

MONDAY

ONLINE

MAILING

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Top Stories

MHHA Telephone Briefings on Property Tax and Sales Tax Issues a Huge Success

Last week MHHA conducted two telephone briefings on recent developments that may affect nonprofit providers' property and sales tax exemptions. On Jan. 9, over fifty nonprofit housing providers participated in the call and on Jan. 10, nearly forty care center members participated. MHHA staff briefed members on the recent Minnesota Supreme Court decision, *Under the Rainbow Child Care Center, Inc. v. County of Goodhue*, the current political situation and strategies to address the situation, and answered questions members had on the issue.

This was just the start of MHHA's response to this situation. We take very seriously the potential impact of the Supreme Court decision on nonprofit providers. MHHA staff has secured a meeting with the Commissioner of Revenue, as well as other key Department of Revenue staff, on Jan. 28 to discuss possible solutions to this emerging issue. We are also reaching out to representatives of local governments to gain as much information as we can about this issue.

MHHA is also working in concert with the entire nonprofit community through the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits to address this issue. The court decision affects hundreds of nonprofits across the state that are not involved with aging services in any way--ranging from day care centers to organizations like the Girls Scouts. Most Minnesota nonprofits do not operate with substantial surpluses, including many that provide government funded services, and they will be hard pressed to develop new sources of funds to pay these taxes. Accordingly, we have a shared goal to move legislation forward in 2008 to address this situation. We expect to have draft language of proposed legislation this week to review.

MHHA will be extremely active on this issue, and we will keep you informed by every means necessary--stories in *Monday Mailing*, special alerts, conference calls, e-mails. At the appropriate time, we will also ask your assistance in helping us change this decision through the legislative process. In the meantime, you can help us by simply keeping us informed of any information you have about the situation at the local level. We encourage members to reach out to your county commissioners and explain why it is important to maintain property and sales tax exemptions for nonprofit providers. If you do have these conversations, please let us know what feedback you receive. Finally, it is not too soon to bring this issue to the attention of your legislators. Even though this issue has just developed, we recommend that you alert your legislators to your concerns about the possible taxation. They need to know that this will be a major issue that they will have to address this session.

Please note that we have posted all background information regarding this issue on our website at <http://www.mhha.com>. Log in and go to the sidebar on the right side of the member home page and look for the link Property Tax Issues. In the meantime, please contact either Kari Thurlow at 651-603-3512 or kthurlow@mhha.com or Darrell Shreve at 651-645-4545 or dshreve@mhha.com with any questions you may have.

News Briefs

Draft DHS Customized Living Tool is Available from MHHA

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has drafted a worksheet designed to inform lead agencies about providers' available customized living services. This worksheet was e-mailed to those attending last week's DHS videoconference and MHHA has now posted the draft at http://www.mhha.com/inc/data/CustomizedLivingWorksheetDraft_1-7-08.pdf. DHS plans to make additional changes to this draft document based on the feedback from participants at the Jan. 8 videoconference. We don't yet know when the next version will be completed, but MHHA will post the revised form as soon as it becomes available.

Based on the discussion at the videoconference, MHHA anticipates that the revisions may include some clarifications regarding the different types of transfer assistance that may be available and some additional tasks related to assistance with eating, such as supervision of eating. Although providers have raised objections to the inclusion of a question about residency requirements in a document designed to describe the Elderly Waiver (EW) customized living **services** that a provider offers, MHHA expects that this question will remain in the document.

As described in more detail in last week's *Monday Mailing*, this document is the first part of a tool that is designed for use by lead agencies as they contract with providers for customized living services for EW clients. This initial document is designed to be completed by a provider to give lead agencies information about which eligible customized living services the provider offers so that the lead agencies can match their EW clients with providers that can meet their needs. The second part of the

tool will be used as lead agencies and providers negotiate rates for each customized living service the provider offers.

DHS plans additional meetings with representatives from MHHA and other provider groups, as well as representatives of lead agencies (counties and health plans), to develop and refine all parts of this tool. MHHA will continue to update members on these developments. If you have questions, please contact Mary Youle at myoule@mhha.com.

