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Senior Care Regulations Update

Welcome to the Silverchair Learning Systems Quarterly Newsletter.

It is our pleasure to provide this free newsletter to all parties interested in improving the quality of care through employee education.

At Silverchair Learning Systems, our sole focus is providing superior products and services to support the education and training of people employed in Senior Care organizations.

This quarter's newsletter is dedicated to providing helpful hints about the importance of making certain you keep abreast of the regulations that impact your training programs. We thought it was worthwhile to highlight some of what has been going on with the regulators.

Please let me know what you think.



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Senior Care Regulations Update

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Regulations. Just the mention of the word sends shivers down your spine, doesn't it? There are so many regulatory and oversight bodies that the senior care industry answers to—the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), OIG (Office of the Inspector General), CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services), NFPA (the office responsible for life safety codes), and the FDA, just to name a few. Add to that each state's own set of rules and regulations and one can see how easy it is to get overwhelmed!

The Importance of Staying Up to Date

It is important that senior care industry employees are kept abreast of the changes in regulations and how they impact the way they perform their jobs. Part of that process is ensuring that educational materials are kept up to date with the latest information from governing bodies and other agencies. As the full time Clinical Consultant for Silverchair, I maintain an extensive research base to monitor changes in regulations. Keeping ahead of the regulations means monitoring existing

regulations as well as those proposed in current legislation, on both the federal and individual state levels.

At Silverchair we remove your time-consuming burden of updating training materials. When changes in regulations occur, we determine if/how they affect our existing curriculum. While courses are regularly updated every two years, changes to the regulations that merit a change prompt us to update a course as soon as needed. We also determine if there is a need to create a new course based on subject matter we do not currently cover.



SENIOR CARE

Senior Care Regulations Update

One Agency's Regulations Reform

CMS has begun taking a critical look at care in nursing facilities and how regulations that impact the resident's ability to achieve and maintain their maximum functional and psychosocial abilities are expressed and enforced.

As with any reform process, agenda items are prioritized based on areas that are most problematic or have the largest impact to the organization. Therefore, CMS is first revising regulations that will have the largest positive effect on the life of a resident in a nursing facility. As everyone in the industry is aware, for the past two years CMS has kept providers busy with changes to the F tags that regulate Pressure Ulcers, Urinary Incontinence/Indwelling Catheter, Activities, Unnecessary Drugs, the Role of the Pharmacist, and the Function of the Medical Director. A new tag regarding influenza was added as well. *Psychosocial Outcome Guidance* was added to Task 5, Task 6, and Task 5F (Quality Assurance) of the survey protocols.

As CMS updates regulations, they are eliminating many of the "grey areas" that previously existed in the guidance to surveyors. In the past, the guidance to surveyors was fairly open for interpretation by providers and surveyors alike. During a survey, however, if the facility's interpretation did not mesh with the surveyor's interpretation, the surveyor's

interpretation usually prevailed. Generally, this would result in a citation to the facility. As the regulations are updated, the interpretive guidelines include expanded examples and definitions as well as a fairly clear-cut manner of determining compliance with the regulation. However, it may be possible for a facility to receive more citations than in the past. The updates cross-reference other tag numbers that may be potential areas of non-compliance.

This year, although not quite as busy as the last two years, will require review of a few key areas. CMS's 2007 Action Plan for the Further Improvement of Nursing Home Quality tells us we can expect changes to the following F Tags this year:

F 373: Eating Assistants (June 2007)

F 323/324: Accidents (late Summer/early Fall 2007)

F 325 & 371: Nutrition and Sanitation (Summer 2007)

So sharpen your pencils and get ready to review your policies, procedures, and protocols on these topics. Rest assured, as these regulations become available, Silverchair Learning Systems will evaluate our course materials to ensure the content we provide our clients reflects the latest and greatest there is to offer. That's one less thing to accomplish on your regulatory to do list!

About Silverchair Learning Systems

Silverchair Learning Systems works with Senior Care leaders who want to improve the training process in their organizations. Silverchair offers a user-friendly online training solution that improves compliance and eliminates record keeping headaches, while saving time and money. Using this system provides peace of mind and confidence.

Silverchair makes online training successful by:

- Making it easy to get started.
- Making it easy to use.
- Making it easy to track.
- Making it educationally effective.
- Making it fun for the employees

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