



Tip: Log in to the [NHPCO website](#) first to easily access member-only links.

## TOP STORIES

### 2023 NHPCO Health Equity Certificate Awardees

In 2023, the Project ECHO: *Equity Where It Matters* series consisted of bimonthly sessions on a wide variety of topics related to increasing access to equitable serious illness and end-of-life care. Participants in the program who attended at least seventy percent of the sessions and completed program evaluation requirements earned an NHPCO Health Equity Certificate. NHPCO is [excited to recognize](#) those individuals who earned the 2023 Health Equity Certificate. Congratulations!

- Stefanie Hansberry, Hospice of Southern Illinois, Inc.
- Kristopher Halsey, VITAS Healthcare
- Stacy Orloff, Empath Health
- Hope Walke, Empath Health
- Leslie Conner, Housecall Providers
- Ervilene Kuhlman, Hospice of San Angelo, Inc.
- Martha Young, Ecumen Hospice
- Sherry Coval, Empath Health
- Sandy Nelson, Hospice of Holland
- William Matthews, Empath Health





### Pediatric e-Journal Issue #74: Rare Conditions and Diseases – Now Available

For the [74<sup>th</sup> issue of the Pediatric e-Journal](#), NHPCO's Pediatric e-Journal Workgroup focused on rare conditions and diseases likely to be confronted in pediatric palliative and hospice care. There is a very broad category of challenges that can confront children, families, volunteers, and professionals who work in pediatric palliative and hospice care. This issue of the e-Journal does not cover all areas but seeks to guide readers in many important ways of addressing these issues. Archived issues of this publication are available on the [NHPCO website](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 4:** Hospice MDP - [Managing Conflict in the Workplace](#)

**March 4:** Webinar - [Substance Use Disorder Miniseries: Substance Use Disorder Considerations in Palliative Care](#)

**March 5:** [We Honor Veterans Office Hours](#)

**March 6:** Bereavement Professional Chat – [Grief in Dementia](#)

**March 7:** Project ECHO Dementia Care Miniseries: [Best Practices and Beyond](#)

**March 8:** [Membership Orientation Call](#)

**March 13:** Spiritual Caregiver Chat - [Can You Help Me? Exploring the Spiritual Needs of Caregivers](#)

**March 14:** Webinar - Quality & Regulatory Miniseries: [Quality and Regulatory Deep Dive: Why and How the Experience of Care Impacts End-of-Life Care Delivery](#)

**March 14:** Project ECHO Dementia Care Miniseries: [Best Practices and Beyond](#)

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## REGULATORY & COMPLIANCE

### MedPAC March Meetings

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) is hosting meetings on March 7 and 8. Presentations include reforming Medicare's wage index system, evaluating a prototype design for post-acute care prospective payment system, and Medicare Advantage payment policy. Register to attend or find recordings and transcripts on the [March Meeting page](#).

### Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Requesting Topic Suggestions

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is requesting topics for future evidence reports. Evidence reports are reviews of relevant scientific research to provide information to consumers, clinicians, and policymakers. These reports are provided at no cost and can help improve the understanding of programs, inequities, and issues. Topics can be submitted on the [AHRQ website](#).

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## QUALITY

### Hospice Quality Reporting Program (HGRP) Updates

**Care Compare February Refresh:** Publicly reported hospice quality data have been refreshed on [Care Compare](#). Quality measures updated with the February 2024 refresh include Hospice Item Set Comprehensive Assessment Measure, CAHPS® Hospice Survey Family Caregiver Experience, and CAHPS® Star ratings. **NHPCO members should access the [Quality Alerts and Updates](#) webpage to download the complete Quality Alert (dated 2/21/24) for more information.**

**Open Door Forum (ODF):** CMS held a Home Health, Hospice, and DME Open Door Forum on Thursday, February 22. CMS staff communicated that CAHPS® Provider Preview Reports for the May 2024 refresh have been delayed and should be available on February 28. The 30-day preview period for CAHPS® data will begin the same day reports are made available. Members should check their CASPER folders and reach out to [quality@nhpco.org](mailto:quality@nhpco.org) if they have not received their CAHPS® preview reports. Members are also encouraged to sign up for the [CMS ODF Mailing List](#) to receive future communications regarding Open Door Forums. A recording and transcript of the ODF will be posted at [CMS Open Door Forum Podcasts and Transcripts](#).

**Key Dates Webpage Updates:** The HGRP [Public Reporting: Key Dates for Providers](#) webpage has been updated with refresh dates for 2024, however there are errors noted on the page. CMS has confirmed that CAHPS measure reporting schedules have not changed and that corrections to the page are in progress. Members are encouraged to visit the page to review refresh schedules, data corrections deadlines, and submission deadlines.

### Project ECHO Miniseries: Best Practices in Dementia Care

NHPCO, in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association, will host a new [Project ECHO miniseries](#) beginning March 7. This seven-session, weekly miniseries focuses on implementation of evidence-based dementia care, specifically in serious illness and at the end of life, and will support and enhance the ability of providers across the continuum of care to understand the unique needs of persons living with various facets of cognitive impairment. Members are encouraged to [register for the miniseries](#), which will be hosted via Project ECHO's dynamic iECHO platform, or reach out to [projectecho@nhpco.org](mailto:projectecho@nhpco.org) with questions.

### National Impact Assessment of the CMS Quality Measures Reports

In the 2024 Impact Assessment report, CMS analyzed quality measure results from 2016 to 2021 across 26 quality and value-based incentive payment programs. Members are encouraged to [download the report](#) to learn more about the impact of CMS quality measures.

