FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMDA Receives $1.6 Million CMS Grant to Improve Care of Younger Adults in PA/LTC

Columbia, MD – AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine will receive $1,624,269 in civil money penalty (CMP) funds over a three-year period to improve the quality of care and quality of life for younger adults receiving post-acute and long-term care (PA/LTC). The funds will be used to develop a training curriculum and program about caring for younger adults in PA/LTC for clinical practitioners and staff, and that training will be provided to every Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) certified nursing home in the states of Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

Younger adults (ages 31 to 64) are the fastest growing population in PA/LTC, doubling in population size over the past 20 years. Younger adults typically present psychological, social, psychiatric, and sexual needs and issues very differently from other PA/LTC patients, presenting unique challenges to providers of how to properly care for these patients while integrating them into a community or facility with other PA/LTC patients and residents.

The Lead Consultant and Faculty of the AMDA training program, Rebecca L. Ferrini, MD, MPH, CMD, says a historic level of younger, physically disabled patients are in need of long-term care, “and they are living longer than ever. We are also seeing a growing patient population with brain injuries and mental illness. Facilities have to be ready, because these patients are coming.” Specialized training is necessary for the interprofessional team to manage the unique care needs and/or goals of younger adults in PA/LTC, not frequently seen among traditional PA/LTC patients, including: determining appropriate relationships with staff; treating conditions affecting cognition such as seizures, head injuries, alcohol or drug use, and multiple sclerosis; and understanding that these residents will potentially need PA/LTC supports and services for decades.

AMDA’s training program will educate medical directors, nursing home staff, surveyors, long-term care ombudsman, and members of Quality Improvement Organizations/Quality Improvement Networks, about how to provide better care for the younger adult in PA/LTC. Training will be organized around real cases of younger adults, the challenges they face, and recommendations for best practices to successfully integrate younger adults into the life of PA/LTC facilities. The program will include online and face-to-face educational formats, using seasoned faculty and virtual learning tools such as web-based forums, conference calls, and webinars.

“With the distribution of this training AMDA will be filling a major void in available education about an important population that is quickly increasing in size,” commented AMDA Board of Directors President Leonard Gelman, MD, CMD. “The key to improving quality of life for a patient is properly trained, caring, and dedicated health care providers. The main focus of AMDA’s mission has and always will be providing
quality PA/LTC – and we are pleased to continue to work towards improving the quality of care for younger adults, and for the entire PA/LTC population.”

AMDA will work with the project team to develop and test the training program in 2015 and deliver it in 2016 and 2017, both in online form and in-person meetings. In addition, a “learning collaborative” is planned in which practitioners will have a forum to share experiences and best practices with each other. “This funding allows us to have a direct impact on the care delivered in a broad swath of nursing facilities at one time,” said AMDA Executive Director Christopher Laxton, CAE. “This kind of program is so exciting because it is central to AMDA’s mission to improve the quality of care and the quality of life of all those who depend on post-acute and long-term 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.