



June 2023

Assisted Living Matters

Tips & Tools for Assisted Living Professionals

Each month, *Assisted Living Matters* provides you concise updates on the information you need to know, practical strategies to help you and your team, valuable tools and resources, and innovative tips and suggestions.

Echelon

The Pursuit of Continuous Quality Improvement

Participants of the LeadingAge Wisconsin Echelon program continue striving for excellence in assisted living.

The Echelon network met on May 31. Our guest for this meeting was Robert (Bob) J. Lightfoot, Shareholder, Chair, Long-Term Care, Assisted Living and Independent Senior Housing Practice Group, Reinhart Boerner van Deuren, s.c., Madison, Wisconsin. Bob shared thoughts, suggestions, and perspectives on surviving an assisted living survey and evaluating for appeal.

Following Bob's presentation, the network went into an open forum and addressed the questions and concerns of Echelon participants. Participants broke into groups to discuss ideas for continuous quality improvement in assisted living, especially in the priority areas identified in the 2023 Winning Strategies meeting. Participants shared the following ideas and suggestions.

Rebuilding the Culture of Your Assisted Living Community

- Leaders should make their presence known throughout the building. Do walk-throughs and greet your staff members.
- Know and understand every member of your team on a personal/professional level.
- Have leadership present during lunch hour. This not only builds on your presence, it also curtails negative talk.
- Build and promote career ladders.
- Invest in your staff. By providing training to build your team's skills, you are giving them more reason to take pride in the work they do.

Recruitment and Retention

- Be transparent with your team. Share with them the decision-making process. Solicit their input.
- Do check-ins with every team member.
- Plan team outings.
- Provide Surprise Support – Surprise a team member by offering to do that individual's work while they take a short break or run a quick errand.
- Provide positive encouragement.
- When you hire an individual, offer the position by starting with these words, "I have chosen you..."
- Revamp your onboarding process to ensure all staff start from the same point.
- Ask your team members what they want/need to do their job better.
- If a team member comes to you with a concern, address it.

- Offer mini-shifts or 4-hour shifts to cover call-in's.
- Set up an on-call system to cover for all-in's. Individuals receive \$1.00 per hour to be on-call.
- Build a strong team who commit to being there for each other.

Ramping Up for Increased Acuity in Assisted Living

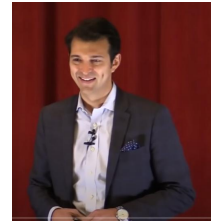
- Get staff involved in the decision-making. For example, when they consider the skill set of the team, would they rather the facility admit individuals with greater physical needs or greater cognitive needs?
- Encourage your managers to have floor presence. Be available to offer encouragement, support, and reassurance or guidance.

Echelon participants can click [here](#) for the 2022 *Winning Strategies* report outlining the action ideas identified throughout the meeting and to identify the actions in each area that would be most meaningful for your assisted living communities to pursue. From there, you can develop your community's action plan for quality improvement.

Echelon Featured Video

Are you and your team struggling to achieve better work/life integration? Give up the idea of time management and learn how to multiply time.

Check out this [video](#).



Echelon Tools & Resources



Echelon Featured Tool

One of the more confusing aspects of senior living includes understanding the different options and the abbreviations that come along with different facilities, communities, and levels of care.

Module 1 of the LeadingAge Wisconsin Staff Education Program (*The Purpose & Philosophy of Assisted Living*) provides a simple guide to understanding what it all means and how to tell the difference between independent living, RCAC, CBRF, AFH, SNF, and much more!

Check out pages 3-5 in the Reference Guide for this training module.

- [RCAC Echelon Participants Click Here](#) and then click on Reference Guide.
- [CBRF Echelon Participants Click Here](#) and then click on Reference Guide

If you have questions, please contact [Janice Mashak](#).

Cost Savings Tip of the Month

Value First is a group purchasing organization (GPO) that provides free, no obligation services for senior living communities that can reduce their operational costs through discounted pricing and rebates on food, medical, environmental and office supplies as well as capital equipment, fire safety, monthly elevator service and more!

Value First is owned by LeadingAge and 25 state affiliates, including LeadingAge Wisconsin. Value First specializes in supporting the purchasing needs of LeadingAge members based on our extensive experience and knowledge of senior living communities.

LeadingAge members gain access to cost saving purchasing programs with best-in-class [suppliers](#) through Value First and its partnership with HPSI, an Avendra Group Company.

Contact Denise May DMay@LeadingAgeWI.org if you would like a comparison for your community. For more info on this program, visit ValueFirstOnline.com.



WCCEAL Added Benefit

WCCEAL Participants Have Free Access to the Clinical Resource Center

The Clinical Resource Center (CRC) website is designed to provide key information and resources about clinical care for staff members caring for residents living in long-term care or assisted living facilities. Website access is currently available free of charge to Wisconsin nursing home staff, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WI DHS) and [Wisconsin Coalition for Collaborative Excellence in Assisted Living](#) (WCCEAL) assisted living community staff.

