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## Psychologists Charged in \$25 Million Nursing Facility Fraud Scheme



Two psychologists were charged for billing Medicare \$25 million for psychological tests on nursing facility residents that were either unnecessary or never provided.

Beverly Stubblefield, Ph.D. (of Slidell, Louisiana), and John Teal, Ph.D. (of Jackson, Mississippi), owned two psychological services companies that contracted to nursing facilities in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida.

Stubblefield and Teal, along with other clinical psychologists employed by their companies, allegedly provided psychological tests and other services to nursing facility residents that weren't necessary, and in some cases, never provided.

Between 2009 and 2015, the companies submitted more than [\\$25.2 million](#) in claims to Medicare, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. Medicare has reportedly paid \$17 million of those claims.

Stubblefield and Teal, along with two other defendants, were charged with conspiracy to commit health care fraud and conspiracy to make false statements related to health care matters. The case is being handled by the Medicare Fraud Strike Force.

Many long-term care facilities actively screen seniors for depression and other mental illnesses. One recent study found more than half of seniors believe depression is a [normal part of aging](#), while another found a "substantial" risk of suicide among LTC residents.

### CoreQ Is Now Available on LTC Trend Tracker



The AHCA/NCAL new customer satisfaction measure, the CoreQ is now available to upload in [LTC Trend Tracker](#). AHCA has developed this short customer satisfaction questionnaire in order to have a satisfaction quality measure for use as part of the AHCA/NCAL Quality Initiative. This questionnaire has been independently tested as a valid and reliable measure of customer satisfaction across long-term care providers. Read more [here](#).

Join the conversation and connect with LNHA today!

## IMPACT Provisions are Coming

On Wednesday, October 21, 2015, CMS held a National Provider Call to explain the data standardization required by the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation Act of 2014 (IMPACT). The Act requires standardization of patient assessment data across all post-acute care (PAC) settings which will lead to improved discharge planning and better coordination of care. The goal of the Act is to improve Medicare beneficiary outcomes and to establish payment rates according to the individual characteristics of the patient, not the care setting. CMS proposed that data uniformity and interoperability will take place regardless of the assessment instrument (e.g., MDS) used by the different post-acute care settings. The quality measure domains and the timelines that apply to the skilled nursing facilities are:

- Functional status, cognitive function and changes in function, and cognitive function must be reported beginning October 1, 2016;
- Skin integrity and changes in skin integrity must be reported beginning October 1, 2016;
- Medication reconciliation must be reported beginning October 1, 2018;
- Incidence of major falls must be reported beginning October 1, 2016;
- Communicating the existence of and providing for the transfer of health information and care preferences must be reported beginning October 1, 2018; and
- Resource and other measures including total estimated Medicare spending per beneficiary, discharge to the community and measures to reflect all-condition risk-adjusted potentially preventable hospital readmission rates must be reported beginning October 1, 2016.

Facilities that do not report the domain measures at the required time will be subject to a 2% reduction on Medicare funding.

Three of the measures are “mapped,” i.e., accepted while others are still being developed. Those already mapped include skin integrity, incidence of major falls and functional status. “Skin integrity” measures the percent of residents with pressure ulcers that are new or worsened (short-stay). “Incidence of major falls” measures the percent of residents experiencing one or more falls with major injury (long stay). “Function measures” the percent of long-term care hospital (LTCH) patients with an admission and discharge functional assessment and a care plan that address function. CMS technical expert panels are working to finalize the measures for the other domains.

CMS will host the first of their open door forums for skilled nursing facilities and long-term care facilities on October 29 and December 1, 2015. There will be a Special Open Door Forum (Understanding the IMPACT Act-Patient and Family Focused Informed Decision Making) on October 27, 2015. Additionally CMS has plans to offer a National Training Program Partner Update sometime in January. More information regarding the implementation of the IMPACT Act and outreach activities is available [here](#).

(Author: KarenSue Zoeller, LNHA Regulatory Director)

Want to enhance organizational success? Prepare for the regulatory future? Obtain superior performance outcome?

If you answered YES to any or all of the above, be sure to [submit your Intent to Apply \(ITA\)](#) for a 2016 Quality Award by 7 pm CST on November 19!

Applicants who submit an ITA receive a discount off of their overall application fee – a \$200 savings for Bronze applicants; a \$400 savings for Silver; and \$550 savings for Gold – AND receive exclusive tips on submitting a successful application. The complete awards fee schedule is available [here](#).

But don't forget that now is the time to begin working on your application, available on the [Bronze](#), [Silver](#) or [Gold](#) Quality Award pages. Resources to help you include:

- The [Bronze Criteria Series](#), a collection of short YouTube videos to guide Bronze applicants through the criteria.
- The NEW [Silver Criteria Series](#), ten videos to help Silver applicants understand the criteria and apply it to their organization.
- The [Management Viewing Guide](#) with direct links to slides and seminars for Gold applicants.

