



Regulatory Update

For Your Information

December 23, 2011

Department of Community Health's Board (DCH) approved the proposed rules for Assisted Living Communities (ALC) for final adoption on Wednesday, December 8, 2011. *No changes in the wording of the rules were made as a result of the public comment hearing.*

The effective date for the new ALC Rules has not been established at this time. The DCH staff thinks the new rules will take effect near the end of December or beginning of January 2012. Once an effective date is decided, we will share the information with you. Please visit our website www.georgiaalfa.org for a copy of the Synopsis of the ALC Rules & Final ALC Rules.

Department's Comments During the December DCH Board Meeting

The department did express appreciation for the comments that were received and stated that they gave careful consideration to them. They further stated that some of the concerns raised in the comments urging further modifications of the proposed rules can be addressed through providing interpretive guidelines (IGs) that clarify language some providers viewed as ambiguous. They also stated that other suggestions for crisper wording, etc., can inform future amendments to the rules.

They expressed concern that it is important to carry out the directions of the legislature and implement new rules for assisted living communities now. The Department believes the proposed rules will provide for more flexibility for seniors living in assisted living communities who wish to age in place. And, finally, we and national ALFA were thanked for our participation in the process.

Next Steps for the Process

Next, the Department is working on a draft version of the **Interpretive Guidelines (IGs)**. We will have an opportunity to review the draft version of the IGs. This draft is expected to be available early January 2012. We have submitted additional wording to DCH with regard to our major concern, Staffing Ratios, in hopes it will be covered in the IGs.

The Department is still working on developing the **Certified Medication Aide (CMA) Training and Testing Program**. We anticipate that will also be available to us early January 2012.

Georgia-ALFA is developing a Certified Medication Aide Training Class. Our classes will be taught by our Industry Partner members who are registered pharmacists and nurses. Attention – Pharmacists and Nurses – If you are interested in volunteering your expertise, please email Genia Ryan at genia@georgiaalfa.org by January 6, 2012. More information and a schedule will be shared with Provider members as soon as the training program is available. If you are interested in receiving more information, please email Genia@georgiaalfa.org.

Candidates for the Certified Medication Aide program **must be a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)** before they can complete the CMA program. Now is a great time to have your staff members that are CMA candidates go through the CNA program.

Request from the Department for Planning Purposes

The Department is trying to work through some planning issues for the CMA program. They have asked Georgia-ALFA to help gather some REALLY rough numbers on the following questions:

1. How many of our member communities do we think will be likely to apply to become an assisted living community?
2. For those communities that do plan on becoming ALCs, how many certified medication aides do we think will be needed for staffing?
3. What does the turnover run for unlicensed staff members that are presently providing assistance with self-administered medications?

Again, the Department is looking for guesses and will not hold us to any numbers. Please fax Georgia-ALFA (678-407-2002) the total numbers for your community for each question; we'll forward only the grand totals of all the numbers...not individual breakdowns, just the grand totals to the Department.

Questions or need more information? Please contact Genia Ryan at genia@georgiaalfa.org or 404-583-1261.

Upcoming Events!

Mark your calendar and plan to join us!

- Our next **Georgia-ALFA Bi-Monthly Luncheon** is Friday, February 17, 2012.
- The **Georgia-ALFA Conference & Trade Show** is October 2 & 3, 2012.

Happy Holidays to You and Your Family from Georgia-ALFA's Board & Staff!!