



Empowering Connections

Assisted Living Conference

April 23, 2025 / Augusta Civic Center



Maine Health Care Association

Agenda

8:00 AM

Registration

9:00 AM

National Assisted Living Update (1)

LaShaun Bethea, Executive Director, National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL)

A national update on the sector and NCAL's priorities and key initiatives to advance the profession including workforce, legislative and regulatory trends. The session will also highlight current efforts to support the success of assisted living professionals, both now and in the future, and provide valuable resources for workforce retention and recruitment.

10:00 AM

Break

10:15 AM

Financial Update (2)

Tammy Brunetti, Principal & Lisa Trundy-Whitten, Principal, BerryDunn

Assisted living communities in Maine continue to face multiple challenges, especially with labor. This session will help you understand current financial and reimbursement trends and offer insights for future planning. Regulatory, compliance, and other relevant topics affecting your facility's operations, such as PNMI Medicaid reimbursement rates, MaineCare supplemental payment reporting, and key operational benchmarks will be discussed, including considerations to focus on best position for success.

11:00 AM

Unpacking Legislative, Regulatory, and Policy Changes for Assisted Living in Maine (3)

Angela Cole Westhoff, CAE, President/CEO, Maine Health Care Association

This session will provide an update on legislative activities, regulatory updates, and policy changes affecting assisted living providers across the State of Maine. Participants will learn about the work Maine Health Care Association is doing on behalf of its assisted living providers.

12:00 PM

Lunch

1:00 PM

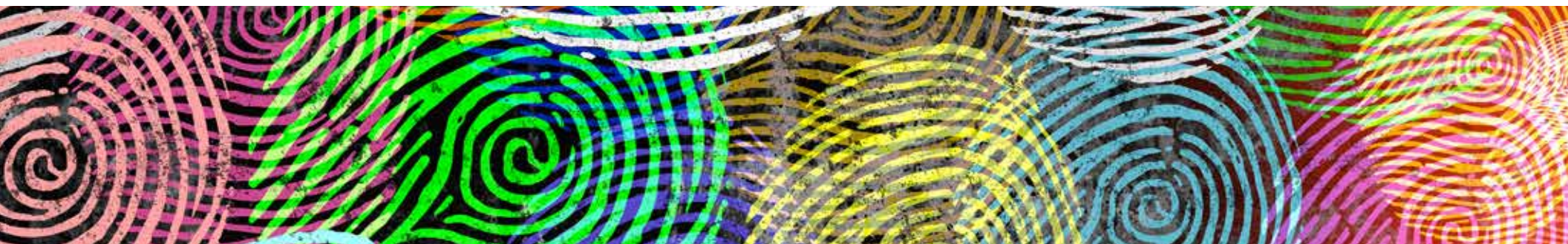
World Café Exercise - Shaping the Future of Assisted Living in Maine (4)

*Judiann Smith, Executive Director & Janell Lewis, Director of Leadership Development & Bob Wright, Strategic Consultant, Facilitator, Executive Coach
Hanley Center for Health Leadership & Education*

Join us for an interactive World Café session focused on the future of assisted living in Maine. We'll explore a set of carefully crafted questions that aim to spark innovative ideas, encourage diverse perspectives, and identify actionable solutions around key topics such as workforce challenges, the need for better representation of both members and non-members, and strategies to improve the quality of care. This is your opportunity to share ideas, hear from others, and contribute to the collective vision for addressing these challenges and shaping the future of assisted living in Maine. **Sponsored by Affinity Care of Maine**

2:45 PM

Break



3:00 PM

**Becoming An Employer of Choice in the 21st Century:
The Case for Values Based and Impact Driven
Recognition Programs (5)**

Nate Hamme, President and Executive Director, CECA Foundation

Staffing shortages and low employee engagement have long been challenges in the care industry, impacting the quality of patient and resident care. While wages have risen, operational and cultural hurdles remain. Employers must go beyond pay and focus on improving the caregiver experience throughout recruitment, onboarding, and staff development. Effective employee recognition and outreach initiatives play a key role in attracting and retaining caregivers, boosting resilience, and maintaining high standards of care. Research shows that well-executed recognition programs improve both employee engagement and client satisfaction, making them an essential strategy for healthcare organizations. In this session, participants will explore best practices in caregiver recognition, learn strategies for building impactful programs, and review case studies of successful initiatives. By the end, they will have actionable strategies to create programs that improve engagement, retention, and person-centered care while fostering a positive, lasting workplace culture.

Sponsored by Acadia Benefits

4:00 PM

**Closing Comments
& Adjourn**

Conference Goals & Objectives

This conference was created specifically for individuals serving in an Assisted Living (AL), Independent Living (IL) and/or Residential Care Community in Maine. The agenda typically focuses on national and local industry trends, regulatory changes, evidence-based practices, and innovative ideas. It's also a great venue for networking with peers to exchange ideas, collaborate on issues and challenges, and discover ways to fine tune your practices to ensure the health and well-being of your residents.

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How To Register

Fees:

Member: \$175.00 per person
Non-Member: \$265.00 per person

[Click here to register](#)

**Deadline to register:
April 9, 2025**

Speaker Bios

LaShaun Bethea is the executive director of the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), the assisted living voice of the American Health Care Association (AHCA). She joined NCAL in 2021 after serving in leadership roles at Genesis Healthcare, Inc. since 2007. A registered nurse and attorney with over 25 years in the profession, Bethea brings extensive long term care experience. She advances NCAL's mission of "Improving Lives by Delivering Solutions for Quality Care," identifies industry risks and opportunities, and develops strategies to strengthen the sector. Bethea fosters transparency and collaboration, engaging with stakeholders, legislators, regulators, and the media to advocate for assisted living facilities. She also oversees NCAL's public policy and quality agenda. She holds a law degree from Widener University, a Master's in Education from American Intercontinental University, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Phoenix.