QIS Basics Workshop a Success -- Still Time To Register for Feb. 5 Program

If written evaluations and member comments are any indication, the "Basics of QIS" workshop held on Jan. 9 in Bloomington was a valuable learning experience for members. Those still considering whether or not to register for the Feb. 5 program in St. Paul (space currently available at press time) may be interested in what previous attendees had to say about the program:

- "Practical program - thank you! Outstanding materials." (administrator)
- "The manual, CD and QA tools are excellent! Overall content was well organized and explained in an 'easy' way to enable the audience to comprehend the information. (director of nursing)
- "The manual is absolutely awesome! Very helpful to take something back to share with staff." (director of nursing)
- "Thank you to MHHA for giving us good value for our educational dollars. The content was excellent, practical and the course manual will be put to good use training our staff." (administrator)
- "Cindy (Mason) did an excellent job teaching. It was interesting and made tough material soft." (assistant director of nursing)
- all day long." (staff development professional)
- "Cindy (Mason) has an excellent understanding and the examples she used were the best." (nurse consultant)
- "I'm actually looking forward to going back to my facility and training my staff." (administrator)

The trainers for the Feb. 5 all-day program are fro Nursing Home Quality LLC, the same organization that is currently training the Minnesota Department of Health surveyors on QIS.

Though the official registration cut-off date is Jan. 29, due to the high interest in this program, members are encouraged to register as soon as possible because space is limited. Because the program is expected to fill this week, as of today, first priority will be given to members who did not send staff to the Jan. 9 program. Organizations that had staff attend last week's program but want to send more staff to the Feb. 5 program will be notified if they will be put on a waiting list for available space. Questions about registering for the program may be directed to Beth Gabrysiak at bgabrysiak@mhha.com. Program content questions may be directed to Heidi Simpson at hsimpson@mhha.com.

Nursing Home Users Fees End on Christmas

The continuing resolution passed by Congress on Dec. 21 did not contain language to continue the controversial nursing home revisit user fees. However, President Bush did not sign the bill until Dec. 26, so user fees will still be assessed for revisits following surveys through Christmas, 2007. Surveys with exit dates of Dec. 26 or later will not have user fees associated with revisits. As a practical matter, this probably means that Dec. 21 is the last exit date subject to user fees because surveys typically end on a Friday, not Saturday, Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday. For further information, contact Darrell Shreve at dshreve@mhha.com.

Information on Home Care Regulatory Meetings Now on MDH Web Site

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has created a web page where it will post the minutes and other information about the Home Care Regulatory Framework Planning Group. This advisory group of stakeholders began meeting in the fall, 2007, to help MDH examine the regulatory framework for home care services now and into the future. With the first wave of boomers retiring in 2010 and the increased expectations that individuals as they age will want to receive care in their own home or a homelike setting, it is expected that this service area will continue to expand in the coming years.

This new web page was created for the Home Care Regulatory Framework Planning Group members and others interested in the future of home care regulation to provide easy access to the information that has been distributed or discussed at meetings. It can be found at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/fpc/profinfo/hcwg/>.

For more information, contact Mary Youle at myoule@mhha.com.

Vacancies in Your HUD Building?

HUD is preparing to publicly launch a web site where owners of HUD-insured or HUD-subsidized properties can voluntarily post information about their vacant units. Once the information is posted, it will be available for viewing nationwide to assist potential renters. HUD has specifically invited members of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA) with vacancies to be the first to use the site, to provide feedback on any concerns or problems, and help inform ways of promoting the site to the other housing provider trade groups. AAHSA is also working with the Office of Public and Indian Housing to facilitate the matching of vacancies in supportive senior housing with transitional housing assistance plans

for elderly survivors of Katrina who are still displaced. Additional displacement as a result of the recent fires in southern California has pushed HUD to launch this tool sooner than planned.

Vacancy information can be entered at https://hudapps1.hud.gov/remes_public/vacancies/Owners/index.cfm. Information entered on this web site form will also be forwarded to the HUD National Housing Locator System, found at <https://hudapps.hud.gov/nhls/>. If you have feedback related to the vacancy lists, contact Colleen Bloom at AAHSA at cbloom@aahsa.org.

