CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner to Receive AACN’s 2013 Policy Luminary Award

The AACN Government Affairs Committee (GAC) is excited to announce that Marilyn Tavenner, MHA, RN, will receive the AACN 2013 Policy Luminary Award at the upcoming Fall Semiannual Meeting. The Policy Luminary award is granted to one nurse each year whose work in public policy has made significant and lasting contributions to the nursing profession. Ms. Tavenner serves as the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). A graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University School of Nursing, Ms. Tavenner manages all aspects of CMS, the $820 billion federal agency that ensures healthcare coverage for 100 million Americans. Ms. Tavenner will offer brief remarks during the acceptance ceremony at the meeting.

To read more about Administrator Tavenner, visit: http://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/leadership/.

The GAC will also be sponsoring a session titled Graduate Nurse Education Demonstration: A Year in Review on Sunday, October 27 from 4:45–6:00 PM ET. The session will feature representatives from the five sites participating in the Demonstration, including Melanie C. Dreher, PhD, RN, dean of Rush University College of Nursing; Catherine Gilliss, DNSc, RN, FAAN, dean of Duke University School of Nursing; Afaf Meleis, PhD, RN, FAAN, dean of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing; and Patricia Starck, DSN, RN, FAAN, dean of the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Nursing. AACN members will have the opportunity to learn how these sites are implementing the goals of the Demonstration, the program’s impact to date, and expectations for the future. The Graduate Nursing Education Demonstration is a CMS initiative aimed at increasing the number of advanced practice registered nurses by reimbursing up to five eligible hospitals for the reasonable cost of providing clinical training to these students.

AACN Applauds Legislation Extending Medicaid Payment Rates to APRNs

Last month, Representative Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) introduced the Protecting Access to Primary Care Act (H.R. 2986) supporting advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) as providers of high-quality care to Medicaid beneficiaries. H.R. 2986 would expand a two-year increase in payment for Medicaid primary care services in 2013 and 2014 to specifically include nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse-midwives, and physician assistants as providers eligible to receive payment for these services at Medicare rates. By extending an equivalent payment rate to these providers, the bill will help to augment the supply of services for Medicaid beneficiaries and also acknowledges the contributions of APRNs as primary care providers integral to serving our country’s healthcare needs. AACN commends Rep. Bonamici for introducing this legislation and continues to
collaborate with our colleagues to promote efforts that ensure APRNs are able to practice to the full extent of their education and training.

For more information about H.R. 2986, including the full text of the bill, visit: http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/113/hr2986.

**Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Compliance Requirements Postponed**

The current delay to postpone the face-to-face encounter requirements for certain items of DME is a critical first step to protect the role of advanced practices registered nurses in providing this care which has been spearheaded by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP). CMS has announced that, due to continued concerns that some providers and suppliers may need additional time to establish operational protocols necessary to comply with face-to-face encounter requirements mandated by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) for certain DME items, CMS will delay enforcing full compliance with the DME face-to-face requirements. The new date that CMS will expect DME suppliers and physicians to fully comply by will be announced in Calendar Year 2014. Section 6407 of the ACA established a face-to-face encounter requirement for certain items of DME, and the law requires that a physician must document that a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or clinical nurse specialist has had a face-to-face encounter with the patient. The encounter must occur within the six months before the order is written for the DME. The AANP and American Nurses Association, with the support of their organizational colleagues, such as AACN, will work to find a permanent fix.

To view the CMS announcement, see: http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Monitoring-Programs/Medical-Review/FacetoFaceEncounterRequirementforCertainDurableMedicalEquipment.html.

**Mark Your Calendars! AACN’s Virtual Advocacy Day on Monday, October 28th**

AACN will be hosting a virtual advocacy day on Monday, October 28, 2013 in conjunction with AACN’s Hill day during the Fall Semiannual Meeting. Your support is critical to ensuring that nursing’s voice is at the forefront of those that influence policy decision-making at the federal level. Members of AACN’s Grassroots Network will be invited to send a message to their federal legislators requesting they support policy priorities impacting nursing education and practice. To join AACN’s Grassroots Network, see: http://capwiz.com/aacn/home/. AACN appreciates all that our members do to support programs and legislation that advance our profession and the health of our patients.

**Upcoming Change to Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship Program**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Health Professions (BHP) has announced a change in the award allocation process for the Title VIII Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship (AENT) program (Sec. 811 of the Public Health Service Act). Part-time students will only be eligible to participate in AENT if they are in the final year of their studies. BHP hopes this policy adjustment will further the goal of AENT to increase the number of nurses trained to provide primary care, by focusing financial supports on students approaching graduation and workforce entry. The change will take effect fiscal year 2014 and will impact only new trainees. Part-time students who have previously received funding through the program will
continue to be funded. No changes will be made to funding for full-time students. For further information, visit: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-09-03/pdf/2013-21343.pdf.

