



# 2026 IHHC ANNUAL CONFERENCE ROOTED IN WHY READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT

**Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council Annual Conference**

**April 7-9, 2026**

**NIU Naperville**

**1120 E. Diehl Rd., Naperville, IL 60563**

## **AGENDA**

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**Tuesday, April 7, 2026**

### **TU01 - Leadership Masterclass - Turning Conflict into Connection: A DISC Leadership Approach**

**Time:** 1:00 PM-5:00 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Therapy, Private Duty

**Speakers:** Marcyllie Combs, Owner, BS, MS, RN, CHCE & Brenda Beggs, Chief Clinical Officer, BSN, RN, *MAC Legacy*

#### **Description:**

Conflict shows up in every workplace, usually uninvited and right on time. It's missed expectations, clashing priorities, and those conversations everyone avoids until they can't. Left unmanaged, conflict drains energy, erodes trust, and slows progress - but handled well, it becomes a powerful leadership advantage. In this leadership masterclass, emerging leaders will learn how to turn everyday tension and awkward conversations into meaningful connection using a DISC-based approach. You'll uncover your natural conflict style, learn what's actually driving challenging interactions and practice practical strategies that turn friction into trust, clarity, and forward momentum. This session is designed to sharpen your self-awareness, strengthen your influence, and help you lead with confidence when it matters most - because the leaders who grow fastest aren't the ones who avoid conflict, but the ones who know how to handle it with confidence, skill, and a little good humor. Conflict is inevitable, but how you lead through it defines your impact.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Recognize the types and sources of conflict.
2. Identify strategies to respond to conflict effectively.
3. Learn how to use conflict as a leadership growth opportunity.

**Bio:**

**Marcylyle Combs** is a visionary builder of people, companies, and movements. With more than 30 years of experience transforming organizations across healthcare, real estate, and leadership development, she is known for turning bold ideas into enduring impact. From her beginnings as a clinical nurse to buying, scaling, and successfully exiting companies, Marcylyle has built multistate enterprises, launched record-setting startups, and advised CEOs and executive teams on growth, culture, and succession. Her influence extends globally through international leadership work, mission-driven initiatives, and partnerships that shape care standards worldwide. An HHFMA Hall of Fame inductee, author of *Never Hire Your Friends*, and host of the globally ranked podcast *50% with Marcylyle Combs*, she challenges leaders to build organizations rooted in authenticity, connection, and results that last.

**Brenda Beggs** is a nationally respected healthcare executive and strategist with more than 35 years of leadership in home health and hospice, spanning roles from frontline clinician to Chief Operating Officer. She has led complex, multi state organizations through accelerated growth, regulatory disruption, and operational transformation, consistently delivering results while safeguarding the highest standards of patient centered care.

Known for building elite leadership teams and scalable operating models, Brenda brings a rare blend of clinical insight, executive rigor, and board level perspective. Today, she advises senior executives and ownership groups across the country, helping organizations strengthen performance, improve outcomes, and lead decisively in one of healthcare's most rapidly evolving sectors. Her work is defined by clarity, accountability, and purpose driven leadership, equipping leaders to perform at the highest level when it matters most.

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**Wednesday, April 8, 2026**

**WE01 – Welcome & Business Meeting**

**Time:** 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speakers:** Sara Ratcliffe, *IHHC*; Shelia Guither, *OSF Healthcare-Home Care*

**Description:**

Kick off the conference with our annual Welcome & Business Meeting, where you'll hear key highlights from Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council's accomplishments over the past year, learn about exciting new initiatives, and gain insight into what's ahead. Join us as IHHC President Sheila Guither shares her vision for the future and how we'll continue advancing home care and hospice across Illinois.

**Bio**

**Sara Ratcliffe** is the Executive Director of the Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council (IHHC), the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers (IACCPHP) and the Maine Alliance for Care at Home, where she leads advocacy, education, and member services. With a proven track record of successful lobbying at the federal level, she excels in coalition building and finding creative solutions. Sara is actively involved in national home care advocacy, and is a former board member of the National Alliance for Care at Home. Beyond her professional work, she is dedicated to community service, including coordinating the Springfield Old Capitol Art Fair and participating in the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln Young Philanthropists.

**Sheila Guither, MSN, RN, CWOCN**, brings 29 years of diverse experience in the Home Care industry, spanning clinical and leadership roles. She currently serves as the Clinical Practice Manager for OSF Home Care, where she combines her expertise in patient care and organizational leadership. Sheila holds a Master's Degree in Nursing Education from OSF Saint Francis College of Nursing in Peoria, IL, a BSN from Mennonite College of Nursing in Bloomington, IL, and a certification as a Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurse from Emory University in Atlanta, GA. Sheila is the current President of the Board of Directors for the Illinois Home Care and Hospice Council (IHHC) and is committed to equipping Home Care clinicians to deliver safe, compassionate, and high-quality care to their patients.