REAC Inspection Scores Go Public

The American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging reports that with no explanation why, HUD has suddenly posted two versions (PDF and Excel) of Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) data detailing property names, addresses, inspection date and most recent scores on the multifamily website. The inspection scores are found at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/remspphysinspscores.cfm>.

HUD Posts New RHIIP Newsletter

HUD has recently posted on its web site the Fall/Winter 2008 Rental Housing Integrity Improvement Project (RHIIP) Newsletter. This edition includes information about EIV, statistics on HUD's subsidy contracts, an overview of the Student Rule and more. Access the newsletter at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/rhiip/newsvol3no7.pdf>. An archive of the RHIIP newsletters, an archive of past RHIIP Listserv Tips and other publications are found at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/mfh/rhiip/mfhrhiip.cfm>.

DHS COLA Bulletin Increases Cap for Home Modifications/Adaptations

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) has issued bulletin #07-69-03C, which significantly increases the amount allowed for home modifications and adaptations under the Elderly Waiver (EW) and Alternative Care (AC) programs. Previously, the amount allowed for each modification or adaptation under these programs was \$4,942, but as of Jan. 1, 2008, the new per item cap for modifications/adaptations is \$10,000. In addition to this rate cap change, the bulletin includes additional entries for rates for EW/AC Family Adult Day Services (FADS). The bulletin is available at <http://tinyurl.com/2vlbd1>.

Housing Assistance Council Releases Environmental Review Guide

The Housing Assistance Council has recently released a new publication, *Environmental Review: A Guide for Applicants Seeking HUD or USDA Rural Development Financial Assistance*, which explains HUD's and Rural Development's processes step by step. Developers' responsibilities are clearly noted and definitions and tips are provided. It is free on the Rural Homes website at <http://www.ruralhome.org/manager/uploads/EnvironmentalReviewGuide.pdf>.

Senator Kerry Introduces Trust Fund Bill

Senator John Kerry (D-MA) has recently introduced S. 2523, which would establish a National Housing Trust Fund. The bill, co-sponsored by Senators Snowe (R-ME), Sanders (I-VT), Domenici (R-NM) and Schumer (D-NY), creates a dedicated funding source for affordable housing production, preservation and rehabilitation of an estimated 1.5 million affordable homes over the next 10 years. At least 75 percent of the funds will be for housing for households that are extremely low income, earning less than 30 percent of an area's median income." Helping to provide clean, safe, affordable housing is a measurement of our values, and a test of whether government has its priorities in the right place," said Senator John Kerry.

In October, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2895, the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act of 2007. The House bill, introduced by Financial Services Committee Chairman Barney Frank (D-MA), passed the House by a strong bipartisan vote of 264 to 148. The Senate and House bills are almost identical. Senator Kerry has introduced bills to establish a National Housing Trust Fund in the 106th, 107th and 108th Congresses. More information about the National Housing Trust Fund Campaign is found at <http://www.nlihc.org/template/page.cfm?id=40>.

Member News

Member News

In this week's Member News, http://www.mhha.com/index/Member_News read about and Open House & Dedication at Guardian Angels. Send your news to Jenny Mims at jmims@mhha.com.

Association News

Register to Attend the MN-DONA Breakfast at the Institute

The Minnesota Directors of Nursing Administration (MN-DONA) invites all DONs and ADONs to a complimentary breakfast on Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2008, at 7:15 to 8:15 a.m. in the Lake Nokomis Room on the 5th Floor of the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis. If you plan to attend, please RSVP by Jan. 31 to the MN-DONA Office by email to barb@bestmeetings.com or phone at 952-858-8875 or 800-958-8875.

Must Attend Events at the 2008 Institute

Make time to relax and attend one, many or all of these special events at the 2008 MHHA Institute:

WEDNESDAY, FEB 6

7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

MHHA PAC Silent Auction

New this year! Going once, going twice, gone to the highest bidder! Will that be you? Plan to do some shopping at the MHHA PAC Silent Auction. View dozens of auction items. Get your Valentine's Day shopping out of the way. Proceeds will go to the MHHA PAC.

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Grand Opening of Exhibit Hall

More than 160 vendors of goods and services already know you are leaders. That's why they scramble to exhibit at what is in their words the "A" best show in the upper Midwest." Find out how they can help you continue to be great!

