

Communicator

ASSISTED LIVING ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA

Springtime Is Conference Time!



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SAVE THE DATE!!

It's a GIRL

Come and Go
Baby Shower @ the
ALAA Office—
Thursday, May 26
from 1:30pm-4:00pm
For: Amy Findley

So much going on! The 2011 Spring Conference broke all records for attendance and vendor support!

We appreciate and send big “thanks” to all the Education Committee who worked for almost a whole year preparing for this event.

Even to taking out the trash after our roof top bash on Monday night!

If you missed the kick-off reception on the roof at the Alley you missed one really great party.

We will definitely plan to repeat this feature in the fall...if we can just find a proper place for a roof topper!

FH thanks Bonnie Thomas of Five Star for sponsoring our “Kick off” party for the Spring Conference.

More pix on page 4.

Teepa Snow contributed a fantastic presentation...even if some were a little uncomfortable with the graphic nature of the subject.

This was one of the largest—if not the largest attendance we have had in the past ten years.

Plus we had a record number of sponsors and exhibitors.

We also owe a big Thank You to Five Star Senior Living for a cash grant to allow the “roof top” kick off party event!

Again this year Dr. Geary presented the latest news from ADPH. It was his first as Interim Director of the Bureau of Provider Standards.

As usual there were the random changes and some presentations were too long or short, but overall the evaluations were very positive.

Turenne PharMedCo. stepped in at the last moment and saved the day on our nursing CEUs. We are negotiating with them now to take on the chore for all our events.

RSA Renaissance Hotel is a fine location mid-way for most travelling from north or south.

The Board is reviewing several options for our next locations. We will be announcing the Spring and Fall meeting sites for the next three years very soon!

We are trying to affect some savings in multi-year contracting and also trying to keep moving the Fall conference around the state.

In the meantime, we start today getting ready for this Fall in Mobile!

Don't forget to register and get early bird discounts!

Five Star Helps Us Partaaaaay!



Huh?

Just My Opinion
Frank Holden

What exactly is going on in the Governor's office? There have been several seemingly contradictory moves by the Governor regarding the CON.

One of the first acts by the Governor was to freeze any pending action on CON applications and policy decisions by the Statewide Healthcare Coordinating (SHCC).

In itself this is not unusual. A new governor gets to appoint a new CON Review Board and a new SHCC.

Then the new SHCC met to organize itself and passed three pending changes to the State Health Plan (written over the past year by the previous SHCC) as well as passed the draft State Health Plan.

One would think the newly appointed SHCC was following specific policy directions from the Governor.

But then Governor Bentley did not sign off on the action taken by the SHCC, thus letting the State Health Plan expire.

And then, Mr. Michael Ciamarra, Governor Bentley's chief policy advisor resigns.

If you are confused, join the club!

If you have a pending CON application, hold your breath.

April 29th the SHCC will hold its second official meeting. Governor Bentley is expected to address the SHCC at that time, to explain his actions.

What can we expect? We understand that the Administration is generally favorable to free market competition.

That would argue for reforming the CON process making it easier to get a CON especially if the affected entity does not impact state spending...such as the SCALF CON.

Ciamarra is widely known as an opponent of the CON mechanism. He argues that free markets produce less expensive health care overall.

His departure following the Governor's recent action seems to indicate a disconnect in the Administration over this issue.

No one I have talked to in various state agencies and others who should know, have any guess as to what the Governor's plan is regarding the SHCC.

He could reinstitute the State Health Plan as amended in the last SHCC meeting, he could instruct them to write a new health plan, or he could make a major policy announcement on the 29th.

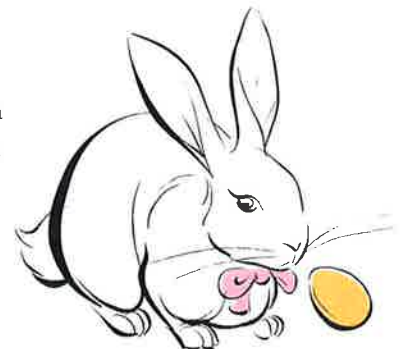
In the meantime, everyone is in the same fog as to the outcome.