CRC has been designed to provide key information and resources about clinical care for long-term care staff. The secure, log-in based CRC website is a user-friendly resource which provides links to educational and clinical information about selected care areas and training topics. The key components of the website are the Care Area Modules, Training Modules, full downloadable versions of AMDA clinical practice guidelines and other materials, and both Federal and State specific nursing home regulations. To facilitate ease of use, each care area module is organized using a framework that provides tools, guidelines, related regulations and additional resources for learning. It provides a one-stop, dynamic forum for accessing useful information and resources about long-term care. The following Care Area Modules and Training Modules are currently available on the CRC website, as well as full copies of the AMDA Clinical Practice Guides and other tools and resources from [AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine](#).

Care Area Modules:

- Challenging Behaviors
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Dementia
- Depression
- Diabetes Management
- Falls & Fall Risk
- Infection
- Nutrition & Hydration
- Pain Management
- Person-Centered Care
- Pressure Injury Prevention & Treatment
- Restraints
- Transitions in Care
- Urinary & Bowel Incontinence

Training Modules:

- Managing Challenging Behaviors
- Person-Centered Comprehensive Care Plans
- Review of the Care Process: Getting to the Root of the Matter
- Identifying and Responding to the Changes in Resident Condition (ICRC): The Impact of Effective Communication between the Licensed Nurse and Medical Provider
- Building Relationships Within a Clinical/Cultural Environment
- Infection Prevention and Control Within a Clinical/Cultural Environment

From the WCCEAL website, Echelon participants can click the link to CDC and enter their WCCEAL username and password to access the tools and resources on the CDC site.

Introducing the Dementia Care Designation System

Within the next month, LeadingAge Wisconsin will be launching our new Dementia Care Designation System (copyright pending), a project that has taken us three years to develop. The purpose of this self-assessment is to provide long-term care and assisted living communities a tool to identify and substantiate the level of dementia care they provide. The tool takes a deep dive into what true dementia care entails in five areas:

1. Supportive & Therapeutic Environment
2. Information, Education and Support
3. Assessment and Care Planning
4. Life Enrichment
5. Workforce

After completing the assessment, your facility could earn a score ranking them as Dementia Supportive, Dementia Capable, or Dementia Specific. LeadingAge Wisconsin will provide the facilities documents identifying the level of dementia care they offer and what that level of care means.

For the facilities that complete the assessment, they will have a document showing what sets them apart in the level of dementia care they provide. If they are interested in being recognized for providing a higher level of dementia care, they will know in what areas they need to work.

For individuals with dementia and for their families, this identifies what sets dementia care apart from long-term care and assisted living providers who might say they provide dementia care when, in reality, they provide care that might not have any consideration for true dementia care. The system also will enable individuals to identify what aspects of dementia care are most in tune with their wants, needs, and expectations.

LeadingAge Wisconsin extends our deepest gratitude and sincere congratulations to the dedicated members of our Dementia Care Task Force. The members of this task force included experts in dementia care across all departments in skilled nursing and assisted living communities. They devoted countless hours, numerous meetings, thoughtful discussions, deep thinking, and extreme expertise to bring this impressive system to reality for you.

LeadingAge Wisconsin also acknowledges and thanks the generous sponsorship of HealthDirect Pharmacy. With their sponsorship, we will be able to provide this valuable assessment to our members and subscribers free. This is part of our mission to ensure the highest quality care for each individual served.

Be watching for more information coming your way soon.

Assisted Living Leadership Seminar Series Has Been Rescheduled

At the request of numerous member organizations, in order to maximize the benefits of the Assisted Living Leadership Series, and to allow for more participants to attend our planned series, we have re-scheduled the seminar series -- *The Greater Good: Strong Assisted Living Leaders Ensure a Great Experience for Residents, Families and Staff.*

Our new plan is to offer this Assisted Living Leadership Series as a track at the LeadingAge Wisconsin Fall Conference and Trade Show, which will be held October 2-4 in Green Bay. Additional details will be provided at a later date.

Echelon Networking

Did you miss the May Echelon Network meeting?

Don't worry; we will be scheduling another meeting soon. Potential topics for discussion at our next meeting include:

- MD Visits during non-business hours
- Better communication with hospitals
- Unpacking the Echelon website

What else would you like to learn or discuss? Please email your thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns to [Janice Mashak](#).

Is Echelon for You?

Through Echelon, LeadingAge Wisconsin provides a voluntary system of tools, guidelines, practices, educational opportunities, peer support, consulting services, facilitated discussions, and network meetings to enhance your quality improvement efforts. Our quest for quality is driven by our firm belief that your residents deserve excellent care and services.

Learn more about Echelon [here](#). Access the Echelon Participation and Attestation form [here](#).

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