Performance Booster: Caffeine may also help boost performance in endurance activities – especially in well-trained athletes. Caffeine may help athletes ignore fatigue and help muscles work harder for longer. Since coffee is a more concentrated source of caffeine than soda, a cup or two can possibly improve performance.

While some of the evidence, particularly in the diabetes studies, seems to show that the more coffee the better, excessive coffee and caffeine intake is not risk free. Not only can the caffeine in coffee keep you up at night and give you the jitters, it can also increase calcium losses through the urine and may reduce a woman's chance of getting pregnant. But it does appear that the benefits of drinking coffee outweigh the risk – which is good news for coffee lovers.

For more information on coffee, visit the Vanderbilt Institute for Coffee Studies at www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/coffee and the Coffee Science source at www.coffeescience.org.

This article was contributed by Morrison Management Specialists. If you have any questions about this article or would like to learn more about Morrison, please feel free to contact Andre Alexandre, Director of Business Development at 1-800-686-6323 ext. 5348 or aalexandre@iammorrison.com.

If you would like to contribute an article to the NNEAHSA e-newsletter, please contact Sheila Deringis at sderingis@nneahsa.org with your submission.