The [AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program](#) sets high standards for quality based on the Baldrige Performance Excellence criteria and encourages member providers to commit, achieve and excel in quality performance. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Quality Award staff at [qualityaward@ahca.org](mailto:qualityaward@ahca.org).

### Important AHCA Dates to Know!

- November 19: Intent to Apply deadline
- December 7: Applications accepted online
- January 28: Bronze, Silver and Gold application deadlines



### Is Your Administrator Receiving Weekly LNHA emails?

Are your upper-level employees subscribed to receive LNHA's weekly informative emails including the Executive Director email, monthly Lagniappe emails and other updates? If not, have the staff member email Karen Miller at [kmiller@lnha.org](mailto:kmiller@lnha.org) with their name, facility, title and email address to be added to the e-list.

Recently, several members have been deleted from the list due to expired addresses. Be sure your administrators are receiving these items.

## Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services began the voluntary submission period for the electronic data submission system, Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) on October 1, 2015. The purpose of the voluntary submission is to allow facilities and vendors to test their processes to submit data prior to the mandatory submission period which begins July 1, 2016.

CMS is implementing this process in compliance with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) which requires facilities to electronically submit direct care staffing information. This information is then combined with census information to determine the level of staff in each nursing facility and to report employee turnover and care.

The registration process for submission takes about 15 minutes to complete and has two steps:

- Step 1: [Obtain a CMSNet User ID](#) for PBJ Individual, Corporate and Third Party users, if you don't already have one for other QIES applications (many users may already have this access for MDS submission).
- Step 2: [Obtain a PBJ QIES Provider ID](#) for CASPER Reporting and PBJ system access.

There is a training module available [here](#). For additional information, click [here](#).

(Author: KarenSue Zoeller, LNHA Regulatory Director)

## Prepare Your Facility for a Winter Storm



This [tabletop exercise](#) will enable your staff to prepare for winter storms. The workplace is one of the most effective environments for educating and encouraging employees to take steps to be ready for inclement weather. Participating in this exercise will benefit your facility by increasing knowledge of safety policies and procedures; building morale and trust by demonstrating a commitment to safety and well-being; and reducing a storm's effects, including injury, property or inventory damage, and financial loss from business disruption.

This tabletop exercise leads participants through a simulated winter scenario and prompts them to examine their plans, policies, and procedures without disrupting the workplace environment. It allows for a facilitated discussion of roles, procedures, and responsibilities in the context of a simulated winter storm scenario.

The goals for the exercise are as follows:

1. To assess your facility's ability to respond using your current plans, policies, capabilities, and resources
2. To help identify improvements that could make the difference in keeping your staff and residents safe and facility operational after a winter storm

## Morning Pointe Alzheimer's Care Garner's Gold Award



Morning Pointe Assisted Living, which operates 24 assisted living and memory care communities in the Southeastern U.S., met the demand for better Alzheimer's care programs with the development of Meaningful Day. Meaningful Day is a structured enrichment program built around residents' biological rhythms and predictability.

The company received the Gold Award in the McKnight's Excellence in Technology Awards in the High Tech/High Touch category for its use of technology to enrich its Alzheimer's and dementia programs. The program is sponsored by The Worx Hub by Dude Solutions. Meaningful Day, when partnered with technology platform SimpleC, improved Morning Pointe's staff-resident interaction, gave each resident a personalized program of care and helped residents' loved ones become more involved with their care.

## Now Accepting 2015 LLTCF Scholarship Applications



The Louisiana Long Term Care Foundation (LLTCF) is pleased to announce they are now accepting applications for 2015 LLTCF Nursing Scholarships.

If you have one or more employees or volunteers who are currently in nursing school and have expressed an interest in pursuing a career in long term care, please provide them with a copy of the application packet and encourage them to apply for this scholarship.

**Download and print the LLTCF Nursing Scholarship Application packet for 2015 [here](#).**

The deadline for scholarship application submission is Monday, November 23, 2015. The Louisiana Long Term Care Foundation will consider all applicants and make its final decision on awards in December. Read the instructions on page one of the packet for additional information, including the criteria to be met by each applicant. Contact Karen Miller at 225.927.5642 or [kmiller@lnha.org](mailto:kmiller@lnha.org) if you have any questions.

Don't miss this great opportunity to encourage those on your staff who exhibit the qualities we need in the long term care profession!