## **WE02 – The One Big Beautiful Bill Act and Home Care Services**

**Time:** 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** Damon Terzaghi, *National Alliance for Care at Home*

### **Description:**

In July 2025, President Trump signed HR1 into law, which resulted in substantial changes to statutory Medicaid financing and operational requirements. In 2026, state Medicaid agencies began the multi-year process of implementing the requirements. This session will review the provisions in HR1, also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA), the impact on Illinois' Medicaid home care programs, and how home care agency staff can plan and respond to the changes.

### **Objectives:**

1. Know the changes in HR1, OBBA, that will impact home care
2. Understand the decisions that the legislature, state Medicaid agency, and Governor face as a result of HR1
3. Increase ability to plan for changes, advocate effectively with the state, and preserve services.

### **Bio:**

Damon Terzaghi has spent his career working in programs that support older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income families. Currently, Damon is Vice President of Medicaid Advocacy and Programs at the National Alliance for Care at Home. In this role, Damon is responsible for

leading the Association's Medicaid practice, including establishing regulatory, legislative, and technical assistance priorities; providing information and analysis to members regarding issues in Medicaid that impact Homecare, Hospice, and HCBS; and developing the organization's resource library. Prior to the Alliance, he has served as:

- Senior Director at ADvancing States, the association representing state government aging, disability, and long-term services and supports agencies.
- Vice President for the Marwood Group LLC.
- Health Insurance Specialist for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).
- Senior Policy Associate for the National Association of State Medicaid Directors.
- Operations and Policy Analyst for the Oregon Department of Human Services.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, and a Master of Science in Public Health Administration from Trinity University in Washington DC. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Health Services Research from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia. Damon lives in Arlington, VA, with his wife, two poorly-behaved dogs, and three equally poorly-behaved children.

### **W03 – Strategies for Efficiency and Burnout Reduction**

**Time:** 10:15 AM – 11:15 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** Dan Catuccio, PT

#### **Description:**

Step away from the stress and into a session designed to recharge your passion for patient care. Led by a seasoned homecare physical therapist, motivational speaker, and content creator, this engaging presentation blends real-world strategies with humor and heart to help healthcare professionals thrive.

You'll discover practical approaches to improve caregiver efficiency, strengthen patient engagement, and boost team morale - all while learning how to find laughter in the daily chaos of home health. Through relatable stories, lighthearted "homecare policy" humor, and meaningful insights, this session aims to reconnect you with your purpose.

Leave feeling inspired, empowered, and confident, ready to bring renewed joy, energy, and impact to every client and patient interaction.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Strategies to providing excellent care while concurrently being the most efficient clinician one can be.

2. How to master charting, and work towards a primary goal of coming home with documentation completed.
3. Essential strategies to reducing burnout risk, with a purpose of finding a critically necessary work-life balance.

**Bio:**

With 21 years of experience as a physical therapist - 19 in home health - **Dan Catuccio** brings real-world insight, humor, and heart to healthcare professionals nationwide. After spending five years as a traveling PT across multiple states, Dan saw firsthand that home health challenges are universal from scheduling chaos to burnout.

Motivated by his own experience with burnout, Dan shifted his mindset, earned vestibular certification, became an adjunct professor, and served as a lead educator for hundreds of clinicians. Today, he combines education, motivation, and comedy to help healthcare teams improve efficiency, boost morale, and rediscover purpose - empowering clinicians to find joy, balance, and confidence in their daily work.

**W04 - Awards Presentation**

**Time:** 11:15 AM-11:30 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**W05 - Lunch**

**Time:** 11:30 AM-12:45 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**W11 – Labor Law Update**

**Time:** 12:45 PM -2:00 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** Aime Delaney, JD, *Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP*

**Description:**

Each year brings new regulation at the local, state and federal level for labor and employment compliance. Employers with operations in Illinois in particular have many new rules to keep up with that impact current policies and procedures. This presentation will provide a comprehensive overview of the updates and changes in the past year.

**Objectives:**

1. Obtain overview of new state laws expanding employment protections and benefits for employees, including new paid time off requirements, unpaid leave benefits, commuter benefits and more.
2. Obtain overview of new and proposed federal rules and regulations impacting employment liability, including changes to the salary threshold for exempt employees, new rules impacting joint employment and independent contractor status, and more.
3. Learn best practices for compliance

**Bio:**

**Aimee Delaney** counsels employers on all aspects of the employment relationship. She is passionate about working with her clients to provide strategic, tailored solutions for their employee-related issues. Aimee has assisted human resources professionals, managers, and in-house counsel on matters spanning from hire through termination, including:

- leave and disability considerations;
- misclassification issues;
- employee misconduct;
- and other disciplinary matters.

