

The Academy Weekly

News & Information for LTC Providers



The Academy of Senior Health Sciences, Inc.

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Week of 19 February 2023

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Ohio News

Governor creates NH Quality Task Force

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine today signed an [Executive Order 2023-06D](#), officially creating the [Ohio Governor's Nursing Home Quality and Accountability Task Force](#). During his 2023 State of the State Address, Governor DeWine announced his plan to form the task force to study issues surrounding quality of life and quality of care in Ohio's nursing homes. The Governor also announced during his address that

the group would be tasked with completing their work on an expedited timeline. In keeping with this directive, the task force will travel to communities across the state between now and May to hear directly from nursing home residents and their loved ones about their experiences and issue a report of their findings. Joining the task force will be a wide range of individuals representing the expansive voices of this community, including representatives of those with lived experience, family caregivers, nursing home administrators, and state regulators including:

- Ursel McElroy, Director, Ohio Department of Aging Chair
- Bruce Vanderhoff, Director, Ohio Department of Health Vice-Chair
- Trey Addison, Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Alzheimer's Association
- Robert Applebaum, Professor and Director of the Ohio Long-Term Care Research Project, Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University
- General Deborah Ashenhurst, Director, Ohio Department of Veteran Services
- Blaine Brockman, Chair of the Elder and Special Needs Law Committee, Ohio State Bar Association
- Jessica Coleman, President, Ohio Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care
- Maureen Corcoran, Director, Ohio Department of Medicaid
- Lori Criss, Director, Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
- Jacqueline DeGenova, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Ohio Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- Kim Hauck, Director, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
- Holly Holtzen, State Director, AARP Ohio
- Ira Kaplan, Co-Chair of Long Term Care Committee, Jewish Federations of America
- Jennifer Kucera, Disability Rights Advocate
- Greg Miller, Vice Chairman, Board of Executives of Long-Term Services and Supports
- Chris Murray, Chief Executive Officer, Academy of Senior Health Sciences
- Pete Van Runkle, Executive Director, Ohio Health Care Association

- Susan Wallace, Chief Executive Officer, LeadingAge Ohio

In addition to the community listening sessions, the task force will hold regular meetings to discuss public input and formulate recommendations on how to improve quality of care and quality of life in all Ohio nursing homes. The Task Force's inaugural meeting will be held on Thursday, March 2, 2023, in Columbus at the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Shipley Atrium. The first community listening session will be held on Friday, March 3, 2023, at Columbus State Community College's Event Center at Mitchell Hall. A full schedule of events will be released soon and will be added online. Ohioans who are not able to attend the in-person events, but who would still like to make their voices heard, will be able to provide their insights on the task force webpage. ([Back to top.](#))

HB 33 hearings continue in House subcommittees

The House Finance Health and Human Services Subcommittee held hearings last week on H.B. 33 - the state operating budget bill. Both the Department of Aging and Developmental Disabilities testified before the committee. Much of the hearing was focused on the staffing concerns and proposed funding increases in the Governor's budget. The objective is to provide funding to providers so they can pay direct care service workers \$16 an hour on average. There was some question as to how to ensure the money would be spent on direct care and if the funding was enough to reach that goal. Furthermore, some interested parties suggested that \$20 an hour was necessary to attract enough workers into the field. Rate increases were also proposed for ICFs, AL waiver, transportation, and other HCBS providers. The subcommittee has more HB 33 hearings scheduled for the next two weeks. ([Back to top.](#))

MDS submission and reporting moving to iQIES

On February 23, 2023, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the transition of the Minimum Data Set (MDS) assessment submission and reporting functionality to the Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES) will go live on April 17, 2023. You can locate this announcement [by clicking here](#). In preparation for the transition, CMS announced organizations will

need to identify and registered a Provider Security Official (PSO) before they will be able to complete a user role request for iQIES access. The PSO designee must work for the provider and will be responsible for approving or rejecting iQIES user access requests for their respective organizations. At minimum, at least one PSO needs to be registered for each provider, but CMS highly recommends at least two PSOs are chosen to help ensure someone will be available to approve and/or reject iQIES access requests. To learn more about user roles, refer to User Roles Matrix on the [iQIES Help page by clicking here](#).

To access the iQIES system, all users must create an account and establish credentials in the Healthcare Quality Information System (HCQIS) Access Roles and Profile (HARP) system. HARP is a secure identity management portal provided by CMS.

To register for iQIES access:

Create an account in the HARP system [by clicking here and using your corporate email address](#) to register.

After establishing your HARP credential, [you will be able to access iQIES](#) and log in with your HARP credentials to complete the process to request your User Role.

Once your user role request has approved by the PSO, notification will be sent via email letting you know your iQIES account access request has been approved.

The Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (QIES) Assessment Submission and Processing (ASAP) system will be turned off on Thursday April 13, 2023, at 8:00 PM eastern standard time (EST). Providers will need to ensure completed MDS records are submitted prior to this or wait until 8:00 AM EST on April 17, 2023, to submit their data in iQIES. ([Back to top.](#))

AHRQ seeks NHs for MRSA project

We are very pleased to share with you a recruitment announcement from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) for an MRSA prevention collaborative

for long-term care facilities, specifically nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities. This is a free 18-month program that seeks to improve bathing and skincare techniques to reduce pressure injuries, wounds, and methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and other Multidrug Resistant Organism (MDRO) transmission.

Benefits of Participation for Facilities Include:

- * Reducing skin and soft tissue infections
- * Reducing pressure injuries and skin tears
- * Reducing MDRO infections
- * Improving team-based infection prevention practices
- * Enhancing communication and teamwork regarding proper skin care
- * Increasing resident and family satisfaction
- * Continuing Medical Education (CME), Continuing Education Units (CEU), and National Association of Long Term Care Administrator Boards (NAB) credits for participating staff
- * Facilities will receive certificates of participation in a Quality Improvement Project and a certificate of completion for the program
- * Feedback on how their facility compares to others on key metrics
- * Various tools and resources will be made available, including a series of "teachable moments" designed for bite-sized (5 minutes) teaching during morning huddles with nurses and nurse aides which can be easily used to document ongoing infection prevention and control education.

To learn more about the program [please click here](#). There are also several upcoming informational webinars that can be registered for using the links [in this PDF flier](#). If you have questions please e-mail MRSAprevention@norc.org. ([Back to top.](#))



National News

CMS providers more info on end of PHE, waivers

During CMS's national stakeholder call last week, CMS provided some details on the end of the PHE and what that will mean for providers. For example, any benefit extension or three day waiver that began prior to May 11 will be allowed to continue. Most waivers will end May 11. CMS released the following information following the call: "On February 9, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the [Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) for COVID-19 will end on May, 11, 2023](#). COVID-19 remains a significant priority for the Biden-Harris Administration and over the next several months, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will work to ensure a smooth transition. During the PHE, CMS has used a combination of emergency authority waivers, regulations, enforcement discretion, and sub-regulatory guidance to ensure easier access to care during the PHE for health care providers and their beneficiaries. Some of the flexibilities that were created during the pandemic were recently expanded by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. Others, while critical during our initial responses to COVID-19, are no longer needed. CMS has made further updates to our [CMS Emergencies Page](#) with useful information for providers – specifically around major telehealth and individual waivers – that were initiated during the Public Health Emergency (PHE). Please reference the following information in response to the PHE ending May 11, 2023:

COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) New Overview Fact Sheet

As part of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) ongoing efforts to provide up-to-date information to prepare for [the end of the Public Health Emergency \(PHE\) for COVID-19](#), which is expected on May 11, 2023, we are providing a new overview fact sheet on [CMS Waivers, Flexibilities, and the Transition Forward from the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#).

Provider-specific fact sheets about COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE) waivers and flexibilities: [Coronavirus Waivers | CMS](#)

Department of Health & Human Services Fact

Sheet: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/02/09/fact-sheet-covid-19-public-health-emergency-transition-roadmap.html>

In the coming weeks, CMS will be hosting stakeholder calls and office hours to provide additional information. Please continue to visit the CMS Emergencies Page for continuous updates regarding PHE sunseting guidance as information becomes available to the public." ([Back to top.](#))

MLN Connects Newsletter

News

- [Hospital Price Transparency: Progress & Commitment to Achieving Its Potential](#)
- [Home Infusion Therapy Services Monitoring Report](#)
- [Immunosuppressive Drugs: Comparative Billing Report in February](#)
- [Expanded Home Health Value-Based Purchasing Model Resources: Submit Feedback through March 31](#)

Claims, Pricers, & Codes

- [HCPCS Level II Coding: FAQs for Single Source Drugs & Biologicals](#)
- [National Correct Coding Initiative: No April Update](#)

Publications

- [DMEPOS Quality Standards – Revised](#)

[To view MLN Connects online, click here.](#)

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ODDS AND ENDS

Recorded call and resources to encourage vaccination among LTC residents and staff

The Public Health Foundation supported a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Communities of Practice webinar originally presented on February 9, 2023. This 60-minute call, moderated by CDC's State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Task Force, highlighted successful strategies to engage older adults, residents, and staff in long-term care settings. Speakers presented strategies in increasing bivalent booster uptake in their communities. [Recording and resources can be found here.](#)

NOTABLE DATES OR EVENTS

[PHE ends](#)
11 May 2023

[Click here for QIO Complex Care.](#)

[Click here for QIO Booster Blitz series.](#)

[Click here for CMS NH COVID-19 Training Modules](#)

[Click here to view CGS Part A training events](#)

[Click here to view CGS Part B training events](#)

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