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[SNCC asks for rate increase in upcoming budget](#) – The Skilled Nursing Care Coalition (SNCC), of which the Academy is a member, moved forward earlier this week on a key component of its legislative agenda for the upcoming budget. Noting that SNF Medicaid rates have been held well below inflation over the past five years and that the quality of care is in jeopardy, the SNCC is requesting a three percent increase each year in the average Medicaid rate. Funding for the increase can be generated from current expenditure levels if additional federal match becomes available from a federal economic stimulus bill. For more information, [download the request here](#) or contact [Victoria Gresh](#). ([Back to top](#)).

[Obama takes office, outlines challenges facing nation](#) – President Obama officially became the 44 president earlier this week amid an atmosphere described as “energetic” and “exuberant.” The president’s inauguration speech mirrored his campaign rhetoric: hope, determination, and leadership. Obama acknowledged the difficult situation the country faces, but expressed optimism that the founding principles of the United States would provide the impetus for overcoming the challenges our nation faces. Despite the optimism, Obama’s speech was riddled with pragmatic temperance. For example, he noted how markets are the path to prosperity, yet government regulation was necessary. Perhaps the biggest immediate challenge the Obama administration is facing is the contracting U.S. economy. Congress is set to debate multiple economic stimulus packages, with the recently introduced House version costing \$825 billion, with \$89 billion going to states via an increase in federal match for health care services. Some of the \$89 billion could go towards increasing SNF Medicaid rates (see related SNCC article). Regardless of the outcome of the stimulus package, the vision Obama has for America at the end of the road is one shared by most Americans: security, jobs, affordable health care, and prosperity. He has called upon the shared principles of Americans to lay the foundation of the road: liberty, self-reliance, and compassion. But the difficulty lies in building the road with diminishing resources. And that is what will ultimately determine where we head as a country. ([Back to top](#)).

[Improve your facility's census while getting CEUs](#) – Do you want to learn how to improve your facility’s census and get three CEUs? Attend the upcoming “**Creating Census Success Through Customer Service**.” Speaker Linda Saunders, LNHA of Censolutions will focus on the principles of customer service within the health care industry and teach you how to use these principles to improve your facility’s census. “Creating Census Success Through Customer Service” will be held in Columbus on **Thursday, February 19** from 1 to 4 p.m. It will offer three (3) BENHA

CEUs. Academy members may attend this program for \$59 and non-members may attend for \$89. Three employees from the same member facility may attend at the discounted rate of \$139. Information concerning this course has been faxed. You can also register online at <http://www.oanh.org/educationalofferings.shtml>. ([Back to top](#)).

Gresh earns CAE credential – [Victoria Gresh](#), the Academy's executive director, has earned the Certified Association Executive (CAE™) credential from the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). The CAE is the highest professional credential in the association industry; less than five percent of all association professionals have earned the CAE. To be designated as a CAE, an applicant must have experience in nonprofit organization management, complete a minimum of 75 hours of specialized professional development, pass a stringent examination in association management, and pledge to uphold a code of ethics. Gresh has been with the Academy since 2005. ([Back to top](#)).

Membership dues in the mail – The Academy has mailed 2009 membership dues invoices to all full (facility) and associate members. Members are asked to complete the membership update form if there have been any recent changes to the contact information. **The deadline for payment of membership dues is Monday, March 2.** Please note there is no dues increase for 2009. Questions about billing or payment should be directed to [Christina O'Neal](#). ([Back to top](#)).

Update from CMS – The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently issued the following information of interest to long-term care providers:

- **Survey & Certification Memo**

[09-21: 2009 Physician Fee Schedule Changes Affecting the Survey & Certification of Rehabilitation Programs \(1/16/09\)](#)

On November 19, 2008, CMS published revisions and updates to payment policies as well as conditions of participation (CoPs) under the Physician Fee Schedule. These changes affected CoPs and conditions for coverage (CfCs) for the following provider types: Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facilities (CORFs), Rehabilitation Agencies (OPTs) and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs).