## Garden Park Ringers: Making Our Own Music



Recently, the Garden Park Ringers handbell choir made its debut in a concert presented at the Garden Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Shreveport, Louisiana. The Garden Park Ringers is the brainchild of Garden Park's Activity Coordinator Michelle Gaharan, formerly on staff at the Pineville United Methodist Church. After rehearsing weekly since April they were ready with a repertoire of 15 pieces, including traditional hymns and favorites such as "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

A packed house of residents, friends, family and staff gathered to hear this performance and none left disappointed. "My cheeks hurt from smiling," said Administrator Jennifer Peters! Nurse Practitioner Pam Patton who happened to be on campus that afternoon said, "The choir is really something special...I'm so glad I got to hear it!"

Spreading this musical joy was wonderful for the participants as well. Ringer Rosetta Porter said, "We really have to pay attention while we're ringing; we can't be looking out at the audience." She emphasized that it was important for them to stay focused so they wouldn't make mistakes and the music would sound good. "She [Gaharan] has practiced with us so faithfully all these weeks, I didn't want to let her down." Porter concluded by expressing how much she is anticipating their trip to play at the Methodist church next month. "They've even invited us to stay for lunch!"

Ms. Gaharan said that although men are welcome, so far the Garden Park Ringers are exclusively women. "They do a beautiful job," she said. "Each of the 19 players is important to the group...their beautiful sound comes from all of them focusing and playing together. It is a great cognitive and psychological boost to them and it gives joy to me and to anyone who hears them. The moment we began practicing, I knew it was going to be wonderful!"

Their next engagement will be playing for the Christ United Methodist Church Senior Adult Christmas Luncheon, which will be a special treat and outing that all of the group members are eagerly anticipating. They are practicing a number of Christmas pieces for this concert as well as for the Garden Park Christmas Luncheon in December when they will perform again for the Garden Park residents and their families.

Click [here](#) to watch the Garden Park Ringers handbell choir.

*Do you have something exciting going on at your facility? Share your story with [kmiller@lnha.org](mailto:kmiller@lnha.org) for a chance to be featured in the Laniappe newsletter.*



## **Regulatory Update Seminar**

### **Presented by Zimmet Healthcare Services Group**

LNHA has teamed up with Zimmet Healthcare Services Group to present an informative one-day session discussing and explaining upcoming challenges regarding new CMS regulations and changes. Presenters will review the 2016 PPS Final Rule and other recent regulatory changes that will impact tomorrow's operations, including a discussion of the Protecting Access to Medicare Act (PAMA) and IMPACT Act, the new ICD-10 coding guidelines, and "clinical reimbursement" refinements associated with quality and payment reform. Zimmet's presenters will also highlight and explain the following topics:

- New MDS focused and QIS surveys
- Value-based purchasing incentives
- Staffing and quality metrics for the CMS Five-Star rating
- Managing managed care issues related to payment
- Common sense compliance and requirements for QAPI for the clinical team
- Impact of Bundled Payment Initiatives
- Dealing with re-hospitalizations
- Analytical monitoring and marketing of quality outcomes

#### **LOCATIONS AND DATES**

- Tuesday, November 10: Paragon Resort Marksville, LA  
To receive a group discount on your hotel room, call 1.800.642.7777 and mention code [LNHN10G](#)
- Wednesday, November 11: Crowne Plaza Baton Rouge, LA  
To receive a group discount on your hotel room, call 1.800.678.4065 and mention code [NUR](#)

Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. Class starts at 9:00 a.m. and concludes at 4:00 p.m.

**PRICING:** Members: \$150; Nonmembers: \$300

This activity is co-provided by LSUHSC School of Nursing and Louisiana Nursing Home Association. Louisiana State University HSC School of Nursing, Faculty Development Continuing Nursing Ed & Entrepreneurial Enterprise is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nursing Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. This session has been submitted to the Louisiana Board of Examiners of Nursing Facility Administrators for five continuing education hours.

**[Register Today!](#) Space is limited.**

Cancellation Policy: Written cancellation of a registration received in the LNHA office at least 10 days prior to the program will be refunded in full. Otherwise, one-third of the fee will be retained or billed for administrative costs. If you have questions, contact Maureen Velez at 225.927.5642 or at [mvelez@lnha.org](mailto:mvelez@lnha.org).

## LNHA's Upcoming Events and Save the Dates!



New events have been added to the [News and Events web page](#) and to the e-calendar. To register for an event, visit [www.lnha.org](http://www.lnha.org) and click the calendar icon on the home page and select the appropriate event.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- November 10, Regulatory Update Seminar, Marksville
- November 11, Regulatory Update Seminar, Baton Rouge

### SAVE THE DATES:

- January 26-27, 2016: MDS Training Update, Metairie
- January 28-29, 2016: MDS Training Update, Marksville
- May 3-4, 2016: LNHA Spring Conference, Baton Rouge

**Follow LNHA on your social media sites for the latest in news and updates!**



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