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AMDA Supports New Goals of National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes

Columbia, MD – AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine supports the National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care’s new goals, announced today, to further reduce the use of antipsychotic medications in long-stay nursing home residents, and looks forward to working on initiatives aiming to improve the overall quality of care given to dementia patients. The new national goal is to reduce the use of antipsychotic medications in long-stay nursing home residents by 25 percent by the end of 2015 and by 30 percent by the close of 2016, using the prior baseline rate (Quarter 4, 2011). The original goal, of reducing antipsychotic use by 15 percent was met in 2013 (decreasing from 23.8 percent to 20.2 percent nationwide).

The Partnership’s initial focus was the reduction of the use of antipsychotics, but the overall goal is to enhance the use of non-pharmacologic approaches and person- and family-centered dementia care practices, and team-based approaches to dementia care. “We very much appreciate CMS’s extended focus on broader approaches to improved dementia care rather than just the antipsychotic medications,” said AMDA Board of Directors President Leonard Gelman, MD, CMD. “Improving the quality of care given to dementia patients is about more than just the meds and we can't take our eye off that ball.”

While AMDA supports further reducing antipsychotic use, there are other important steps in the ongoing journey to improve dementia care. Education for the entire interprofessional care team on properly caring for dementia patients is vital to improving quality of care. AMDA’s Dementia Clinical Practice Guideline Professional Development Program focuses on the recognition, assessment, treatment, and monitoring of dementia and is available for prescribers and non-prescribers. AMDA and the partners in this effort are committed to finding new ways to implement practices that enhance quality of life for people with dementia, protect them from substandard care, and promote goal-directed, person-centered care for every resident. Some of AMDA’s past and current efforts to improving dementia care can be found here.

An initiative of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care seeks to optimize quality of life for residents in America’s nursing homes by improving comprehensive approaches to the psychosocial and behavioral health needs of all residents, especially those with dementia. This public-private collaboration has engaged providers and provider associations, clinicians, researchers, advocates, government agencies, residents and families in every state and outlines a multidimensional strategy to address this public health issue.
Along with AMDA, American Health Care Association (AHCA), LeadingAge, and Advancing Excellence in America’s Nursing Homes, are partners of the National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care.

AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine is the national professional association of medical directors, attending physicians, and other professionals practicing post-acute and long-term care medicine and committed to the continuous improvement of patient care. AMDA provides education, advocacy, information, and professional development to enable its members to deliver quality post-acute and long-term care.