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TOP STORIES

Combined Regulatory and Quality Office Hours in 2024

The NHPCO team is excited to share that beginning next week, Regulatory and Quality Office Hours will be combined into one, expanded 90-minute session hosted monthly throughout 2024. These informal sessions, hosted by members of the Regulatory and Quality & Standards Committees, are an opportunity for members to share best practices, ask questions, and network with colleagues nationwide. The next Regulatory and Quality Office Hours session will be held on Tuesday, January 9 at 12:30 p.m. ET. Register on the [Regulatory and Quality Office Hours page](#) and submit questions in advance to regulatory@nhpco.org or quality@nhpco.org.



Third NHPCO-NAHC Town Hall to be Delayed

The Boards of Directors of NHPCO and NAHC have jointly decided to delay the third town hall to discuss the organizations' [collaboration and possible combination](#). Due to the holidays and the January Board meetings, it has been determined that the third town hall will be more productive and informative at a later date, which we will jointly announce in the near future. Please stay tuned.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 9: [Quality and Regulatory Office Hours](#)

January 10: Pharmacist Chat – [Why the Buzz About Buprenorphine? Overview of Buprenorphine for Pain Management in Hospice](#)

January 10: Spiritual Caregiver Chat – [Back to the Basics: What Services Do Spiritual Caregivers Provide?](#)

January 11: Webinar – [Special Focus Program: Proactive Strategies to Prepare Your Hospice for the SFP in 2024](#)

January 16: Workforce Chat – [Understanding and Battling Staff Burnout](#)

January 16: QAPI Chat – [New to Your Quality Improvement Role? Now What?](#)

January 17: Volunteer Management Chat – [NHPCO & MyNHPCO Library and Resources Recap](#)

January 18: [We Honor Veterans Office Hours](#)

January 18: Quality and Regulatory Webinar Miniseries – [Navigating Regulatory Waters: Insights from the 2023 Hospice Audit Survey and Care Compare](#)

REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE

NHPCO to Meet with CMS Regarding Hospice Audit System Challenges

NHPCO has a meeting scheduled in January with leaders from the Center for Program Integrity (CPI) at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to discuss challenges with the system of hospice audits, including how poorly structured and targeted audits can disrupt hospice operations and harm patient access to care. The meeting will include NHPCO leadership and representatives from member hospices. Discussion will be informed by both a recent survey of hospices and conversations with NHPCO members. If you would like to provide additional input before the meeting, please reach out to Patrick Harrison at pharrison@nhpco.org by January 10.

MODELS & DEMOS

CMS Requests Information on the VBI Model

In December, CMS released a [request for information](#) (RFI) on the Value-Based Insurance Design (VBI) Model to help inform potential future Model policy development. This RFI seeks information on various aspects of the VBI model, particularly hospice care, including hospice access and network adequacy considerations. This RFI also includes questions regarding health equity, including flexibilities that would enable Medicare Advantage Organizations to target VBI benefits based on certain factors. Comments are due to the VBI Mailbox at VBI@cms.hhs.gov by January 31, 2024.

NHPCO will submit a response to the RFI and is soliciting member feedback through [a Qualtrics survey](#). To ensure your comments inform the final response, please complete the survey by Wednesday, January 26. Any questions can be directed to innovation@nhpco.org.

QUALITY

Measures of Excellence (MOE): New Dashboard and Fourth Quarter Data Submission

MOE Dashboard Update: For members who submit MOE data, a new page is now available on your Dashboard. *Rates – Falls, Medication Errors, and Infections* provides patient safety data by overall rate, as well as incident rates per 1,000 patient days. Members are encouraged to download the recently revised [Measures of Excellence User Guide](#) for more information.

Fourth Quarter Data Submission Deadline: MOE data for the fourth quarter (Oct. – Dec. 2023) is due on January 28, 2024. Please reach out to moe@nhpco.org with any questions.

Quality Connections Credit: Quality Connections participants who submitted four quarters of MOE data in 2023 may now login to the Quality Connections portal and complete the attestation to receive a second MOE credit in the Measurement pillar. Please reach out to qualityconnections@nhpco.org with questions.

About MOE: The [Measures of Excellence \(MOE\)](#) is a quarterly data collection tool and dashboard that organizations may use to track operational and clinical data to inform high-quality care. The quarterly MOE Dashboard allows organizations to compare themselves to others for benchmarking and the MOE National Report provides data that supports a comprehensive review of national participant performance. The MOE Dashboard and National Report are exclusive NHPCO member benefits.

