



THE SOCIETY FOR POST-ACUTE AND LONG-TERM CARE MEDICINE

Your involvement in ALMDA fosters better care for patients

ALMDA, Alabama's state chapter affiliate of AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long Term Care Medicine, welcomes your involvement as we strive to provide the best medical care and compassionate service in one of the most challenging medical environments – our state's long-term care facilities. Membership in ALMDA and AMDA provides you with many benefits including free webinars, national advocacy and national networking, clinical practice guidelines and unique education on topics tailored to your practice setting.

You can be a member of either or both organizations but we encourage you to do both to maximize your educational opportunities and professional interactions. The benefits from interacting and learning from other long term providers is immeasurable.

ALMDA offers two educational events each year to help you learn more about surviving and thriving in long-term care. In 2018 our Mid-Winter Conference will be in Birmingham on January 27, and our Annual Conference is set for July 26-29 in Destin, Fla. Learn more about our conferences in the events section of ALMDA's website. We are appreciative of our good relationship with the Alabama Nursing Home Association and their commitment to supporting both of our annual meetings and we value the work we do together through the Advisory Committee, which meets in conjunction with our meetings.

ALMDA provides several membership categories to encourage participation from providers at all levels of patient care. 2018 Membership and Conference Registration forms are available on our website at www.almda.org/page/almda-membership. If you have any questions about a membership category do not hesitate to contact our executive director, Jennifer Hayes, at jbayes@alamedical.org.

Join us as we strive to advance the care in our long-term care facilities. We need you and we believe you need us to make a difference in the lives of our patients!

Steve Furr, MD, CMD
President

ALMDA

News & Notes

WWW.ALMDA.ORG

Meet ALMDA President Steve Furr, MD, CMD

ALMDA is pleased to welcome back Dr. Steve Furr, who served as our president in 2005-2006.

Dr. Furr is a family practice physician in Jackson. He received his



bachelor's and medical degrees at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, and completed post-graduate training at Huntsville Hospital.

Dr. Furr's involvement in organized medicine is widespread. He served as an ALMDA delegate to the AMDA national conference and as chair of the American Medical Directors Certification Program Board of Directors.

He is a past president of the Alabama Academy of Family Physicians and the Medical Association of the State of Alabama.

He previously served on the Alabama State Board of Medical Examiners as well as the Alabama State Committee of Public Health.

Dr. Furr is a past chair and current member of the University of South Alabama Board of Trustees.

ALMDA Annual Conference Wrap-up



Kendra Sheppard, MD, MSPH, CMD, presents J. Grier Stewart, MD, with a plaque recognizing his service as 2016-2017 president of ALMDA.



Attendees of ALMDA's 2017 Annual Conference earned up to 12 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™.



ALMDA board members presented Walter T. Geary, Jr., MD, (second from right) with an inscribed clock recognizing his retirement and dedicated service to the Alabama Medical Directors Association.

Election Results

President: Steve Furr, MD, CMD, Jackson

President-elect: Sally Ebaugh, MD, CMD, Bessemer

Secretary-Treasurer: Robert Webb, MD, Killen

Board Chairman: J. Grier Stewart, MD, Tuscaloosa

Board Members (serving 2017-2019)

James Yates, MD, CMD, Jacksonville

Charlotte Wynn, CRNP, Birmingham

Joel Bolen, MD, Montgomery

Bernita Mims, MD, Butler

Greg Flippo, MD, Pinson

Kevin Jackson, MD, Opelika

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

New Regular Members (Physicians and CRNPs)

Salah Al-Abbadi, MD, Grove Hill Hospital

Stephanie Bauerle, DO, Senior Select Partners, LLC, Birmingham
Daveta Dozier, MD, Thomasville Nursing Home