Previous statements by the Governor's office indicate the likelihood that relaxing bed-need methodology and other mechanisms for controlling SCALF development could be in the offing.

The "stop-gap" amendment to the State Health Plan which was drafted by SHPDA in the last six months and was approved by the new SHCC last month may survive since it moves in the direction Gov. Bentley seems headed.

But again, no one knows.

So stay tuned. We will announce the Governor's action on the 29th by an email/fax notification...or you can just watch it on the news that afternoon!



ADPH Updates

Dr. Geary called an informal meeting to discuss the appropriate place for skilled care in assisted living.

Physicians, nurses, assisted living, and ADPH were represented. Recent citations for deficiencies regarding the use of IV antibiotics administered by Home Health nurses in assisted living were the catalyst for the meeting.

Recent interpretations by ADPH in regard to Gait Belts also hinge on “skilled care” definitions.

In the past several years ADPH has acknowledged the positive role of Home Health in assisted living as a means of meeting a resident’s skilled care needs for short intervals up to ninety days duration.

But new technologies and changed standards of medical practice have outstripped our rules and ADPH’s interpretations. This has put many ALF managers at risk of deficiencies and made it difficult for ALAA to advise members of proper procedures and policies.

This initial meeting helped identify where the problems are and both ADPH and ALAA are working on language to add to the regulations that will provide guidance for everyone on the proper use of skilled care in assisted living settings.

All of these discussions pre-suppose the cognitive ability of residents in ALFs to participate in directing their own care.

We still have to agree on how to measure cognitive impairment in order to make progress on this and many other ALF issues.

Since we all agreed to abandon the MMSE as the measurement, new standards will emerge overall and that will help make these skilled care issues more clear.

Dr. Powers has urged ADPH to use “function” as the standard, but as we all know, that is very difficult to measure.

ALAA hopes to have advice on that new standard very soon as a result of research going on now.

OSHA Turns Attention to ALF

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration which regulates safety in the workplace has begun to turn its attention to workplace employee safety in senior living communities.

Our regulations—by reference—require ALF/SCALF providers to meet standards by other agencies such as OSHA. Failure to do so can result in survey deficiencies from ADPH as well as monetary penalties from OSHA.

ALAA is researching recent actions by OSHA and reviewing the current standards for long term care employees.

In the meantime, it would be prudent for all Assisted Living managers, Administrators, and human resources managers to review OSHA standard for long term care employees and quickly audit your policies and procedures for compliance.

This website maintained by the US Department of Labor outlines the workplace safety standards for nursing home and personal care facilities:

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/nursinghome/index.html>

The website also provides guidance on approved or recommended policies and procedures.

Since there is no comprehensive national definition for “assisted living” you will find some of the language peculiar but all the references to “personal care homes” and many of the nursing home references will have application for assisted living.

You should also be cautioned that while OSHA seems to recommend Gait Belt use for resident transfers by all resident care employees, ADPH currently views Gait Belt use as a “skilled activity” and thus should not be part of you policy at this time unless it is part of a prescribed therapy in use by home health employees for a period not to exceed 90 days and that they remove the Gait Belt from the premises when they depart.





Up On The Roof! Everyone seemed to have a rollicking good time up on the Roof as we celebrated the “kick off” of our 2011 Spring Conference. As you can see it should have been an audition for American Idol!



And the lights burn bright over at ADPH while we Party!

“IT WORKS FOR ME”

July 29, 2011

Danberry at Inverness, Hoover, AL

The selection committee is hard at work to pick the providers who submitted programs for evaluation in our inaugural “It Works For Me” best practices competition!

