



AALTCN  
Changing the Culture of Long Term Care Nursing  
Together we ALL Can

### Free Manual for Dining Assistant Programs

Dining assistants have existed for several years and have proven effective in many nursing homes at enhancing residents' intake, improving quality of care, and facilitating culture change. A *Manual for Dining Assistant Programs in Nursing homes: Guidelines for Implementation*, developed by Abt Associates and Vanderbilt University with funding and input from CMS and AHRQ, is a comprehensive resource to guide this effort. This 138 page manual provides a description of models of dining assistant programs, guidance on how to select residents, regulatory compliance issues, and other related topics.

It is available for download at:

[http://www.aahsa.org/uploadedFiles/resources/Food\\_and\\_Nutrition/Dining%20Asst%20Manual%2002%2027%2009%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.aahsa.org/uploadedFiles/resources/Food_and_Nutrition/Dining%20Asst%20Manual%2002%2027%2009%20FINAL.pdf)

### Clinical Practice Guideline: Delirium

A free evidence-based practice guideline for acute confusion/delirium is available from the National Guidelines Clearinghouse. It reviews assessment tools, interventions, and prevention.

To access this resource go to:

[http://www.guideline.gov/summary/summary.aspx?view\\_id=1&doc\\_id=14340](http://www.guideline.gov/summary/summary.aspx?view_id=1&doc_id=14340)

### Gait Speed and Longevity

Evidence that slow walking is related to reduced longevity was presented by Stephanie Studenski, MD, a geriatrician and professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh, at the 19th International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics. The study included a pooled analysis of nine studies that observed more than 34,000 older adults over the age of 60. Findings indicate that elders who displayed the ability to walk faster are more than twice as likely (92% vs. 45%) to be alive after 10 years.

Previous research revealed that a slow walking speed in older adults is also associated with sarcopenia, an age-related condition that involves a progressive decline in muscle mass, strength, and function. As the ability to walk is dependent on the function of other body systems, gait speed can be a basic indicator of general health status. Studenski suggests that elders' walking speed may eventually be used clinically as a type of vital sign similar to other basic indicators of their health status such as temperature, blood pressure, or respiratory rate.

The full study was published in: **Jaime B Talkowski, Jennifer S Brach, Stephanie Studenski and Anne B Newman**, Impact of Health Perception, Balance Perception, Fall History, Balance Performance, and Gait Speed on Walking Activity in Older Adults, *Physical Therapy*, Vol. 88, No. 12, December 2008, pp. 1474-1481.

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## **What are You Doing to Prepare for the Surge in Foreign Born Residents**

Over the past two decades, the number of foreign born people 65 and older has grown from 2.7 million to 4.3 million since 1990, representing 11% of America's immigrant population. In California alone, nearly one in three older adults are foreign born. According to a U.S. Census Bureau survey, this segment of the senior population is expected to increase to 16 million by 2050.

If your nursing home isn't doing so already, it may want to consider how it addresses the special needs of foreign born residents. Such considerations could include menu options, themed activities, and special celebrations. Honoring cultural traditions is an important means of demonstrating respect to residents and honoring their individuality.

## **Consumer Tip Sheet Available from Advancing Excellence Campaign**

The largest, voluntary group of its kind working together in every state to improve the quality of care for nursing home residents today released a guide to help consumers to become a partner in improving standards of care in long-term care facilities. The *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* Campaign's Consumer Tip Sheet, together with a more comprehensive Consumer Guide, provides nursing home residents and family members basic information and 10 questions they should be asking to better understand resident care planning, staffing, important care issues and the significance of measuring resident and family satisfaction. In a typical year, 3.2 million Americans will spend some time in a nursing home. Although there are many guides for choosing a nursing home already available, the *Campaign* is trying to help residents and their families ensure the best care and quality of life while in a nursing home. To learn more about the Campaign or get a copy of the new Consumer Tip Sheet or new guide for consumers visit the Campaign's website at [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org)

## **LTC Nursing Loses Judy Camp**

Judith (Valentine) Camp, age 70 of Columbus, Ohio, passed away peacefully on March 1, 2010, at home surrounded by her family. A registered nurse in the State of Ohio since 1960, she worked at a number of Hospitals and facilities including St. Rita's Hospital in Lima, OH, Arlington Court Nursing Home and was Director of Nursing at St. Luke's Convalescence Center, The Convalesorium of Dublin and Columbus, West Park in Columbus, OH. Most recently, Judy was the director of Adult Day Care/Home Health Services and Case Manager for Columbus West Park. Judy had dedicated her life to the care of senior citizens. She was founding member of the Ohio Directors of Nursing in Long Term Care (ODONA). In 2006, Judy founded the Secret Santa program at the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging which provides Christmas gifts and basic needs to the elderly. This program started with providing gifts to 100 clients and it has grown to 500 clients this past year. Just before her death, Judy was the recipient of the Central Ohio Area Agency Outstanding Service to Seniors Award for 2010.

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Reflections on Life...

**THERE'S A HOLE IN MY SIDEWALK**  
Autobiography in Five Short Chapters  
By Portia Nelson

**Chapter 1.**

**I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I fall in.  
I am lost...  
I am helpless.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.**

**Chapter 2.**

**I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I cant believe I am in this same place.  
But it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.**

**Chapter 3.**

**I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in... its a habit.  
But, my eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
It is my fault.  
I get out immediately.**

**Chapter 4.**

**I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.**

**Chapter 5.**

**I walk down another street.**

*Dan Johnson, author of several books on spiritual awakenings in life was kind enough to allow us to share his commentary on this poem:*

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Thinking of life as a journey is a metaphor. We can think of life's journey in many different ways. From our beginning life is taking us to a destination with challenging adventures along the way. Life may be seen as an ocean voyage across unknown depths where storms occasionally toss us about as we seek the safety of calm shores. An old bluegrass song tells us that life is like journeying on a mountain railway with hills, tunnels, dangerous curves and the need of a brave engineer.

Other metaphors speak of life as a wheel taking us through the circularity of change. Life may be seen as a spiral leading us upward in our growth towards maturity. The movie character, Forest Gump, says that, "Life is like a box chocolates. You never know what you will get." Take a chance and see what happens. Metaphors of life give us a vision of the life process and help us to understand what is required for the essential tasks of psychological and spiritual growth.

Portia Nelson's delightful and insightful story of the hole in the sidewalk provides another metaphor of life. Life is like a stroll down a somewhat hazardous sidewalk. The story identifies the key feature required to safely navigate life's sidewalk. To read additional commentary on the poem and more of Dan Johnson's thoughts, visit [http://www.lessonsforliving.com/sidewalk\\_of\\_life.htm](http://www.lessonsforliving.com/sidewalk_of_life.htm)

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