



Visiting Nurse Association
of Central Jersey

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VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL JERSEY IMPROVES GERIATRIC MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Red Bank, February 2008 – Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey (VNACJ) today announced they have successfully completed the Visiting Nurse Associations of America's (VNAA) Curricula for Homecare Advances in Management and Practice (CHAMP) Geriatric Medication Management course, a program that prepares frontline managers to incorporate learned geriatric assessment skills into the daily work of the teams they manage. Throughout the course of the last ten months, participants have learned about key issues in geriatric medication management, team management, and quality improvement through a variety of techniques including face-to-face workshops, self-paced online learning, conference calls, and faculty-moderated discussions. VNACJ was part of the 2007 class comprised of 20 home healthcare agencies from across the nation.

“Our goal was to incorporate what we learned regarding medication management into our plan of care,” said Wendy Ebner, RN, CRRN, VNACJ clinical manager. “We started off small, teaching one nurse from each of 3 pilot teams, then we advanced to teaching every nurse in the pilot teams. Now our processes have been implemented agency-wide.” Ms. Ebner added, “I think that one of the most important things I learned is the far-reaching value that small measures of improvement can have. By the end of the program we were able to incorporate a medication management program into our electronic plan of care software. Nurses are automatically prompted in the steps to take if a patient has a severe medication interaction. As a result, we have improved our ability to educate the patient, communicate with the physician, reduce rehospitalizations due to medication interactions and improve overall outcomes. Those are major accomplishments.”

“This was a wonderful opportunity for the managers and myself who participated in the session,” stated Eileen Toughill, vice president of research, education and quality at VNACJ. “Not only to

become better managers but by having the ability to share information with other agencies across the country and improve communication across and within disciplines.”

CHAMP is an evidence-based practice improvement program that was developed by the VNAA and the Center for Home Care Policy and Research of the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, in conjunction with national experts in the home healthcare field. It is the first national initiative aimed at improving the capacity of frontline home healthcare managers and field nurses to provide “best practice” geriatric care to their older patients.

"CHAMP recognizes the pivotal role of frontline managers in improving geriatric home healthcare," said Penny Feldman, VP and Director of the Center for Home Care Policy and Research at the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. "The program delivers key clinical and management content straight to the managers, which they in turn share with the clinicians who report to them. The agencies that participated in the Geriatric Medication Management course have empowered their workforce to address the challenges facing older persons with complex medication regimens."

Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, now in its 95th year of service, is a nonprofit provider of in-home health care and hospice services. The organization also offers extensive community-based health and wellness services throughout its service area of Middlesex, Monmouth, and Ocean counties.

About VNAA CHAMP

CHAMP is a national initiative aimed at improving the quality of geriatric home healthcare services. Funded by a grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies, the program provides non-profit and for-profit homecare agencies with the tools and skills necessary to raise clinical standards and outcomes for geriatric patients. Two courses, Geriatric Medication Management and Geriatric Pain Management, have been designed and launched through a collaborative effort of the Visiting Nurse Associations of America and the Visiting Nurse Service of New York’s Center for Home Care Policy and Research. For more information, please visit the CHAMP website:

www.vnaa.org/champ.

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