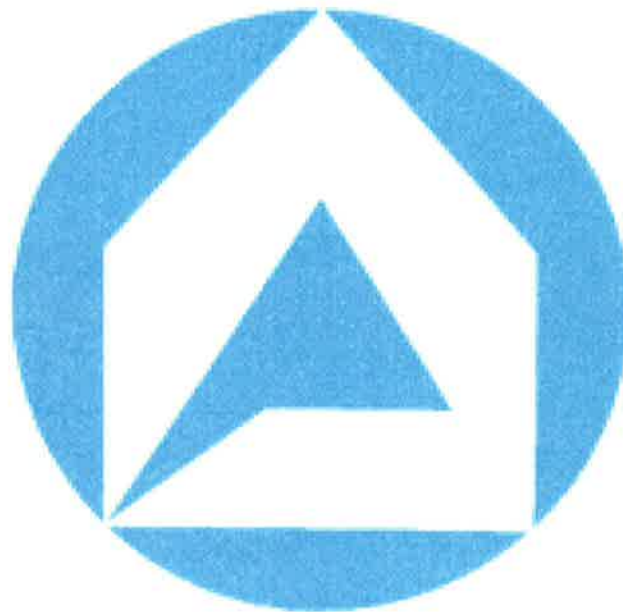
If you are a provider make sure some on your staff are registered to attend. This is an awesome opportunity for the care staff to come to a valuable education event at a low cost and enjoy meeting others who are hard at work in similar positions.

Everyone will enjoy the show! Everyone will enjoy a great lunch and have a chance to win door prizes.

The applicant programs are competing for four cash awards. It will be a fun and exciting learning experience for all.

If you are a vendor this is a fantastic opportunity to make your services and products known to the folks who make use of them!

We hope to see you there!



**Use the Attached Registration Forms to
Get Your Reservation!
Don't Miss the Fun!!!**



**ASSISTED LIVING ASSOCIATION
OF ALABAMA**

“IT WORKS FOR ME”
July 29, 2011

Fees:

\$25.00 for the first 2 registrants
\$20.00 for each additional

Continuing Education Credits will be asked for:

Assisted Living Administrators, Nurses, Pharmacists,
Nursing Home Administrators, Activity Professionals
and Social Workers

Name: _____

Facility: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please charge my _____ Visa _____ MasterCard/Total Charge: \$ _____

Name on Card: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Signature: _____

Location: Danberry at Inverness
235 Inverness Center Dr
Hoover, AL 35242

Time: 10am - 2:00pm (Lunch Provided)

This would be a great learning experience for your “Direct Care Givers”.

Send completed form to:

ALAA

**5921 Carmichael Rd.
Montgomery, AL 36117**

Or fax to (334) 262-4603

"IT WORKS FOR ME"

July 29, 2011

Danberry at Inverness, Hoover, AL

Please complete the following information:

SPONSOR REGISTRATION:

Listed in Agenda ONLY:

Agenda Only \$250 – Member Agenda Only \$350 – Non-Member

Booth Set-Up:

Exhibit & Agenda \$400 - Member Exhibit & Agenda \$500 – Non-Member

Company Name: _____

(2)Representatives/Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

We will need an electrical outlet: Yes No

We will provide a door prize: Yes No

I understand that the sponsorship registrations are on a PRE-PAID basis. I understand that the registration deadline is Tuesday, July 5, 2011.

Signature: _____ **Title:** _____

Total Payment: \$ _____

Check Enclosed (payable to ALAA) Check Request Enclosed
(If payment is not received by July 5, your company will be asked for a credit card number.)

Please charge my ___ Visa ___ Master Card Total Charge: \$ _____

Name on card: _____ Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Authorized Signature: _____

Please return form with registration fee to:

ALAA, 5921 Carmichael Road, Montgomery, AL, 36117

Or fax your registration to (334) 262-4603 with a credit card number.

You will receive a confirmation letter from ALAA prior to the Conference. If you have any questions, please call Amy at 800-826-9410.

Please email your company logo to afindley@alaaweb.org when you register.