- **SNF Open Door Forum**

The next SNF/LTC Open Door Forum is scheduled for Thursday, January 29 at 2 p.m. To participate, dial 1-800-837-1935; conference ID: 70014598.

- **OASIS**

"Attachment D" to Chapter 8 of the "Outcome and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) Implementation Manual" has been reissued to promote accurate selection and assignment of the patient's diagnosis on the current OASIS (OASIS B1 [1/2008]). This document clarifies CMS expectations specific to the assignment of diagnosis codes to the OASIS as dictated by the revised ICD-9-CM coding guidelines effective October 2008, and the Home Health PPS refinements effective January, 2008. Attachment D addresses the diagnoses items that pertain to the home health episode (i.e., M0230, M0240 and M0246) and is currently posted in the "Downloads" section of the "OASIS B1 User Manual" web page on the CMS website:

http://www.cms.hhs.gov/HomeHealthQualityInits/14_HHQIOASISUserManual.asp

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Notes from the Monthly Provider meeting – Representatives from the long-term care trade associations met with state officials and other interested parties this week to discuss survey and certification issues. The following are highlights from the meeting:

- ODH's Infection Control Division has updated their website.
- The results of the Family Satisfaction Surveys have been made into PDF files and will be uploaded to the Ohio Department of Aging's website shortly.
- Facilities that have issues with survey results in relation to the CMS Five Star Rating System must submit errors to Carla Lind at the Ohio Department of Health. Only obvious significant errors will be considered for correction.
- A concern was raised about whether medication aide hours count towards the "other" professional hours that SNFs are required to provide. ODH explained that these hours would only count if the aide was doing nursing aide duties, not medication passes.
- ODH provided a list of RCF citations and their frequency for 2008.
- A question was raised about oxygen tanks being filled in RCFs and about storing tanks in a resident's room in an RCF. ODH explained they do not have any codes regarding this and it should be referenced in the Fire Code.

For more information please contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

OANH Annual Convention seeks LTC superstars – The Academy is currently seeking long-term care “superstars” to present at the 2009 OANH Annual Convention & Trade Show. Presenting at OANH’s Annual Convention is a great way to share your knowledge with others in the long-term care industry, receive recognition from your peers and gain exposure for your company. OANH is currently taking applications for presenters, and this application can be completed and submitted via the Academy’s website or printed and faxed. Go to <http://www.oanh.org/2007.shtml> to view and submit the application. If you have any questions about the application or being a presenter please contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

Tradeshow booths are going fast – Many booths have already been reserved for the 2009 OANH Trade Show. To ensure placement in the booth of your choice, reserve yours today. The 2009 OANH Convention & Trade Show will be held Oct. 21-23, 2009 (Wednesday - Friday) at the Hilton Columbus at Easton. Trade show hours will be very similar to the 2008 show.

Booth prices are as follows:

- **Regular Booth Pricing**
Early Bird Booth Prices (Through June 30, 2009)
OANH Member: \$875
Non-Member: \$975

Regular Booth Prices (After June 30, 2009)
OANH Member: \$975
Non-Member: \$1075
- **Premium Booth Pricing**
Early Bird (Through June 30, 2009): \$1,075
Regular (After June 30, 2009): \$1,275

Contracts for 2009 are available via the [OANH website](#), or you can contact [Dawn Kennedy](#) to reserve your booth. ([Back to top](#)).

Call for presentations for OPC3 Conference due Jan. 30 – [Call for presentations](#) for the Ohio Person Centered Care Coalition's 4th annual conference are due January 30, 2009. The conference is scheduled for June 2, 2009 at the Aladdin Shrine Center in Columbus. Save the date post cards will be mailed in February--breakout sessions, registration, speaker and blocked hotel rates are still being determined. For more information, please contact [Christina O'Neal](#). ([Back to top](#)).