Enrico Gaspar, MD, United Doctors Family Medical Center, Boaz

Scott Harris, MD, Alabama Department of Public Health, Decatur

Ashley Lackey, CRNP, United Doctors Family Medical Center, Boaz

Laureen Mushati-Makoko, CRNP, Southern Nurse Practitioner Associates, Tuscaloosa

Elizabeth Owings, MD, Camden Nursing Facility

Amy Thompson, CRNP, Optum, Spanish Fort

Scottie Twillie, DO, Integrative Family Medicine, Cordova

James Zumstein, MD, Phenix City Health Care

New Associate Member

Darron Forrest, PA, Southern Nurse Practitioner Associates, Tuscaloosa

Save the Date for ALMDA's 2018 Mid-Winter Meeting

January 27, 2018
Birmingham Marriott
Grandview Parkway

The ALMDA room block rate is \$139 and will expire on Jan. 5. Call 888-426-5171 or reserve online at www.tinyurl.com/ALMDAmarriott.

Application for Quality Payment Program Hardship Exception is available for 2017 transition year

MIPS eligible clinicians and groups may qualify for a reweighting of their Advancing Care Information performance category score to 0% of the final score, and can submit a hardship exception application, for one of the following specified reasons:

- Insufficient internet connectivity
- Extreme and uncontrollable circumstances
- Lack of control over the availability of Certified EHR Technology (CEHRT)

There are some MIPS eligible clinicians who are considered Special Status, who will be automatically reweighted (or exempted in the case of MIPS eligible clinicians participating in a MIPS APM) and do not need to submit a Quality Payment Program Hardship Exception Application.

For more information about the Quality Payment Program hardship application process, visit the [Quality Payment Program website](#).

EHR Incentive Program Hardship Exception Application

Eligible professionals (EPs) who are first-time participants in the Medicare EHR Incentive Program in 2017 are also eligible to apply for a one-time hardship exception. **Applications are due by Oct. 1, 2017.**

A first-time EP may apply for this one-time significant hardship to avoid a 2018 payment adjustment if:

- The EP is a first-time participant in the EHR Incentive Program in CY 2017 and intends to participate in the Medicare EHR Incentive Program in CY 2017, and
- The EP is transitioning to MIPS for the 2017 performance period, and
- The EP intends to report on measures specified for the Advancing Care Information performance category under the MIPS in 2017.

Visit the [EHR Incentive Programs website](#) and download the instructions on how to apply for this EHR Incentive Programs hardship application. 

Achieve a successful transition to MACRA's Quality Payment Program

In October 2016, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act (MACRA) of 2015 repealed the Medicare Part B Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) payment system and adopted a new two-track system. MACRA's Quality Payment Program (QPP) program is designed to streamline the Physician Quality Reporting System (PQRS), Value- Based Modifier (VM) and Meaningful Use Incentive programs into one process.

In a new survey by *NueMD*, 56 percent of respondents said they did not know whether they qualify to participate in MACRA's QPP. The most common answer to every question in the *NueMD* survey was "I'm not sure." The survey found that while 50 percent of responding health care professionals were "not at all" familiar with MACRA, 41 percent said they are "somewhat familiar" and only 9 percent said they are "very familiar" with MACRA.

Don't become a statistic. The Medical Association of the State of Alabama has partnered with the Alabama Quality Assurance Foundation (AQAF), to help you make a decision that will impact your payment structure under MACRA. Part of AQAF's contract with CMS is to provide training to clinicians on four categories of the Quality Payment Program and help every practice in Alabama choose its pace to participate so that you achieve a positive or neutral Medicare Part B Fee Schedule payment adjustment.

Technical assistance from the AQAF staff is always FREE! Learn more at <http://alabamamedicine.org/physician-resource-pick-pace/>. 