Webinar on ACA Implementation

On September 12, 2013, the Nursing Community, a forum comprised of 59 national nursing organizations, including AACN, hosted a webinar titled *Implementation of the ACA: What Nurses Need to Know* featuring Mandy Cohen, MD, MPH, Senior Advisor to the Administrator of CMS, and Ellen-Marie Whelan, PhD, RN, FAAN, Senior Advisor at the CMS Innovation Center. The webinar addressed how the nursing profession will play a vital role in transformations under the Affordable Care Act.

Dr. Cohen addressed the expansion of insurance coverage with the launch of the new Health Insurance Marketplace on October 1 and took questions on this topic. Dr. Whelan discussed the impact of the ACA on nursing practice and offered some guidance for nurses as to how best to prepare for the transition. AACN is pleased to bring such vital and timely information to our membership. Nearly 2,300 people registered to view the webinar, and attendance reached the maximum limit of 1,000 computers for the live viewing.

To view the archived webinar, visit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/webinars/2013/09/12/implementation-aca. Please note you will have to register before receiving login information to stream the archived webinar.

National Health Service Corps 2014 Site Application Cycle Open

Healthcare facilities interested in hosting National Health Service Corps (NHSC) scholars or loan repayment recipients may now apply for approval in 2014. To be eligible to join the nearly 14,000 sites which are already NHSC approved, healthcare facilities must be located in a designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA); provide primary care medical, dental, or mental and behavior services regardless of a patient’s ability to pay; offer discounts to patients in need; and accept Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children’s Health Insurance Program. In 2012, almost 10,000 National Health Service Corps clinicians served in HPSAs around the country and provided care to their over 10.4 million residents. The NHSC is also currently accepting applications for sites seeking recertification, and both cycles will remain open until **November 1, 2013 at 7:30 PM ET.**

For more information about becoming a certified NHSC site, or to apply, see: http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/sites/index.html.

The NHSC helps bring qualified healthcare providers to work in underserved communities at NHSC-approved sites. These sites provide outpatient primary care in HPSAs, which are communities designated by HRSA as having an inadequate supply of primary medical care, dental, or mental health providers to serve the population.

For more information about the NHSC, see: http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/index.html. For more information about HPSAs, see: http://www.hrsa.gov/shortage/.
HHS Releases Draft Strategic Plan for Public Comment

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has released a proposed Strategic Plan to guide its activities from fiscal year 2014 through 2018. The department has identified four main goals to advance its mission over the next four years: strengthening health care; continued development of innovative research; promoting the health, safety, and well-being of the American people; and ensuring HHS programs are efficient, effective, and transparent. Under each of these overarching goals, the plan distinguishes additional objectives and strategies for achieving them.

The agency welcomes public comment on the Strategic Plan and will accept input until October 15, 2013. For more information on how to submit comments or to view the report, see: http://www.hhs.gov/open/recordsandreports/strategic-plan/index.html.

Department of Health and Human Services Seeks Feedback on Adverse Drug Event Prevention

According to the HHS, adverse drug events (ADEs) account for a third of hospital-related adverse events and over 3.5 million physician office visits each year. In response to this national health threat, HHS has partnered with the U.S. Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Bureau of Prisons to develop the National Action Plan for Adverse Drug Event Prevention. The draft plan defines three high-priority ADEs: anticoagulants, diabetes agents, and opioids. The plan also presents a four-pronged approach for addressing these ADEs, including monitoring data and progress; disseminating effective prevention tools; investigating the efficacy of additional techniques, including financial incentives and oversight; and identifying areas where further research is needed.


HHS is currently seeking public input on the draft plan from interested stakeholders. Comments should be submitted electronically no later than 5:00 PM ET on October 4, 2013. For more information on how to submit comments, see: http://www.hhs.gov/ash/initiatives/ade/index.html.

Apply to be an RWJF Health Policy Fellow

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is now accepting applications for 2014-2015 Health Policy Fellowship cycle. Up to six exceptional health professionals will be selected for a 12-month minimum program in Washington, DC to experience the policy process first hand. Fellows will undergo an intensive orientation process to better understand the tools needed to succeed on Capitol Hill. Upon completion of the orientation program, fellows will be placed with a Congressional office or in the Executive branch, where they will actively participate in the policy process. Typically, fellows will have the opportunity to work on legislative proposals and hearings, meet with constituents, and prepare legislators to speak on health issues.

Applications must be submitted by 3:00 PM ET on November 13, 2013. There will be optional conference calls to provide interested applicants with more information on October 9, 2013 at 11:00 AM ET and November 1, 2013 at 2:00 PM ET. To register for one of these calls, see: http://www.healthpolicyfellows.org/fellowship_howtoapply.php.

For more information on the RWJF Health Policy Fellows program, including application materials, see: http://www.rwjf.org/cfp/hpf5?cid=XEM_A7545.
Attention Students: NCHS/AcademyHealth Health Policy Fellowship Application Cycle Now Open

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) and AcademyHealth are now accepting applications for a fellowship designed for two selected scholars to work collaboratively with NCHS staff on a wide range of projects. Over the course of this 13-month program, fellows will conduct new and innovative analyses as well as participate in developmental and health policy activities related to the design and content of future NCHS surveys. NCHS “provides statistical information that will guide actions and policies to improve the health of the American people. As the Nation's principal health statistics agency, NCHS leads the way with accurate, relevant, and timely data.”

AcademyHealth is a leading national organization “serving the fields of health services and policy research and the professionals who produce and use this important work. Together with our members, we offer programs and services that support the development and use of rigorous, relevant, and timely evidence to increase the quality, accessibility, and value of health care, to reduce disparities, and to improve health.”

Eligible candidates include students at any stage in their career, from doctoral students to senior investigators who demonstrate training and/or experience in health services research and its methodology. All applicants are strongly encouraged to complete the online ‘Statement of Interest’ form prior to applying. Once the form has been submitted, AcademyHealth and NCHS staff will follow up to provide both guidance on the proposal and assistance on the application process. The deadline to apply is January 6, 2014. To learn more about the Health Policy Fellowship, please visit www.academyhealth.org/nchs.

Upcoming Webinars

HRSA will be holding two webinars in the coming weeks. The first, titled Telehealth for Safety Net Providers, will be on Friday, September 20, 2013 from 2:00–3:00 PM ET. Presenters will discuss programs available to support the use of telehealth for medically underserved populations and will provide examples of how such technology is already being used to treat patients around the United States. Panel speakers include: Matthew Quinn, Director of Healthcare Initiatives in the Federal Communications Commission’s Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Analysis; Brian Christensen, RN, Clinical Telehealth Coordinator at the Benefis Health System Realizing Education And Community Health (REACH) Network, and Gene Koppy, Project Director and Telehealth Technical Specialist at the Benefis Health System REACH Network.

Participants can register here: https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=uj9f002ra75h.

HRSA welcomes questions for the presenters ahead of the webinar and encourages those with questions to email them to healthit@hrsa.gov.

The second webinar is scheduled for Thursday, October 3, 2013 from 1:00–2:00 PM ET and titled The Impact of Interprofessional Education on Improving Hispanic Health. Speakers from the Bureau of Health Professions Divisions of Nursing, Public Health & Interdisciplinary Education, and Medicine & Dentistry will discuss interprofessional efforts. This webinar is open to all HRSA staff as well as the public. To participate in the webinar, visit: https://hrsa.connectsolutions.com/hispanic1/.
Conference Number: 888-603-9219
Participant Code: 8654112

CMS Issues Guidance on Hospital Admissions

CMS has released new guidance on interpreting physician certification requirements for payment for hospital inpatient services under Medicare Part A, section 1814(a) of the Social Security Act. The guidance allows a physician assistant, resident, or registered nurse to document the practitioner order for inpatient treatment, provided
state laws and hospital policies permit it. The order must still be signed by the qualified practitioner, who is licensed by the state to admit patients to hospitals, has admitting privileges at the hospital in question, and is familiar with the patient’s medical condition. As part of the physician certification, the practitioner order must then be authenticated by a physician familiar with the patient’s case.

To review the guidance in its entirety, see: http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AcuteInpatientPPS/Downloads/IP-Certification-and-Order-09-05-13.pdf.

**Register Now for AACN’s 2014 Student Policy Summit**

The AACN Student Policy Summit (SPS) is a three-day conference held in Washington, DC and is open to baccalaureate and graduate nursing students enrolled at an AACN member institution. Students who attend SPS are immersed in didactic program sessions focused on the federal policy process and nursing’s role in professional advocacy. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Registration priority will be given to applicants who have not previously attended the Student Policy Summit. The 2014 Summit will take place March 23-25. The 2014 Summit keynote speaker is Beatrice Kalisch, PhD, RN, FAAN, the IOM AAN/ANA/ANF Scholar and the Shirley Titus Distinguished Professor of Nursing and Director of Innovation and Evaluation at the University of Michigan School of Nursing.

For more information, including a draft agenda and registration details, see: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/student-policy-summit.

Interested in sponsoring the 2014 Summit? Your generosity will ensure it remains an affordable opportunity for all students. Learn more about sponsorship packages here: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/2014-SPS-Sponsor-Packages.pdf.

**AACN’s Faculty Policy Intensive Now Accepting Applications**

AACN will hold its second annual Faculty Policy Intensive on March 24-27, 2014 in Washington, DC. This fully-funded, four-day immersion program is designed for faculty of AACN member schools who are interested in actively pursuing a role in healthcare and nursing policy. This Faculty Policy Intensive offers participants the opportunity to enhance existing knowledge of policy and advocacy through sessions that will strengthen understanding of the legislative process and the dynamic relationships between federal departments and agencies, national nursing organizations, and the individual advocate. At the conclusion of the Intensive, participants will put their new advocacy skills to use as AACN Faculty Policy Fellows.

For more information about FPI, including a draft agenda and registration details, visit: http://www.aacn.nche.edu/government-affairs/fpi.