Evaluation of Grief Support Services (EGSS) Data Submission Deadline

Data Submission Deadline: Data submission for the second half of 2023 is due by January 28, 2024, for the period July 1 through December 31, 2023. Surveys must be submitted by January 28 in order to be included in 2023 data.

About EGSS: The EGSS survey is a members-only resource designed to evaluate an organization's grief support services. For more information, visit the [EGSS Survey](#) webpage.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

2024 Hospice Manager Development Program Schedule

The Hospice Manager Development Program (MDP) is the only comprehensive management training program that provides hospice-specific information and helps managers develop the skills they need to meet the challenges and changes they face managing programs, systems, and people. This dynamic training and development program provides access to national hospice experts and peers in hospice management. Level I and II courses are [now open for registration](#). Visit the Hospice MDP [Upcoming Courses schedule](#) for more information, rates, and registration.

More to come in 2024:

- [Hospice MDP Foundational Course](#): January 29 – March 11
- [Managing the Changing Organization](#): February 12 – March 11

WE HONOR VETERANS

We Honor Veterans Office Hours

Join the We Honor Veterans' team for Office Hours on Thursday, January 18, 12-12:30 p.m. ET. WHV participants of all levels are welcome to bring questions regarding level reports, website support, and more. [Sign up today!](#)

WHV Partner Portal Reopening January 8

The We Honor Veterans Partner Portal will reopen following scheduled maintenance on January 8 at 8 a.m. ET! We look forward to welcoming new members and accepting completed level reports. If you have any questions, please contact veterans@nhpco.org.

MEMBER UPDATES

Upcoming January Membership Orientation Call

New to NHPCO? Welcome! Our Membership Orientation Calls provide an opportunity for members to connect and share valuable insights about NHPCO and maximize the benefits of membership. Join the Membership team on the second Friday of each month from 2-3 p.m. ET. Your membership is important to us and we're here to support you every step of the way. [Register for January 12 call today.](#)

MyNHPCO COMMUNITIES

Upcoming Chats Not to Miss

As a member of NHPCO, you have free access to specialized chats with peers from across the country through the [MyNHPCO Communities](#), including:

- [Why the Buzz About Buprenorphine? Overview of Buprenorphine for Pain Management in Hospice](#) - You're invited to the MyNHPCO Pharmacist Community chat on Wednesday, January 10 at 1 p.m. ET where presenters will review initial dosing of buprenorphine products FDA-approved for pain management, highlight information about off-label use of buprenorphine for pain management, and discuss appropriate monitoring when transitioning to or from buprenorphine products for patients receiving hospice care.
- [Back to the Basics: What Services Do Spiritual Caregivers Provide?](#) - Join the MyNHPCO Spiritual Caregiver Community on Wednesday, January 10 at 3 p.m. ET to get back to the basics and explore how we represent spiritual caregiving and engage in dialogue to ensure that others gain an understanding of the services and interventions we provide.
- [Understanding and Battling Staff Burnout](#) - You're invited to the MyNHPCO Workforce Issues Community inaugural chat! On Tuesday, January 16 at 1 p.m. ET, presenters will

dive into the topic of burnout in the homecare work force and discuss research conducted on the unique contributors to burnout in nurses. A panel will help guide participants in ways to identify and address burnout among interdisciplinary staff.

- **[New to Your Quality Improvement Role? Now What?](#)** - Don't forget to register for the MyNHPCO QAPI Community chat on Tuesday, January 16 at 3 p.m. ET to explore the basics of hospice quality regulatory components, Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HQRP), Performance Improvement Initiatives, and provide attendees with many helpful resources.
- **[NHPCO and MyNHPCO Library and Resources Recap](#)** - Don't miss out on the MyNHPCO Volunteer Management Community chat on Wednesday, January 17 at 3 p.m. ET as presenters review the NHPCO and MyNHPCO Library and resources to provide tips and tricks that best support Volunteer Management programs.

Chat Recordings Now Available

MyNHPCO Community chats are recorded and posted for your convenience. Here are the recent chat recordings now available:

- **Volunteer Management Community Chat Recording:** [Volunteer Management Open Discussion](#)
- **Bereavement Professional Community Chat Recording:** [The Forgotten Grievers: Who Are They and What Makes Them Forgotten?](#)

The full [chat schedule](#) is available on MyNHPCO. You must be logged in to access details on MyNHPCO Chats. Please also note that to view some chat recordings, you may have to join the appropriate MyNHPCO community. Chats are a unique opportunity for professional communities to learn together; continuing education credits are not available.

NewsBriefs is a weekly publication provided to members of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

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