Tammy Brunetti is a Principal and the leader of BerryDunn's Healthcare Practice Group. Tammy provides audit, accounting, third-party reimbursement, operational analyses, certificate of need, and other business and regulatory consulting services to senior-living organizations. Tammy has primary engagement responsibility for many of the firm's post-acute care clients and specializes in Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement. She also works with other BerryDunn specialists in valuation, tax, and IT to provide comprehensive solutions to clients in the senior-living industry. Tammy is a regular speaker for MHCA, presenting on current reimbursement topics and accounting issues. Tammy joined BerryDunn in 1996, is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and serves on the AHCA Not for Profit Advisory Council.

Nate Hamme is the President and Executive Director of Ceca Foundation. With extensive experience in both for-profit and nonprofit sectors, he specializes in strategy, product development, relationship management, partnerships, organizational growth, and data analysis. A strong advocate for caregiver recognition, Nate has written and spoken extensively on workforce

issues in healthcare. He has been featured on ABC News7 and in McKnight's Senior Living, Homecare Magazine, Seniors Housing Business, and Authority Magazine. He regularly presents at major healthcare and senior living association conferences, including AHCA and LeadingAge affiliates. Since joining Ceca in 2014, Nate has led the development of Ceca's software platform and mobile app, as well as its network of CecaTVs. He played a key role in expanding partnerships with hospitals and nursing homes, becoming Chief Operating Officer in 2017 and President in 2019. Nate holds a degree in Political Science and Anthropology from the University of Virginia.

Janell Lewis is the Director for Leadership Development for the Hanley Center. Janell joined the Hanley Center in August of 2021 after 12 years of various roles at MaineHealth. Most recently Janell designed and implemented a Health Career Pipeline program based in Maine Medical Center's Department of Medical Education. Janell has spent much of her career as a certified health educator with a focus on connecting with our underserved and underrepresented populations, working on effective communication and plain language, and building and developing curriculum to engage different populations in health and wellness. Janell has a strong interest in supporting our various providers and healthcare employees across the state to be the best leaders that they can be. All with an aim to care for Maine's diverse populations. In her spare time, Janell enjoys her family, chickens, ducks and gardens.

Judiann Smith is the Executive Director of the Hanley Center, joining in April 2015 after an 18-year tenure at Spurwink, Maine's largest nonprofit mental health agency. At Spurwink, she held progressively senior roles, starting as Director of Human Resources, then Director of Regulatory & Legislative Analysis, and finally Vice President of Strategy & Government Relations. She worked closely with state leaders, legislators, providers, and businesses to shape policies benefiting individuals with behavioral health diagnoses and developmental disabilities. She also led mission impact and marketing initiatives. Passionate about physician leadership in health policy, Judiann advocates for meeting the Triple Aim while addressing the needs of underserved populations. Prior to Spurwink, she practiced law in Boston and held roles in insurance, government, and municipal services. Judiann holds a B.S. in Psychology from St. Bonaventure University and a J.D. from Suffolk University Law School. A graduate of the Hanley Center's Health Leadership Development program, she enjoys family time, baking, and exploring Maine's coast.

Lisa Trundy-Whitten is a principal in BerryDunn's Healthcare Group and leads the firm's Senior Living Practice. Lisa has concentrated on serving

the healthcare industry, senior living organizations, industry associations, and acute care hospitals for the past 20 years. Lisa provides audit and consulting services to a number of organizations throughout the continuum of healthcare located throughout the Northeast, Midwest, and West Coast. Lisa has extensive experience working closely with long-term care clients, including State Veterans Homes, and consulting on third-party reimbursement issues, including cost reporting, certificate of need applications and Medicaid and Medicare audits. She serves as the firm's subject matter expert on the Patient Driven Payment Model (PDPM) and provider relief funding (PRF).

Angela Cole Westhoff, CAE is the President/ CEO of the Maine Health Care Association. Prior to this role, Ms. Westhoff held similar positions with the Maine Dental Association and the Maine Osteopathic Association. Angela has over 20 years of non-profit management experience with a focus on health care, reimbursement policy, public health, and advocacy. Ms. Westhoff graduated from the University of Maine with a bachelor's and master's degree in communication, with concentrations in health communication and public relations. Angela also earned her Certified Association Executive (CAE) credential from the American Society of Association Executives. She is also a graduate of the Hanley Health Leadership Development (HLD) program as well as a past president of the American Osteopathic Society of Executive Directors and the Maine Public Health Association. In 2017, she received national recognition from the American Academy of Osteopathy with an Academy Award, the highest honor bestowed upon non-physicians. Angela serves on the Board of Directors for the Maine College of Health Professions and the Maine Council on Aging. She is a member of the HLD Alumni Council and a volunteer for the United Way of Kennebec County.

Bob Wright is a Strategic Consultant, Facilitator, Executive Coach at the Hanley Center. He leads PELI and HLD programs and supports clients in strategic planning and solving complex organizational challenges. Bob has designed and implemented leadership development initiatives across North America, Asia, Europe, and Africa, working with healthcare systems, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations on quality management, organizational culture, work systems redesign, and community-building efforts. Bob has worked with a diverse range of clients, including Boston College, Bose Corporation, Christiana Care Health Services, the Peace Corps, and the United Nations. He also annually facilitates the Maine Association of Nonprofits Leadership Institute for Executive Directors. With a Master's in Management and training in Gestalt Psychology, Bob is a Professional Certified Coach. His interests include poetry, woodworking, and sailing the Maine coast, and he has served on several nonprofit boards, including as board president.



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