Thank you to our friends, supporters and fellow advocates for making 2018 a year of many successes and meaningful work; we look forward to 2019 and working together to achieve quality care and quality of life for all those receiving long-term care and services. Wishing you happiness and success in the new year and looking forward to continuing our shared efforts of standing for quality care!

New Review of State Palliative Care Policies and Programs

The National Academy for State Health Policy has released a report - "Advancing Palliative Care for Adults with Serious Illness: A National Review of State Palliative Care Policies and Programs." The report is a comprehensive review of how states are supporting the delivery of palliative care to adults and what they are doing to implement and enhance palliative care access and quality. The report highlights major trends from the 50-state scan, promising policy approaches, and key
considerations for states to enhance palliative care access and quality across settings. Read the report here.

New Practice Tip on the PRACTICAL Tool

The National Center on Law & Elder Rights has released a Practice Tip on using the American Bar Association's PRACTICAL Tool - A Decision Guide for Lawyers and Guardians. The PRACTICAL Tool aims to help avoid guardianship, if possible, by identifying and implementing decision-making options for persons with disabilities that are less restrictive than guardianship. This Practice Tip provides an overview of the PRACTICAL Tool and highlights the key steps lawyers and guardians can use to enhance a client's self-determination and to assess for modification of guardianship or restoration of rights. Read the Practice Tip here and access the PRACTICAL Tool here.

Webinar on New Change Package to Prevent All Cause Harm in Nursing Homes

Telligen, the Quality Innovation Network National Coordinating Center is holding a webinar about its new resource - a "Change Package to prevent all cause harm in nursing homes." The resource, funded by CMS, is a compendium of successful practices of nursing homes identified as high-performing by Telligen (based on various data sources, including the 5-star rating system), illustrating how they prevent harm while honoring each resident's rights and preferences. Learn more about the Change Package in a webinar on Thursday, January 24th at 3:00pm ET. Register here.

FTC Warns of Scam Calls About Your SSN

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has been receiving reports about scam calls in which the caller pretends to be from the Social Security Administration (SSA) and attempts to get your Social Security number (SSN) and your money. In one variation of the scam, the caller says
your SSN has been linked to a crime, your SSN is blocked and you must pay a fee to reactivate it. In other variations of the call, the caller says that someone has used your SSN to apply for credit cards. The FTC is reminding consumers that:

- The SSA will never call and ask for your Social Security number.
- Even if your caller ID shows the SSA's real phone number (1-800-772-1213), it is not the real SSA calling. Computers make it easy to show any number on caller ID.
- Anyone who tells you to wire money, pay with a gift card or send cash is a scammer.

For more information about the scam and information on how to report a scam, click here.

Free Opioid Training Modules for Providers from the CDC

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) has launched two new opioid trainings as a part of its series of interactive online trainings. The new trainings support providers in safer prescribing of opioids for chronic pain. The first training - Determining Whether to Initiate Opioids for Chronic Pain - provides information about identifying and considering important patient factors when starting or continuing opioid therapy. The second training - Implementing CDC's Opioid Prescribing Guideline into Clinical Practice - walks through a quality improvement process using the set of 16 clinical measures outlined in Quality Improvement and Care Coordination: Implementing the CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain. See the CDC's full interactive training series here.

Spotlight on Resources

House passed the IMPROVE Act, includes a 3-month extension of the "spousal impoverishment protections" & 3 months of funding for the Medicaid Money Follows the Person Program

Long-Term Care Resources & News

- Why You Should Check In With Your Older Family Members This Holiday Season, December 24, 2018, Forbes

Read past issues of The Voice here.

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Why You Should Check In With Your Older Family Members This Holiday Season, December 24, 2018, Forbes

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Consumer Voice and the National Ombudsman Resource Center have a multitude of resources available online covering a wide range of long-term care topics. Visit the Consumer Voice and NORC websites to explore all the available resources. Check out this week’s highlighted resource:

NORC Notes