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SNCC testifies before subcommittee on potentially devastating impact of Governor's proposed budget – The Skilled Nursing Care Coalition (SNCC) yesterday testified before the Health and Human Services Subcommittee, outlining what could be dire straits for skilled nursing facilities in Ohio if the bill passes as introduced. Testimony focused on the fact that the Strickland Administration is proposing to cut SNF funding and use the federal stimulus money as a tool to divert more than \$600 million of General Revenue Funds (GRF) away from long-term care. In addition, while SNFs have already been forced to reduce direct care staff, they are facing a significant increase in the number of individuals requiring more assistance. SNCC testimony also noted that the proposed \$4.75 per bed per day increase in the Franchise Permit Fee (FPF), or "bed tax," would cost the average facility in Ohio around \$76,000 over the biennium, with the most impacted facility paying an additional \$328,745 over the same time period. To view the testimony in its entirety, [click here](#). For more information, contact [Victoria Gresh](#) or [Chris Murray](#). ([Back to top](#)).

"Basic QIS" starts next week – Are you registered for the upcoming **"Basic QIS"** class? Time is running out, and the classes start next week. The Quality Indicator Survey (QIS) is real and surveyors in Ohio are using it. Attend "Basic QIS" to learn from a former state surveyor the information you need to be successful in this new environment. "Basic QIS" will be held in Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati during the month of March. The class will be from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will include lunch. American Medical Equipment is generously sponsoring these classes and is offering attendees the option of attending "Negative Pressure Wound Therapy" for an additional hour of CEU from 4 to 5 p.m. "Basic QIS" has been approved for seven (7) hours of CEU from BENHA and "Negative Pressure Wound Therapy" has been approved for one (1) hour of CEU. Attendance at "Negative Pressure Wound Therapy" is optional, but only those attendees who stay will be given the additional one hour of CEU. Academy members may attend these programs for \$149 and non-members may attend for \$199. A member facility may send three employees for the discounted price of \$359, a savings of \$88!

- **Cleveland – Tuesday, March 24**
Holiday Inn Independence
6001 Rockside Road
Independence, Ohio 44131
- **Columbus – Wednesday, March 25**
Confluence Park Restaurant
679 W. Spring Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215

- **Cincinnati – Tuesday, March 31**

Great Wolf Lodge
501 Great Wolf Dr
Mason, OH 45040

Information has been faxed and mailed. You can also register online at

<http://www.oanh.org/educationalofferings.shtml>. For questions, contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

Put the spotlight on your company at the PAC Golf Outing – Gain exposure to Academy members through sponsorship opportunities while “hitting the links” at the sixth Annual OANH PAC Golf Outing. Whether you golf or sponsor a hole or lunch, Academy members will recognize that you support their association. Sponsors of the golf outing receive publicity prior to the outing, via *The Academy Weekly* and website. Sponsorships are currently available for holes, beverages, lunch and the “19th Hole” reception. The Academy is also seeking prize donations— company logo golf shirts, balls, umbrellas and other golf related items are appreciated. The outing will take place on Monday, May 18 at the private Medallion Club in Westerville, Ohio. Registration and lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m. with a shotgun start at 1 p.m. After a challenging game of golf, attendees will stay at the course for food, drinks and prizes at the “19th Hole” reception. Prices are \$250 per golfer or \$950 per foursome. Registration brochures have been mailed. For more information and to discuss sponsorship opportunities, contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

Average per-bed prices for skilled nursing, assisted living fell in 2008 – After hitting record prices in 2007, the average price paid per bed for skilled nursing facilities fell by 18% to \$45,500 in 2008, a new report by Irving Levin Associates Inc. found. The drop was largely attributed to less attractive and less profitable skilled nursing facilities available in the market for sale, according to The Senior Acquisition report. As the economy slipped, companies were not willing to sell higher-quality properties at lower prices, said Stephen M. Monroe, editor of the report. Meanwhile, in the assisted living market, the average price paid fell by 21% in 2008 to \$124,900 per unit. The volume of transactions declined significantly and the overall quality of the communities sold was lower than the record high in 2007. The average price per unit in the independent living market plummeted more than 30% from 2007's record level to just \$118,100 per unit in 2008, according to the report (Source: McKnight's Long-Term Care News & Assisted Living, 3/13/09, www.mcknights.com) ([Back to top](#)).

Is your facility prepared to be blamed by the hospital? – Plan to attend “**Managing Risk in the LTC Environment in Light of Medicare Hospital Regulatory Changes**” to learn how to protect your facility from hospital blame. As of October 1, 2008 CMS initiated changes in the Medicare reimbursement system for conditions which they label as “hospital acquired conditions due to complications associated with poor nursing care that should never happen in an acute care setting.” If one of these conditions occurs, the hospital will not receive reimbursement for any treatment rendered without significant physician documentation determining the condition occurred outside of the hospital. How does this affect facilities? Several of the conditions in question such as pressure sores, falls with trauma, and infections related to catheters occur frequently in the LTC environment. This new regulation could lead to blaming between the hospital and LTC facility. “**Managing Risk in the LTC in Light of Medicare Hospital Regulatory Changes**” will teach you how to deal with this new regulation and develop an action plan to turn the negatives of the regulations into positives.

Dates and locations are:

- **Cleveland – Tuesday, April 21**
Holiday Inn Independence
6001 Rockside Road
Independence, Ohio 44131
- **Columbus – Tuesday, April 28**
Confluence Park Restaurant
679 W. Spring Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
- **Cincinnati – Thursday, April 30**
Kings Island Resort
5691 Kings Island Dr.
Mason, Ohio 45040

“Managing Risk in the LTC in Light of Medicare Hospital Regulatory Changes” will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and has been approved for four (4) hours of CEU. Academy members may attend this

program for \$89 and non-members may attend for \$129. A member facility may send three employees for the discounted price of \$199, a savings of \$68! Watch your fax for more information or you can register online at <http://www.oanh.org/educationalofferings.shtml>. For questions, contact [Dawn Kennedy](#). ([Back to top](#)).

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

• **Five-Star Quality Rating System**

The Five-Star provider preview reports will be available beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2009. Providers can access the report from the Minimum Data Set (MDS) State Welcome pages available at the state servers for submission of Minimum Data Set data. Provider Preview access information:

- Visit the MDS State Welcome page available on the State servers where you submit MDS data to review your results.
- To access these reports, select the Certification and Survey Provider Enhanced Reports (CASPER) Reporting link located at the bottom of the login page.
 - Once in the CASPER Reporting system:
 - Click on the 'Folders' button and access the Five Star Report in your 'st LTC facid' folder,
 - Where st is the two-digit postal code of the state in which your facility is located, and
 - Facid is the state assigned facid of your facility.

The Five-Star Helpline will be open for providers from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. beginning Wednesday, March 18 through Thursday, April 2, 2009 to address any March's Five-Star data concerns. Nursing Home Compare will update with March's Five-Star data on Thursday, March 26, 2009.

• **Update on Final Rules Regarding ICD-10 Code Sets and Standards Governing Electronic Transactions**

On January 15, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released two final rules that will facilitate the United States' ongoing transition to an electronic health care environment through adoption of an updated set of diagnosis and procedure codes and updated standards for electronic health care and pharmacy transactions. In accordance with the White House Chief of Staff's memorandum of January 20, 2009 entitled "Regulatory Review," a determination has been made that the effective date will not be extended and the comment period will not be reopened for either of these rules. The first rule finalizes new code sets to be used for reporting diagnoses and procedures on health care transactions. This final rule replaces the ICD-9-CM code sets, developed nearly 30 years ago, with greatly expanded ICD-10 code sets. The second final rule adopts updated versions of the standards governing electronic transactions under the authority of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. The updated versions replace the current standards and will promote greater use of electronic transactions. In response to public comments suggesting that more time would be needed for effective industry implementation, the final rules include later compliance dates. More specifically, the final rules provide compliance dates of January 1, 2012, for the transaction standards and October 1, 2013, for the ICD-10 code set. ([Back to top](#)).

Register now for 2009 Safety Congress – Register now for the upcoming 2009 Ohio Safety Congress & Expo. This annual conference is one of the largest gatherings in the United States singularly dedicated to this cause. The 79th Safety Congress is set for Tuesday – Thursday, March 31 through April 2 and will be held at the Columbus Convention Center. This annual conference is one of the largest gatherings in the United States singularly dedicated to this cause. The free event is designed to provide a flexible yet customized, industry-focused learning approach to promote safety in the workplace. This year's congress will feature more than 150 educational sessions and an exciting Expo Marketplace. For more information or to register, visit www.ohiobwc.com. ([Back to top](#)).

Tough economy demands tougher marketing strategies – In a tough economy, it's more important than ever to make sure your company is visible and available to potential customers—and tradeshow are still a great bang for the buck! 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](#)).

Attention providers: we want to hear from YOU in *The Academy Advocate* – The Academy is currently seeking articles from providers who have best practices or unique knowledge to share. We know there are many innovative administrators, nurses, social workers, therapists, activities directors, admission directors, etc. in the Academy, and we want to hear from you in the upcoming semi-annual magazine, *The Academy Advocate*. Submitting an article for publication is a great way for you to be recognized among your peers. Challenging times call for unique ideas and business practices for the long-term care profession as a whole to remain competitive and successful. If interested, email [Christina O'Neal](#) at the Academy. All articles are due no later than June 1, 2009. All authors are required to submit a professional headshot and sign the [article release form](#). ([Back to top](#)).

Long-term care background checks bill reintroduced at Federal level – Sens. Herb Kohl (D-WI) and Susan Collins (R-ME) on Wednesday reintroduced a bill to establish a nationwide system of background checks to prevent people with criminal histories from working in long-term care settings. The bill, the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act, expands on a three-year pilot program that helped to prevent applicants with a criminal record from working in long-term care. Rep. Joe Sestak (D-PA) is expected to introduce a companion bill in the House. Specifically, the bill calls for states to establish coordinated systems that include checks against abuse and neglect registries and a state police check. It also would require screening applicants against the FBI's national database of criminal history records. Last Congress, the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act was passed unanimously out of the Finance Committee.
(Source: McKnight's Long-Term Care News & Assisted Living, 3/19/09, www.mcknights.com)
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