Medicare and Medicaid – Reform of requirements for long-term care facilities

CMS.gov

Nursing home surveys are conducted in accordance with survey protocols and Federal requirements to determine whether a citation of non-compliance appropriate. Consolidated Medicare and Medicaid requirements for participation (requirements) for Long Term Care (LTC) facilities (42 CFR part 483, subpart B) were first published in the *Federal Register* on Feb. 2, 1989 (54 FR 5316). The requirements for participation were recently revised to reflect the substantial advances that have been made over the past several years in the theory and practice of service delivery and safety. The revisions were published in a final rule that became effective on Nov. 28, 2016.

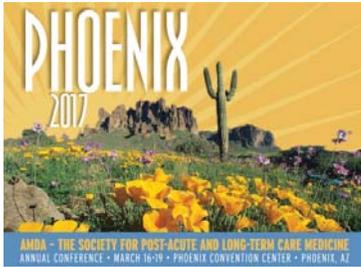
The survey protocols and interpretive guidelines serve to clarify and/or explain the intent of the regulations. All surveyors are required to use them in assessing compliance with Federal requirements. Deficiencies are based on violations of the regulations, which are to be based on observations of the nursing home's performance or practices.

The sections below provide additional information about the background and overview of the final rule, frequently asked questions, and other related resources.

For additional information about the background and overview of the final rule, frequently asked questions, and other related resources, visit the [website for CMS Nursing Home information](#). 

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.ALMDA.ORG

AMDA's 2017 Annual Conference educational sessions available for purchase



Experience the education sessions from AMDA's 2017 Annual Conference from the comfort of your own home! Education sessions at the annual conference in March were recorded, synchronized with the audio and PowerPoint presentations, and can be experienced either via online streaming or CD-ROM formats. CME/CMD credits are available for sessions with the online streaming format.

Top 10 Sessions:

1. Billing & Coding in PA/LTC: Something Old, Something New
2. Latest Approaches to Difficult Medical Issues in LTC
3. Recognizing & Managing Sepsis in PA/LTC
4. Antimicrobial Stewardship in PA/LTC Settings: Past, Present & Future
5. Update on CMS Regulatory Changes: Implications & Challenges
6. Leadership in Medical Direction: Wearing the Mantle of Leadership Will Enhance Medical Director's Effectiveness...
7. Breaking Down Poor Cardiovascular Outcomes in the SNF
8. Wound Care for the PAC Clinician
9. Deprescribing: Medication Management in the PAC Setting
10. A Successful Comprehensive Nursing Home Opioid Reduction Strategy

Don't miss out on experiencing any of the great education sessions that AMDA has to offer! You may purchase access to the entire conference or any individual session. See details on [AMDA's conference website](#).

Resources added to www.almda.org CMS and the MACs (fiscal intermediaries) requirements for patient visits

Get clarification on who can perform specific visits and who can't; and which visits can be performed by physician assistants or CRNPs.

- The actual CFR (which is mentioned in the CMS guidance so you might want to refer to this when reading the guidance).
- The new F-Tag (effective November 2017) associated with physician visits.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Signature Requirements

- Change Request (CR) 6698 - Signature Guidelines for Medical Review Purposes

For more information visit

www.almda.org/page/resources.



AMDA Annual Conference March 22-25, 2018, Grapevine, Texas

AMDA's Annual Conference is the only educational forum of its kind in the field of post-acute and long-term care (PA/LTC). It is filled with opportunities to enhance your knowledge and competencies in providing quality PA/LTC. Attendees are exposed to the latest clinical development in geriatric medicine, best practices in medical direction, policy/regulatory updates, as well as practical tools to help implement new ideas in your practice setting. Learn more at <http://www.paltc.org/node/2906>.

ALMDA News & Notes

Alabama Medical Directors Association

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The Alabama Medical Directors Association (ALMDA) is the professional association of physicians and other professionals practicing in the long-term care continuum and is dedicated to excellence in patient care by providing education, advocacy, information and professional development.

The articles contained in ALMDA News & Notes are meant to provoke thought and comment and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the members, Executive Council or staff of the Alabama Medical Directors Association. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome.