2003 MHCA Volunteer of the Year Award Recipients

Everyday, volunteers help out and make a difference in the lives of residents. At the MHCA Annual Winter Business Meeting, the MHCA recognized those special volunteers, nominated from staff at member facilities, who are most deserving by awarding them with a plaque and recognition during the event. The categories for the 2003 Volunteer of the Year awards are Adult, Young Adult, and Group, and this year, there was also a President’s Special Recognition Award. All of those that volunteer their time and energy in facilities are “winners” but the MHCA takes pleasure in recognizing those who were selected from this year’s nominees. In the Adult Category, Ms. Mary Maude Smith was nominated by Jenny Scott at Beverly Healthcare Brookhaven. Ms. Smith has been volunteering for over 3 years and puts in over 30 hours a week at the facility. In her time there, she has developed a “Reminiscing Group” to which she reads and develops discussions about the past. Through her efforts, she has recruited other volunteers to play games with the residents and speaks to her fellow church members about the importance of being involved in the residents’ lives. She was also recognized by her local newspaper as a “Hometown Hero” for her volunteering. In the Young Adult Category, Heidi Weaver was nominated by Wanda Jones at Noxubee County Nursing Home. Ms. Weaver has been volunteering for almost 10 years and visits with residents in the facility weekly. During her time there, she visits room-bound residents and encourages them to participate in facility activities, along with reading to and singing with the...
Certified nurse assistants are the foundation of care for residents in facilities, but unfortunately, their hard work and dedication to the job and to their residents often gets overlooked. The MHCA’s “The CNA Series” is THE seminar that CNA’s will want to attend and administrators will want to send them to - for valuable training on two key issues, communication and how to deal with Alzheimer’s/Dementia residents. The four-hour seminars, at only $30 per person, are sponsored through an educational grant by Jannsen Pharmaceutica, and are approved by the State Department of Health to count towards a CNA’s annual continuing education requirements. To make them more accessible to facilities, they are being offered at ten different sites around Mississippi, as follows: Gulfport (February 3), Hattiesburg (February 4), Southaven (February 10), Tupelo (February 11), Starkville (February 12), Jackson (February 18), Meridian (February 20), McComb (February 23), Grenada (March 9), and Greenville (March 10). Reward your CNA’s for the great work that they do - groups of five or more are encouraged to attend! For specific times and locations or for more information, call 601-956-3472 or visit www.mshca.com.

**MHCA 2004 Education Season Tickets**

The MHCA 2004 Season Ticket Program is a way to make continuing education for facility staff easier to obtain. During 2004, it is the MHCA’s goal to offer, at a minimum, the following workshops for long-term care staff: 5 for nursing home administrators, 2 for nurses, 2 for activity directors, 2 for social workers, and 2 for dietary staff. There are no limitations as to how many Season Tickets may be used at any single MHCA event (i.e., if a facility has purchased 10 Season Tickets, it may choose to send 10 employees to a single event; 5 employees to 2 events; or any combination of usage). If you would like to attend MHCA’s 2004 Seminars at a considerable discount from regular prices ($70 vs. $90, a 22% savings!), why not consider purchasing MHCA Season Tickets! It takes the hassle out of having to do the processing for a check or other form of payment each time you want to attend an MHCA event. Each Season Ticket package includes 10 seats for $700 (10 x $70 each) that you/your staff can use in any combination for most all MHCA events during 2004. To find out more on the MHCA Season Ticket Program or to order your Season Tickets, simply visit our Members ONLY web site www.mshca.com/members/seasonticket.htm. For additional questions regarding the Season Ticket Program or its policies, please contact the MHCA @ 601-956-3472.

**Additional Details regarding events listed above can be found at www.mshca.com**
Medicaid CMP Grants

The Division of Medicaid has announced another round for awards utilizing the state’s Civil Money Penalty Funds, in two categories: Enhancement Grants and Education Programs. The enhancement grants are for facilities which have maintained federal compliance, and for FY ’05, $250,000 has been earmarked for grants in the range of $5,000 to $50,000. The education programs are for facilities which have not been in substantial compliance with federal requirements, and for FY’05, $100,000 has been earmarked for grants. Both are to provide funds for programs or projects that benefit the residents by providing an enhanced quality of life. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2004 with awards granted on April 1, 2004. For more information, call 601-359-6750 or visit www.dom.state.ms.us.

Quality First Commitment

In alignment with the American Health Care Association, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, and the Alliance for Quality Nursing Home Care, Mississippi Health Care Association has made a pledge and commitment to the seven principles which are embodied in “Quality First: A Covenant for Healthy, Affordable and Ethical Long Term Care.” These principles are: Continuous Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement; Public Disclosure and Accountability; Patient/Resident and Family Rights; Workforce Excellence; Public Input and Community Involvement; Ethical Practices; and Financial Stewardship.

Update on Feeding Assistants in Mississippi

Approval on the federal level for the use of feeding assistants was approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and guidelines were issued in the September 26, 2003, Federal Register. After months of working closely with state officials in seeking approval for the use of feeding assistants in Mississippi, on December 1, 2003, the MSDH Division of Health Facilities Licensure & Certification issued its state guidelines for the use of paid feeding assistants. Prior to being able to put feeding assistants to work, a facility must submit appropriate documentation to Licensure & Certification, including the facility’s training course. In light of federal approval, the American Health Care Association (AHCA) also unveiled on December 8, 2002, its long-awaited Assisted Dining: The Role and Skills of Feeding Assistants, a manual for the training and use of feeding assistants.

The AHCA training program is designed for any individual who is paid to feed residents in a skilled nursing facility. The 97-page book is a comprehensive “how to” on feeding residents with differing abilities and teaches how to respond to emergencies, infection control, communications, and resident’s rights. The state utilized this manual in its development of state guidelines and has also approved the AHCA manual for use in Mississippi, noting that there are a few Mississippi-specific areas required by state guidelines that are not currently in any currently published curriculum. For more information on how to purchase the AHCA Feeding Assistant Manual, call AHCA at 800-321-0343 or www.ahcapublications.org.

Millcreek (Continued)

named for the physician regarded in health care as the “father of outcomes measurement,” showcases the effective use of performance measurement by health care organizations to improve the quality and safety of health care. A panel of national experts in quality measurement and improvement selected the four recipients of the 2003 Awards. "Improvements that measurably advance health care require innovative thinking, teamwork, and commitment," says Dennis S. O’Leary, M.D., president, JCAHO. "This quality improvement initiative not only enhanced the safety of the treatment setting and improved clinical outcomes, it strengthened positive therapeutic interactions between the children and the staff," says Margaret F. Tedford, Millcreek’s administrator. "This achievement has raised the level of expectations and treatment understanding for all of us." Millcreek's restraint reduction initiative was designed to enhance the safety of the treatment setting, provide a more stable, therapeutic environment, and improve treatment outcomes for its children. The facility emphasized the interdisciplinary treatment plan and a team concept for its staff. Other strategies included staff training in proactive de-escalation techniques; specific monitoring of the use of restraint use; hiring nurses as residential unit managers; establishing clear policies and procedures for the use of restraint; and creating a position for a dedicated nurse monitor to oversee the use of each episode of restraint. JCAHO also credited the initiative for resulting in increased understanding of the patients served, including positive changes in staff turnover and morale; improved staff and patient interactions due to increased, enhanced training; and overall efforts to create a safer work environment that fostered continued learning and support.

Two Year Moratorium

Congress has passed a two-year moratorium on therapy caps. The moratorium was official when President Bush signed the Medicare reform bill into law December 8, 2003.
Mississippi Health Care Association
Nursing Home Members

Southern Healthcare
Jones County Nursing Home
Ellisville, Mississippi
The Carrington Nursing Center
Carthage, Mississippi
The Nichols Center
Madison, Mississippi
Vineyard Court Nursing Center
Columbus, Mississippi
Willow Creek Retirement Center
Jackson, Mississippi

Community Eldercare Services
Biloxi Community Living Center
Biloxi, Mississippi
Courtyards Community Living Center
Fulton, Mississippi
Laurelwood Community Living Center
Laurel, Mississippi
Liberty Community Living Center
Liberty, Mississippi

Longwood Community Living Center
Booneville, Mississippi
Meridian Community Living Center
Meridian, Mississippi
Plaza Community Living Center
Pascagoula, Mississippi
Pleasant Hills Community Living Center
Jackson, Mississippi
Sunplex Community Living Center
Ocean Springs, Mississippi
Tishomingo Community Living Center
Iuka, Mississippi
Vaiden Community Living Center
Vaiden, Mississippi
West Point Community Living Center
West Point, Mississippi

New MHCA—Mississippi Center for Assisted Living Members
Magnolia Elderly Care
Enterprise, Mississippi
The Bureau of Health Facilities Licensure and Certification is concerned with the increasing number of citations being issued under F309 involving care of diabetic residents. Since September 2003, there have been seven (7) deficiencies cited at the immediate jeopardy (IJ) level for findings that facilities’ care systems had serious faults or breakdowns that placed diabetic residents in jeopardy. The most common finding among the seven IJs is the failure of facility staff to identify, treat, and monitor residents experiencing hypoglycemia reactions to insulin treatment. Specific examples will be shared by Licensure and Certification staff with the participants of the MHCA January 22, 2004, Nursing Summit. Facilities are urged to evaluate their diabetic care practices to ensure that staff is adhering to acceptable standards of practice for the care and treatment of residents with diabetes.

We are sad to announce that the bureau has lost the following employees since October 31: Judy Pevey, RN surveyor; Rita Rose, RN surveyor in training; Jacqueline Carrena, Delta LTC Division Director; and Ann Ricks, Chief Nurse. We are pleased that following individuals have joined the bureau: Judy Alexander, RN surveyor assigned to the Delta LTC unit; Sherrie McElwain and Linda Dickinson, RN surveyors assigned to the Complaint unit; and Teri Manning, laboratory surveyor assigned to the CLIA unit. We also look forward in January to six (6) individuals joining us to survey personal care homes. As we begin 2004, the Licensure & Certification team members join me in wishing all providers and residents a peaceful, healthy, and successful new year.

— Karen Selestak, Director

Volunteers

Residents. She was nominated because of her quiet and gentle disposition and her continuing commitment to be a part of the residents’ lives. In the Group Category, St. Richard’s Group was nominated by Rachel Robertson at Manhatten Nursing Home & Rehabilitation Center, in Jackson. Members of St. Richard’s church and school have had an established group providing volunteer services to Manhatten for over 15 years, putting in at least 3 or more hours weekly. Events that they have sponsored for residents include bringing over their sponsored Daisy and Cub Scout groups, holiday programs from St. Richard’s students, singing for residents, providing Catholic literature, and their annual “Manhatten Mall” where St. Richard’s 6th grade students collect Christmas gifts throughout the year for residents. This year, President Ed Hill also recognized a very special young man who devotes the majority of his daily life to working with the residents of Community Nursing Home in Jackson. Mr. Patrick Silas has been volunteering his time and energy for over 10 years for at least 30 hours a week. He spends his time at the facility sharing “the Word” with residents, greets all who come to the facility, and escorts them around the building. Even overcoming his own personal challenges, the residents say Patrick is “a ball of energy” and a friend to everyone. The facility’s other volunteers look to him and his constant encouragement to residents to stay active and stay involved. For 2004, nomination forms will be distributed to member facilities during May, with the winner in each category, as is done each year, forwarded to AHCA for consideration as Volunteer of the Year on a national level. Please be on the lookout for this year’s nomination forms to recognize the special volunteers in each facility who go the extra mile to give of what they have to the residents who call the nursing facility their home.
Jackson Smoking Ban

The Jackson City Council passed an ordinance on banning smoking in public places, on December 24, 2003, with an implementation date of January 24, 2004. Included in the ordinance is a smoking prohibition in nursing homes, which does not allow smoking in a facility’s “waiting rooms, hallways, ... and wards” but exempts private and semi-private rooms where the room’s residents are smokers and “have requested in writing to be placed in a room where smoking is permitted.” Unfortunately, state regulations prohibit smoking in resident rooms, which places the city ordinance and state regulations in conflict with each other. The end result is that for facilities within the city limits of Jackson, smoking is not allowed anywhere within the physical facility, but is allowed 25 feet outside the facility “so as to insure that tobacco smoke does not enter the area through entrances, windows, ventilation systems, or other means.” Additionally, there is a requirement of posting “no smoking” signs at all entrances, and all ashtrays and smoking paraphernalia must be removed from areas where smoking is prohibited. For more information or a copy of the ordinance, contact the Jackson City Clerk’s office at 601-960-1035 or ecarr@city.jackson.ms.us.

Dietary Manager Training

The MHCA has been working closely with Nutrition Systems, Inc., on developing an ongoing, once-a-month, day long workshop for training dietary managers and for preparation for completion of the Dietary Manager’s Correspondence Course, beginning Spring 2004. For more information on dates and times, contact the staff at Nutrition Systems, Inc., at 601-437-3012.

Mississippi Medicaid Electronic Cost Reporting

The Division of Medicaid contract for electronic cost reports with MediMax Technologies will end January 20, 2004. Effective this date, the software will not be available and cost reports should not be submitted electronically. Please continue to submit a paper copy of all cost reports. The instructions and an excel version of the forms and schedules is available on our web site at www.dom.state.ms.us under Select a Link, LTC Cost Report & Instructions. They are also listed under the Medicaid Provider Information link. Please remember that software developed in-house must be approved for use by the Division of Medicaid. For approval, submit a printed version of the cost report forms and schedules from your software to the Bureau of Reimbursement. It will be checked for formatting conformity. Formula reliability is solely the responsibility of the preparer and will not be checked by the Bureau of Reimbursement during this approval process. Should you have any questions, please contact Margaret King, CPA, at rbmck@medicaid.state.ms.us or (601) 359-6155.

Mississippi Health Care Association

2004 Annual Convention & Trade Show

Beau Rivage Resort & Convention Center

Fishing and Golfing Opportunities!

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