5 - 6:30 p.m.

Chairperson's Reception sponsored by Merwin Long Term Care Pharmacy

Back by popular demand! Join us in the Nicollet Promenade for a complimentary reception in appreciation of your hard work and dedication in caring for older adults. Start your evening with conversation, snacks and hors d'oeuvres. Socialize and unwind from your busy day. Reconnect with your colleagues from around the state. Network with old friends and make some new ones. Don't miss it!

8:30 - 11:30 p.m.

Opening Night Celebration Featuring Brat Pack Radio sponsored by Northland Securities Inc. and Thrifty White Pharmacy Services

Last year hundreds of you boogied down to Boogie Wonderland. Don't miss this year's event -- Brat Pack Radio is the ultimate 80's musical experience! They will get you rockin' to the unmistakable beats and sounds of the 80's - from the "hair bands" to pop, Euro-techno to Rock and Roll, and R&B to New Wave, no genre is left behind. Complete with costumes, visual effects and audience interaction, the Brat Pack Radio Supershow will transport you back to the time of The "A" Team, Alligator shirts, and Atari!

THURSDAY, FEB. 7

7 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.

MHHA PAC Silent Auction

New items are added each day, so stop by the Silent Auction again to see what is new!

8 - 8:45 a.m.

Interfaith Celebration sponsored by Pathway Health Services Inc.

Join us for the 16th Annual Interfaith Celebration at Westminster Presbyterian Church. This celebration is an honored tradition of the Institute. Join your extended MHHA family for a truly inspirational service. Take time out of your hectic day and enjoy this time of quiet reflection and devotion. Renew your spiritual energy and begin your journey into the new year with a powerful reminder of your mission in serving the elderly. Whatever your religious background, come and enjoy this uplifting event.

11:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Lunch on the Exhibit Floor sponsored by Evercare and Living Independently Group

Take advantage of this opportunity to visit with more than 160 companies willing to share their innovative products and services. A complimentary lunch will be available on the exhibit floor on a first-come, first-served basis.

8 - 11 p.m.

New and Just Added!! The MHHA Technology Experience -- Come and Play!

Have you seen all the cool and fun techie stuff showing up in our residents' homes? They're having a blast! Well, why should they have all the fun? Come play with us! Join the fun in the Hyatt Lobby for an evening of karaoke, race car driving, flight simulators, music videos from the 50's through the 90's, cognitive games, fun video clips and more. The interactive technology is provided by MHHA Business Partner, It's Never 2 Late, a company built around engaging the residents we serve. Now it's time you get a chance to see what they're up to! You'll have a great time. Don't miss it!

Questions regarding these special events can be directed to Jenny Prosser, jprosser@mhha.com.

Special Thanks to 2008 Annual Sponsors

MHHA thanks the following 2008 Annual Sponsors for helping advance our mission and for supporting important programs and initiatives.

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For information on future sponsorship opportunities please contact Jenny Prosser, jprosser@mhha.com.

MHHA Institute Offers Another Informal Professional Development Opportunity - Session Moderating

Over the course of your aging services career you've probably heard many, many speakers give presentations and perhaps wondered what getting up in front of people to talk might be like. Perhaps this is something that you might be called upon to do in your work. You might even be open to trying it to see if it's as scary as it may look, but want to do so in a way that you can learn, but still be successful in it. MHHA can help you hone your skills with such an opportunity. We have over 100 presentations at the upcoming Institute that require moderators, so we need many members to step forward to help with this important job. A number of your peers have already done so, but we need more volunteers. We make it easy for you to do by providing the information and resources you need to moderate sessions you're already planning to attend. You can indicate your willingness to moderate directly to Heidi Simpson in the MHHA offices in a number of ways: by faxing in the completed "Moderator Assistance Reply Form," found at <http://www.mhha.com/inc/data/ModeratorForm.pdf>, by sending an e-mail to hsimpson@mhha.com or by calling her at 651-645-4545 with your preferred session numbers. Be brave, be bold and agree to moderate by **Friday, Jan. 18!**

