

Quality Counts

Arizona Home Health Quality Initiative

In This Issue

HH STAR OASIS Information
Sheets Updated. 2

NPI Update 2

Medication Management:
The ACH Connection. 3

AAHC Survey REDiness! Workshop . . . 3

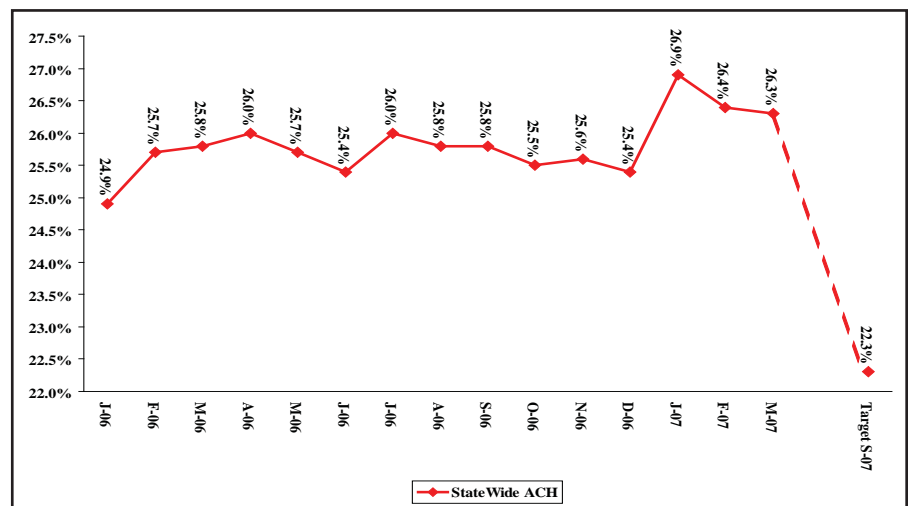
HHQI National Campaign Update 3

How To Use the Telemonitoring
BPBP 4

HSAG Home Health Team
Contact Information 4

Arizona's ACH Rate—How Are We Doing?

Reducing acute care hospitalization (ACH) rates is a challenging mission



Reducing ACH is a challenging mission for all Arizona home health agencies. The dotted line on the graph above depicts Arizona's current ACH rate and the state's ACH goal by September of this year. HSAG recognizes and applauds agencies for all of their hard work and success with their ACH quality improvement efforts and shares agencies' concern with the current trends. Arizona has been among the top states in the nation on this measure, and we want to stay there!

(Continued on page 2)

What's New

CMS Open Door Forum

The next CMS Home Health, Hospice, and DME Open Door Forum is scheduled for Wednesday, August 29.

For more information and to register to receive updates, please visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/17_ODF_HHHDME.asp.

Medicare Appeals: Provider Information

To view HSAG's new Medicare provider Web page that contains information about Fee-for-Service and Medicare Advantage benefits, visit <http://www.hsag.com/providers>. The page contains information on:

- The beneficiary notices initiative (BNI).
- Managed care appeals and grievances.
- Sample notice forms (downloadable).
- The *Federal Register* BIPA Regulation.

HSAG recognizes that agencies are facing significant obstacles, which include the nursing shortage, physician shortage in rural areas, utilization of hospitalists, contractor processes, and ever-changing rules and regulations.

Agencies are encouraged to remain focused on their current ACH quality improvement efforts and to implement tools and resources that work well in their existing workflow processes. HSAG is available to help agencies by providing on-site visits, inservices, and technical assistance. In addition, a variety of materials exist to help agencies improve their ACH rates, such as best practice tools, clinical guides, intervention packages, and Web site applications. These tools can be found on HSAG's Home Health Quality Improvement Web site at <http://hhqi.hsag.com> or on MedQIC at <http://www.medqic.org>.

Other resources include the Home Health Quality Improvement (HHQI) Campaign (<http://www.homehealthquality.org>), which contains best practice intervention packages and specific quality improvement tracks. Registered agencies receive agency-specific ACH Benchmark reports that break down hospitalizations by reason and by day of the week. The Setting Targets-Achieving Results (STAR) Web site (<http://www.hhqi-star.org>) can also help agencies set achievable targets for all publicly reported quality improvement measures.

HH STAR OASIS Information Sheets Updated

The OASIS additional information sheets on the Home Health Setting Targets-Achieving Results (HH STAR) Web site have been updated for each quality measure.

As a reminder, these sheets can be found under the My Data Comparison section for each measure. The information included on the sheets is current as of July 23.

Now is a great time to use this new information and update your current STAR targets by visiting <http://www.hhqi-star.org> today!

HSAG is also available to work with agencies to develop plans of action; track progress; and gather appropriate literature, documentation, and success stories to promote best practice implementation and agency culture change. Don't reinvent the wheel; someone has been there before! Contact HSAG to help direct you to the right resources for your agency. Together we can continue to be one of the top states in the country in reducing ACH rates.

NPI Update

The NPI is here. The NPI is now. Are you using it?

During the testing and implementation phase for the National Provider Identifier (NPI), providers should pay close attention to information from health plans and clearinghouses to understand how claims are being processed and what to do to ensure that there is no disruption in payment.

Providers should also ensure that the information they are submitting on a claim is what is being transmitted to each health plan by the billing vendors or clearinghouses that may be submitting the claims on their behalf.

Additional important information for Medicare providers and suppliers, including how to use the NPI correctly on Part A and Part B claims, can be found by viewing a recent *MLN Matters* article at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0725.pdf>.

Still confused?

Not sure what an NPI is or how you can get it, share it, and use it? More information on the NPI can be found by visiting the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services NPI page, <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/NationalProvIdentStand>. Providers can also apply for an NPI online at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> or call the NPI enumerator to request a paper application at 1.800.465.3203.

