

Care in Motion

Assisted Living Conference

Hilton Garden Inn, Auburn

April 23, 2026

Agenda

April 23, 2026

8:00 AM

Registration

9:00 – 10:00 AM

National Assisted Living Update (1)

LaShuan Bethea, Executive Director, NCAL

Sponsored by Bedard Senior Care

10:00 – 10:15

Break

10:15 – 11:15 AM

State of the State Panel (2)

Anna Black, Director of Government Relations & Workforce, MHCA

Maureen Carland, Director of Quality Improvement & Regulatory Affairs, MHCA

Angela Cole Westhoff, President/CEO, MHCA

Courtney Freeman, Regional Director of Operations, Northbridge Companies

Lisa Trundy-Whitten, Principal, BerryDunn

Sponsored by SMD, Inc.

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM

Lifting Voices: Building on Last Year's World Café - Workforce, Communication & Advocacy for Assisted Living & Residential Care (3)

Angela Cole Westhoff, President/CEO, MHCA

Sponsored by Affinity Care of Maine, LLC

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Lunch

1:00 – 1:45 PM

Strengthening Maine's Workforce: An Inside Look at the Resources and Opportunities for Assisted Living Providers and their Employees (4)

Edward Wright, Alford Workforce, NMCC/WCCC

Sponsored by MVH Pharmacies

1:45 – 2:45 PM

The Resident Experience in Assisted Living (5)

Mary Jane Richards-McDade, Chief Executive Officer, North Country Associates

Sponsored by Guardian Pharmacy of Maine

2:45 – 3:00

Break

3:00 – 4:00 PM

Culture at Speed: Why Momentum Matters More Than Perfection (6)

Ed Krow, Talent Transformation Expert, Ed Krow, LLC

Sponsored by MaineSail Care Communities

4:00 PM

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How To Register

Fees:

Member: \$195.00 per person
Non-Member: \$292.00 per person

Click here to [register](#)

Deadline to register: April 9, 2026

Registrations submitted after this date will be subject to a \$35 late fee.

CEUs: 6

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.



LaShuan Bethea Executive Director National Center for Assisted Living

National Assisted Living Update (1)

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

This session will give a national update on the sector and NCAL's priorities and key initiatives to advance the profession, including an understanding of what activities federal policymakers are undertaking that impact assisted living. State and national industry, regulatory, and legislative trends and developments will be discussed as well as current efforts to help assisted living professionals succeed now and in the future.

Sponsored by Bedard Senior Care

LaShuan Bethea is the executive director of the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), the assisted living voice of the American Health Care Association (AHCA). Bethea joined NCAL in 2021 from Genesis Healthcare, Inc. where she served in various leadership roles since 2007. Bethea, a registered nurse and attorney, has over 25 years in the profession and a depth of long term care experience. In her NCAL role, she communicates the association vision and mission of "Improving Lives by Delivering Solutions for Quality Care," identifies potential risks and opportunities within the industry, and develops strategies to fortify the sector. Promoting a culture of transparency and collaboration, Bethea develops a strong relationship with association and industry stakeholders, legislators, regulators, and other relevant parties. A key part of her role is advocating for the interests of assisted living member facilities before federal officials, national consumer and health care associations, and the media. Additionally, she oversees the development of the association's assisted living public policy and quality agenda, serving as a respected voice for the provider community in the field of assisted living. Bethea received her law degree from Widener University School of Law, Harrisburg, PA. She earned a Master's degree in Education from American Intercontinental University and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from University of Phoenix.



State of the State Panel (2)

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

In this, panelists from BerryDunn, MHCA, and providers will discuss current financial and reimbursement trends, and updates on legislative activities, regulatory updates, and policy changes affecting assisted living providers across the State of Maine. Participants will learn about the work BerryDunn and Maine Health Care Association is doing on behalf of its assisted living providers.

Sponsored by SMD, Inc.



Anna Black
**Director of Government
Relations & Workforce**
Maine Health Care Association

Anna Black is the new Director of Government Relations and Workforce at Maine Health Care Association. Ms. Black, an accomplished government strategist, communications and public policy leader, joins MHCA after 15 years in the public sector. Prior to MHCA, Ms. Black served as the Chief of Staff for Arizona's Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation, and Reentry, focusing on, among other areas, government affairs, communications, and workforce development initiatives. Prior to that, Ms. Black served the State of Maine for 10 years in a number of areas, including as the Director of Government Affairs and Communications for the Maine Department of Corrections, and as a program and policy contractor with the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Office of Behavioral Health (formerly known as the Maine Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services).



Maureen Carland
**Director of Quality
Improvement &
Regulatory Affairs**
Maine Health Care Association

Maureen Carland, MA, RN-BSN, NHA, is the Director of Quality Improvement and Regulatory Affairs at the Maine Health Care Association. She is a licensed multilevel nursing home administrator and registered nurse with over 35 years of experience in health care. Maureen led a team to earn the Gold – Excellence in Quality Award – for superior performance in quality care, awarded by the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), becoming the first Gold recipient in the state of Maine. Maureen has been a Gold Award Examiner for the past nine years and is a self-described quality assurance performance improvement (QAPI) junkie. She holds an MA in Leadership Studies as well as a BS in Nursing.



Angela Cole Westhoff
President/CEO
Maine Health Care Association

Angela Cole Westhoff, CAE, is the President/CEO of the Maine Health Care Association. Prior to this role, Angela held similar positions with the Maine Dental Association and the Maine Osteopathic Association. She has over 20 years of non-profit management experience with a focus on health care, reimbursement policy, public health, and advocacy. Angela graduated from the University of Maine with a bachelor's and master's degree in communication, with concentrations in health communication and public relations. She also earned her Certified Association Executive (CAE) credential from the American Society of Association Executives. Angela 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.



Courtney Freeman
Regional Director of
Operations
Northbridge Companies

Courtney Freeman has been in Senior Living for over eighteen (18) years, starting her career out as a caregiver. She continued to pursue a career in Senior Living after her Nana was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Throughout her career she has worked in Programming, the Business Office, Marketing and Sales, completed an Administrator-in-Training program and eventually ended with her current company Northbridge Companies in 2013, when she opened their first Maine Community, Avita of Stroudwater, as their Executive Director. Northbridge Companies expanded in Maine, and Courtney was promoted to Senior Executive Director, as she helped spearhead the opening of Stroudwater Lodge, Avita of Wells and Avita of Brunswick. Over the years came more expansion, and Courtney was eventually promoted into her current role, Regional Vice President of Operations - North, where she oversees eleven (11) Assisted Living Communities within Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. She has been honored as an ACHA/NCAL Future Leaders of Long-Term Care in America (2020) and most recently, graduated from the Argentum Leadership Advancement and Development Program (2023). Courtney was born and raised in Maine. After traveling after college, she found her way back to Portland, where she currently resides with her husband Ross and her three adorable, hilarious children – Henry, Amelia and Leo.



Lisa Trundy-Whitten
Principal
BerryDunn

Lisa Trundy-Whitten is a principal and leads BerryDunn's Healthcare Practice Group. 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. Lisa a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and serves on the AHCA Not for Profit Advisory Council.



**Angela Cole
Westhoff**
President/CEO
Maine Health Care
Association

**Lifting Voices: Building on Last Year’s World Café -
Workforce, Communication & Advocacy for
Assisted Living & Residential Care (3)**

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM

This session will review the summary report from last year’s World Café round table discussions and highlight common themes and practical strategies for Assisted Living and Residential Care leaders, staff, and advocates. We will examine the top trends that emerged from provider conversations that focused on workforce initiatives, advocacy and reimbursement reform, communications, advocacy, technology and innovation. Participants will discuss and prioritize next steps for Maine Health Care Association to assist Assisted Living and Residential Care providers with messaging/ advocacy to policymakers and the public.

Sponsored by Affinity Care of Maine

Angela Cole Westhoff, CAE, is the President/CEO of the Maine Health Care Association. Prior to this role, Angela held similar positions with the Maine Dental Association and the Maine Osteopathic Association. She has over 20 years of non-profit management experience with a focus on health care, reimbursement policy, public health, and advocacy. Angela graduated from the University of Maine with a bachelor’s and master’s degree in communication, with concentrations in health communication and public relations. She also earned her Certified Association Executive (CAE) credential from the American Society of Association Executives. Angela 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.



Edward Wright
Alfond Workforce,
NMCC/WCCC

**Strengthening Maine’s Workforce: An Inside Look
at the Resources and Opportunities for
Assisted Living Providers and their Employees (4)**

1:00 PM - 1:45 PM

This session will focus on highlighting the work of the Alfond Workforce Grant in Maine, including how the resource has helped develop and strengthen Maine’s workforce, who it’s for, and how it’s accessed. Participants will leave with a better understanding of how workforce initiatives can leverage talent that is already present in the state, how it helps with retention in an already established employment base, and how to utilize these resources to maximize their employee benefits.

Sponsored by MVH Pharmacies

Edward Wright is a Workforce Development Coordinator with the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine’s Workforce, the workforce development office of the Maine Community College System. Mr. Wright supports employers throughout Aroostook and Washington counties by linking grant funding to their unique training requirements. Prior to joining MCCC, Mr. Wright worked as the Director of Renewable Energy Services for James W. Sewall Company, and consulted globally in wireless telecommunications for several telecom equipment manufacturers over a ten-year period. With extensive experience in project and process management, systems implementation, and technical training in a variety of industries, Mr. Wright has the insights needed to support employers in developing and executing targeted, short-term training programs.



**Mary Jane
Richards-McDade**
Chief Executive Officer
North Country Associates

The Resident Experience in Assisted Living (5)

1:45 PM - 2:45 PM

This session will explore how resident satisfaction in assisted living communities impacts engagement and overall quality of life. Attendees will be encouraged to rethink common assumptions about aging and gain practical takeaways on how nurturing residents through purpose and creativity fosters resilience and empowerment. The presentation will reframe myths around aging, introduce the Four M's framework (what matters, medication, mentation, and mobility), and examine the role of purpose and creativity in supporting well being. Through discussion and an interactive activity, participants will consider what happens when people are given space to be creative and how that creativity strengthens resilience and empowers residents to thrive.

Sponsored by Guardian Pharmacy of Maine

Mary Jane Richards-McDade has over thirty years of experience working with older adults and people with developmental challenges. She is currently the Chief Executive Officer for North Country Associates, Maine's largest provider of Long Term Care Services. North Country Associates owns and manages 20 Long Term Care, Residential Care, and ICF/IID facilities in Maine, and a Rest Home on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. She has been a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator since 1992. Currently, she is the Immediate Past Chair of the Board for the Maine Council on Aging, a former member and Chairperson for the Nursing Home Administrator's Licensing Board, a member of the Maine Elder Abuse Council, and a past chair and member of the Board of Directors for Maine Health Care Association.



Ed Krow
Talent Transformation Expert
Ed Krow, LLC

Culture at Speed: Why Momentum Matters More Than Perfection (6)

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Perfection is the enemy of progress...especially when it comes to culture. Too many leadership teams get stuck waiting for alignment, approval, and a "perfect plan" before making meaningful cultural change. They hold meetings. They workshop values. They talk about engagement. But they never move. With a dynamic blend of real-world stories, humor, and proven frameworks, Ed equips audiences to stop over-engineering their culture and start leading it forward. Whether you're navigating growth, change, or leadership transitions, this keynote delivers the mindset shift and practical tools to help your team build momentum right now. This isn't theory. It's a blueprint for turning cultural intention into action, and action into results.

Sponsored by MaineSail Care Communities

Ed Krow delivers captivating, high-energy keynote presentations that challenge the traditional model of HR and prepare decision makers for motivating their people with a win-win strategy. A speaker, trainer and coach certified by The John Maxwell Team, Ed's topics bring a refreshing perspective on how to leverage what is commonly viewed as "people problems" and turn negative growth into business success. Ed is a member of the National Speakers Association, and has been featured in USA Today, Business Insider and Yahoo Finance. He is the author of "Strategic HR: Driving Bottom Line Results Through Your People" and "The Talent Attraction Blueprint: How Smart Companies Build a Magnetic Employment Brand and Win Top Talent". When he's not on stage or helping clients, Ed teaches at Millersville University. His first love is family, with golf vying for a tight second. If you do catch him at home, he's likely cheering for the Notre Dame or Baltimore Ravens football teams.

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