Sign Up Now to Participate on a MHHA Committee

If you would like to participate on a MHHA committee, now is the time to sign up. 2008 committee charters and a sign-up form are posted on our website at <http://www.mhha.com/inc/data/2008committeesignup.pdf>. If you did not have the opportunity to serve on a 2007 committee and would like to get involved in the strategic work of the Association, now is the time. Review the committee charges and work products and let us know on which committee(s) you would like to serve. If you served on a 2007 committee(s), please confirm your continued interest in serving on assigned committee(s) or let us know if you would like to change or add to your MHHA committee participation this year. Please fill out the committee sign-up form found at the web site above and return it to Nancy Garrett by mail or fax no later than Friday, Jan. 25, 2008. For more information, contact Nancy Garrett, ngarrett@mhha.com.

Alliance Purchasing News

Marco Offers Five Reasons Why the Time is Right to Adopt Document Management



If you're like most healthcare providers, you can recall a time when you had to rummage through hundreds of files just to get your hands on the one you needed. And because you're in our highly regulated healthcare world, you probably encounter this frustrating scenario almost every day. The amount of data produced and retained by companies is staggering and continues to soar -- with no real end in sight.

How can your facility become more effective at organizing and locating important medical documents and resident files -- while reducing the headaches and risk associated with lost documents? One logical place to start is with an automated electronic document management solution -- a solution that dramatically increases accessibility, security and cost savings. Consider the five reasons why "now" may be the time for you to adopt a document management solution.

1. **Increased Awareness of Regulations** -- Because healthcare is highly regulated, document management solutions can help address the growing number of government regulations. As compliance with e-health mandates and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) continues, the need and demand for electronic filing grows. With document management solutions in place, your organization can improve its data quality, assure regulatory compliance, and reduce costs by making sure that up-to-date information is easily accessible by the right people.
2. **Declining Hardware and Software Costs** -- Historically, document capture and indexing has been a time-intensive, manual process that ultimately costs businesses large amounts of money. Recently, however, document management solutions are more affordable than ever, thanks to new market trends and increased competition between manufacturers. Furthermore, the number of product choices available and the quality of features offered in each solution are further driving the demand for these systems.
3. **Surge in Popularity** -- The availability of electronic document management solutions designed and priced for smaller healthcare providers, coupled with declining hardware costs, have contributed to an increased demand among midsize companies. Healthcare providers want to find better ways to drive efficiencies through increased automation and comply with government regulations surrounding document archival and retrieval. Document management has grown about 20 percent in the last five years, and industry analysts expect the market to grow even more.
4. **New Product Innovations** -- In the last 12 months, the market has witnessed several new advancements in document management technology that can now bring even more functionality to businesses like yours. Some of these technology advancements include:
 - **One-Touch Scanning** -- Many of today's low-cost scanners offer one-touch scanning, which makes it easy for businesses to digitize paper documents. These scanners are designed so that pressing one button takes the user all the way through the scanning task, instead of only launching the program.
 - **All-in-one Devices** -- These devices, often called multifunction printers (MFPs), have been around awhile, but many now offer enhanced networking capabilities and processing speeds that boost their popularity as front-end document capture devices.
 - **Built-in Software** -- Many desktop scanners now deliver increased value for budget-conscious businesses by including built-in management and image-enhancement software. This software enables users to scan, convert, capture and import documents quickly and easily -- with no additional cash outlay.
5. **Unique Storage Alternatives** -- Once your company's documents are converted into digital format, those files must be stored for future retrieval. And today, your choice of storage mechanisms is wider than ever before. Your organization may decide to choose traditional storage solutions, such as storage servers, tape libraries and other hardware. Or, if your company wants to bypass the complexities -- and expense -- associated with such solutions, you can also check out new, on-demand storage solutions that offer a secure, online document storage and sharing workspace where you archive documents and collaborate with others on your team via online sharing regardless of where they are located.

If you're ready to take the lead toward document management, Marco can help you consider all your hardware and software options - enabling you to take advantage of the growing market selection and decreasing costs. For more information, contact Michael Amberg, Marco Technology Advisor, at 800-892-8548, ext. 3042, or michaela@marconet.com. You may also contact Patti O'Brien at pobrien@mhha.com.

MHHA thanks business partner [Graham-Field Health Products](#) and our other business partners for their support.