Getting an NPI is free. Not getting one can be costly.

Medication Management: The ACH Connection

Almost 30 percent of hospital admissions for people aged 65 or older are directly attributed to medication nonadherence. This nonadherence may not only worsen medication management quality measure rates and increase acute care hospitalization (ACH) rates, but may also:

- Prevent the patient's health conditions from improving.
- Cause the patient to become sicker and more unstable.
- Lead to significant side effects.
- Produce other symptoms.

AAHC Survey REDiness! Workshop

The Arizona Association for Home Care (AAHC) is sponsoring a workshop, titled "Survey REDiness! Strategies for Preparing for a Successful Survey."

August 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Phoenix Country Club
2901 N. 7th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85014

Last-minute survey preparation is not only challenging and stressful, but may be detrimental to your agency. Ongoing survey readiness is the key to being prepared before, during, and after a survey.

Join AAHC for a half-day workshop and learn how to create your own "Ready Every Day" (RED) Team to educate and prepare staff on regulatory and accreditation requirements and identify opportunities for improvement. Workshop participants will:

- Gain a better understanding of how to use OBQI data to your agency's advantage.
- Learn how to implement an agency-wide mock survey process.
- Establish a mechanism to provide feedback about preparation status.
- Provide education of agency system vulnerabilities.
- Learn how to develop a comprehensive Plan of Correction to improve compliance and patient outcomes.

Visit <http://www.azhomecare.org> for more information.

Home health clinicians have a unique opportunity to reduce ACH by improving medication management. This may be achieved through:

- Accurate assessment and reassessment.
- Reconciliation of discrepancies with follow-up.
- Clinical interventions when adherence issues are identified.

Medication management is not just a one-time visit intervention in the home, but something that requires a systems approach that necessitates leadership involvement to implement and sustain. Leadership commitment is essential in securing staff contribution and adherence to the practice standards developed for the agency's medication management program.

For more information on increasing the success of your agency's medication management efforts, visit the Home Health Quality Campaign Web site and download all or part of the Medication Management Best Practice Intervention Package at <http://www.homehealthquality.org/hh/hha/interventionpackages/medmanagement.aspx>.

HHQI National Campaign Update

As of August, over 5,300 agencies have registered for the Home Health Quality Improvement (HHQI) National Campaign. This represents about 60 percent of all Medicare-certified home health agencies in the country. In Arizona, over 67 percent of agencies have registered for the campaign. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to reduce avoidable hospitalizations!

Third BPIP in "Simply Summer Series" now available

The current HHQI National Campaign Best Practice Intervention Package (BPIP)—and the third BPIP of the campaign's Home Telehealth "Simply Summer Series" on telemonitoring—is now available for download by visiting <http://www.homehealthquality.org/hh/hha/interventionpackages/telemonitoring.aspx>.

(Continued on page 4)

The Telemonitoring BPIP is designed for agencies that are either utilizing telemonitoring or are investigating/planning for implementation in the near future.

This BPIP contains tracks for leadership (including the patient-family connection, the physician connection, and the managed-care connection), nurses, therapists, and medical social workers.

Upon completing the activities in the Leadership Track, leaders will be able to define telemonitoring, evaluate the agency's current use of telemonitoring, identify how telemonitoring can be used effectively, and identify resources for developing and sustaining a comprehensive and efficient telemonitoring program.

Telemonitoring audio recordings/WebEx available

Agency staff members can also listen to posted telemonitoring audio recordings to find out more about this latest BPIP. These recordings can be downloaded to a CD and used for future educational purposes. An educational WebEx is also posted on the campaign's Web site to provide a quick overview of the BPIP. Both the audio recordings and the WebEx can be found by visiting <http://www.homehealthquality.org/hh/hha/interventionpackages/telemonitoring.aspx>.

Source: <http://www.homehealthquality.org>.

How To Use the Telemonitoring BPIP

Here are some tips that agencies can use to implement telemonitoring strategies using the Telemonitoring Best Practice Intervention Package (BPIP).

Not using telemonitoring?

- Focus on implementing ideas from the Phone Monitoring or Frontloading Visits BPIP as a way to utilize telehealth.
- Keep this BPIP as a resource for future use.

Exploring the purchase of telemonitors?

- Review the Leadership Track for implementation ideas.
- Utilize the Home Telehealth Reference 2005 (available on <http://www.medqic.org>) to help develop a telemonitoring program.

Using telemonitoring, but need to optimize strategies?

- Review the Leadership Track and complete the agency self-assessment to select activities to incorporate.
- Review the connection pages and distribute to staff.
- Distribute the care provider tracks and encourage RNs and therapists to apply for free contact hours.

Using telemonitoring, but need to ensure efficiencies?

- Review the Leadership Track and complete the agency self-assessment to select activities to incorporate.
- Review the connection pages and distribute to staff.
- Use care-provider tracks for annual staff competencies.
- Have RNs and therapists apply for free contact hours.

HSAG Home Health Team Contact Information

Mary Fermazin, MD, MPA Vice President, Health Policy & Quality Measurement mfermazin@hsag.com 602.745.6207	Joe Bestic, NHA, BA Director, Home Health & Nursing Homes jbestic@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6205	Caralyn E. Williams, MAOM Quality Improvement Specialist cwilliams@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6284
Pam Sensky, RN Clinical Quality Specialist psensky@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6330	Dawn Williams, BS Communications Project Manager dwilliams@hsag.com 602.745.6316	HSAG's Web Site http://www.hsag.com

Visit HSAG's Home Health Quality Initiative (HHQI) Web site at <http://hhqi.hsag.com>.

This material was prepared by Health Services Advisory Group, Inc. (HSAG), the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Arizona, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy.