

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



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Governor

November 22, 2013

AFL 13-25.1

TO: Skilled Nursing Facilities
Nursing Facilities

SUBJECT: California Continuing Campaign to Improve Dementia Care and
Reduce Unnecessary Antipsychotic Drug Use in Nursing Homes

This All Facilities Letter (AFL) is being issued to notify all nursing homes of the initiation of Phase II of the statewide campaign regarding improving dementia care and the reduction of antipsychotic medication use. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) previously issued AFL 12-56, which informed nursing homes of the *California Partnership to Improve Dementia Care and Antipsychotic Medication Reduction in Nursing Homes Collaborative* (Partnership).

On March 29, 2012, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched a national partnership to improve dementia care and reduce unnecessary antipsychotic medication use in nursing homes. In California, a unique partnership of nursing home providers, advocates, physicians, government agencies and others are working together with CMS and CDPH to embrace the national initiative and present solutions.

During meetings from August through December 2012, Phase I of the Partnership developed a collaborative action plan with the primary goal to reduce the overall use of antipsychotic drugs in nursing homes by at least 15 percent at the end of 2012, mirroring the CMS national partnership goal. Additionally, the Partnership set a goal for 2013 of reducing the overall use of antipsychotic drugs in nursing homes by at least 30 percent by June of 2013. The Partnership action plan outlined four key areas and established workgroups to address:

- (1) Improving Dementia Care;
- (2) Consumer Awareness;
- (3) Enhanced Enforcement; and
- (4) Informed Consent.

CMS has endorsed the goals and actions of the Partnership to reduce the use of antipsychotic drugs in nursing homes across California.

The accompanying summary report, *Working Together: California Partnership to Improve Dementia Care and Reduce Unnecessary Antipsychotic Medication Drug Use in Nursing Homes* can be found at:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/LnC/Pages/AntipsychoticCollab.aspx>.

Based on statistics from the CMS website *Nursing Home Compare* (which can be found at <http://www.medicare.gov/nursinghomecompare/?bhcp=1>), the combined efforts of California stakeholders and CMS/CDPH enforcement activities resulted in an overall 8.5% reduction in nursing home antipsychotic utilization in 2012 (for long stay residents).

Phase II of the Partnership, directed by the California Culture Change Coalition (CCCC), was initiated on May 29, 2013 via a conference call that provided updates on the status of antipsychotic medication use and reports about the antipsychotic medication reduction activities of various stakeholders. Two in-person meetings were held in July and August, while a fourth meeting was convened by conference line on September 30, 2013.

Partnership Phase II Committee:

- CCCC - Lead
- CDPH;
- CMS;
- California Medical, Pharmacy and Nursing Boards;
- Alzheimer's Association;
- California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform;
- California Association of Health Facilities;
- California Association of Long-Term Care Medicine;
- California Hospital Association;
- California Long-Term Care Ombudsman Association;
- California Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman;
- California Medical Association;
- Health Services Advisory Group;
- Occupational Therapy Association; and
- Marianne Hollingsworth.

Additional information on the *California Partnership to Improve Dementia Care and Antipsychotic Medication Reduction in Nursing Homes Collaborative* can be found at:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/LnC/Pages/AntipsychoticCollab.aspx>; and
<http://www.calculturechange.org>.

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The *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* webpage also has information on the national initiative:

http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/star_index.aspx?controls=dementiaCare.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Debby Rogers

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