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## PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

### **New Date: Managing Conflict in the Workplace - March 18 – April 15**

Conflict is part of human nature; each of us brings unique values, goals, beliefs, ideas, and needs to our work. In this Level II module, participants will learn about the nature and styles of conflict, the skills needed to address conflict, and effective strategies for managing it. The course is now [open for registration](#).

#### **More to come in 2024:**

- [The Interdisciplinary Team: Key Skills for Hospice Managers](#): May 6 – June 3
- [MDP Foundational Course](#): May 20 – July 1

**About MDP:** The Hospice Manager Development Program 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. Visit the Hospice MDP [Upcoming Courses schedule](#) for more information, rates, and registration.

### **2024 Updated CE/CME Opportunities**

NHPCO experts and advisors have reviewed and revamped many online learning offerings, including our signature programs and online enduring materials. Explore the [full catalog](#) to learn more. The courses below outline the latest hospice regulations and standards:

- [Hospice Quality Certificate Program \(HQCP\)](#): This program reviews the federal hospice regulations, compliance as the foundation of a quality hospice program, and the connection between compliance and quality outcomes.
- [Hospice Compliance Certificate Program \(HCCP\)](#): This program covers the basics of healthcare compliance, including developing a compliance program, compliance risk assessment, compliance policies and procedures, and anonymous reporting.
- [Hospice Conditions of Participation](#): This module reviews hospice levels of care and presents application scenarios for participants. The module also discusses the provision of hospice care in nursing facilities, a regulatory "hot spot" for providers today.

If you've already completed HQCP or HCCP, check out the recently updated [companion courses](#). To enroll in any of NHPCO's courses, visit the [Online Catalog](#).

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## MEMBER UPDATES

### **NHPCO's Membership Orientation Call**

Connect, learn, and maximize your NHPCO member benefits. Join us on the second Friday of each month from 2-3 p.m. ET! [Register for the March 8 Orientation Call](#).

### **New HPM Talk Podcast Episode: ACHPN Review – The Conclusion**

Join Dr. Steven Baumrucker, Medical Director, Ballad Health Palliative Medicine Associates, as he speaks with Amanda Stevens, Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Educator, Ballad Health Systems Palliative Medicine and Carissa Depew, Palliative and Hospice Nurse Practitioner, Ballad Health Hospice for the last episode in the ongoing series on the ACHPN exam. [Listen to the newest episode here](#). Subscribe to Physician and Advanced Practice Provider Community HPM Talk in the podcast player of your choice.

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## WE HONOR VETERANS

### **We Honor Veterans Office Hours**

Join the We Honor Veterans' (WHV) team for Office Hours on Tuesday, March 5, 4-4:30 p.m. ET. WHV participants of all levels are welcome to bring questions regarding level reports, website

support, and more. [Sign up today!](#) Check out the [WHV Events Calendar](#) to find out about other Veteran-centric events hosted by our partners.

### **Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Toolkit**

March 29 is Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, an opportunity to provide Vietnam Veterans the hero's welcome they never received. As we prepare to recognize this day, we invite you to review our Vietnam-focused resources and guides for honoring Veterans.

- Host an educational event featuring one of our [Veteran-focused resources](#).
- Familiarize yourself with the [history of the Vietnam War's impact](#).
- Get inspired by the [Welcome Home events](#) our hospice partners have hosted in previous years.
- Review our updated [Veteran Pinning Ceremony Guide](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)) and utilize our [Veteran Certificates of Recognition](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)) in your next honor ceremony.

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## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION**

### **2024 National Impact Assessment of CMS Quality Measures Report**

[Chapter 2: National Findings on Health Equity](#) provides both quantitative and qualitative data in support of CMS' drive to advance health equity and inform future quality measure development. The first section of the chapter summarizes analyses to determine whether population groups differed in quality measure performance at a national level. The second section summarizes results from focus groups representing underserved communities convened to examine drivers of disparities in healthcare delivery and health outcomes. The chapter concludes by identifying lessons learned that CMS is addressing to support measurement which advances health equity for underserved communities.

### **Transformative Research to Address Health Disparities and Advance Health Equity**

This grant from the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\)](#) supports intervention research addressing social determinants of health which would have a major impact on preventing, reducing, or eliminating health disparities and advancing health equity. If interested, the deadline to apply is March 22.

### **Foundations of Population Health Management in Priority Populations Learning Series**

Part one of this four-part webinar series from the [National Nurse-Led Care Consortium](#) will cover the importance of employing a population health approach to the prevention, treatment, and management of chronic conditions among priority populations. Speakers will share current research, examples, and best practices for a population health approach to chronic disease management and provide context for the following three webinars in the series. Priority populations include residents of public housing, agricultural workers, patients experiencing homelessness, and other at-risk populations such as older adults and Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian patients. Continuing education credits are available.

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## **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:

- **Grief in Dementia** - Register for the MyNHPCO Bereavement Professional Community chat on Wednesday, March 6, 2 – 3 p.m. ET as we discuss the challenges of grief for someone with dementia, what should be considered while sharing about the death of a loved one to the individual with dementia, and the best ways to support grief.

- [Can You Help Me? Exploring the Spiritual Needs of Caregivers](#) - Join the MyNHPCO Spiritual Caregiver Community chat on Wednesday, March 13, 3-4 p.m. ET to discuss how spiritual caregivers can provide support, resources, encouragement, and appropriate interventions to caregivers with loved ones at end-of-life.

### **Chat Recordings Now Available**

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

- **Professional Education and Organizational Development Chat Recording** – [The Power of Storytelling](#)
- **Volunteer Management Chat Recording** – [Volunteer Love and Recognition](#)
- **CEO/Executive Director Chat Recording** – [VBID/MA](#)

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.