Aimee's traditional labor law practice includes representing management in labor negotiations, grievances and labor arbitrations, and labor board proceedings.

With her extensive experience in the area of labor and employment, Aimee also develops and provides management and employee training programs. Focused on minimizing potential employment liability and ensuring compliance with state and federal laws governing the workplace, the programs cover anti-harassment and anti-discrimination, as well as a variety of other employment law-related topics.

In addition to being a member of Hinshaw's Executive Committee, she was appointed to the firm's Management Committee in 2019. She also served as the leader of Hinshaw's Labor and Employment Practice Group from 2014 to 2019.

A graduate of Loyola University Chicago School of Law, Aimee has been an adjunct professor at her alma mater for more than a decade, where she teaches Employment Law and Labor Law.

**W12 - Hospice CoPs vs. Conditions of Payment**

**Time:** 12:45 PM -2:00 PM

**Audience:** Hospice

**Speaker:** Melinda Gaboury, COS-C, *Healthcare Provider Solutions, Inc.*

**Description:**

Understanding the distinction between Conditions of Participation (CoPs) and Conditions of Payment is critical for both compliance and reimbursement - yet these two concepts are often misunderstood or incorrectly applied during medical review.

In this session, participants will explore how survey requirements differ from payment requirements, why full compliance with Conditions of Participation does *not* automatically guarantee payment, and how improper application of CoPs can lead to inappropriate claim denials. Real-world examples - including recent denials tied to the 48-hour rule - will illustrate how agencies can be held to participation standards that are not actual payment conditions.

Attendees will also learn where to find true Conditions of Payment guidance, how to recognize when a denial is based on the wrong standard, and when it's appropriate to appeal medical review decisions through the administrative law judge (ALJ) process. This practical session empowers agencies to better protect revenue while maintaining regulatory compliance under Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services requirements.

**Objectives:**

1. Distinguish between Conditions of Participation and Conditions of Payment and understand how each impacts agency operations
2. Identify common scenarios where claims are denied based on participation standards rather than payment requirements
3. Locate authoritative sources used to determine Conditions of Payment versus survey compliance
4. Apply strategies to appeal inappropriate medical review denials, including knowing when escalation to the ALJ level is warranted

**Bio:**

**Melinda A. Gaboury** is co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Healthcare Provider Solutions, Inc. (HPS). Melinda Gaboury and Mark Cannon founded the company in April 2001 to provide financial, reimbursement, billing, operational and clinical consulting to the home care and hospice industries.

Melinda A. Gaboury, with more than 30 years in home care, has over 22 years of executive speaking and educating experience, including extensive day to day interaction with home care and hospice professionals. She routinely conducts Home Care and Hospice Reimbursement Workshops and speaks at state association meetings throughout the country. Melinda has profound experience in Medicare PDGM training, billing, collections, case-mix calculations, chart reviews and due diligence. UPIC, RA, ADR & TPE appeals with all Medicare MACs have become the forefront of Melinda's current impact on the industry. She is currently serving as the Chair of the NAHC/HHFMA Advisory Board and Work Group and is currently serving on the Board of Directors for both the Home Care Association of Florida & Tennessee Association for Home Care. Melinda is also the author of the Home Health OASIS Guide to OASIS-E and Home Health Billing Answers, 2023.

Melinda attended Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee and received her Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting. She began her career in 1991 with a large Tennessee based home care chain as a staff accountant and later joined a national healthcare consulting firm as their Reimbursement Manager.

### **W13 - The Innovative Leader: AI and Leading Change**

**Time:** 12:45 PM -2:00 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** Cindy Campbell, MHA-Healthcare Informatics, BSN, RN, COQS, CHHCM & Katherine Morrison, RN, MSN, CHPN, *WellSky*

#### **Description:**

Across the continuum of care at home, managing through change is made more effective by resting on foundational functional leadership concepts. AI is fueling innovative clinical modeling, yielding leadership time and sharpened focus, perfect for leaning into functional leadership approach. Join us to discuss how integrating machine learned data into long-standing theory can yield advocacy across all stakeholders, supporting top outcomes, growth, mission, and culture.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Describe functional leadership theory and its application across care at home
2. Discuss application of functional leadership theory to evolving use of AI within care at home
3. Discuss current and evolving artificial intelligence integration into home health, personal care and hospice practice.

#### **Bio:**

**Cindy Campbell** is a nationally recognized home health leader and management consultant. She supports home health providers across the country, guiding them toward best practice structure, clinical modeling, and revenue cycle process efficiencies. She is a passionate advocate for shifting advanced levels of care to the home – the least restrictive setting, with the lowest cost, that yields the greatest patient satisfaction. Cindy’s focus is grounded in patient experience and outcomes, with an emphasis on integrating and leveraging innovative technology into advancing clinical models to better manage patients where they live.

**Katherine Morrison** is the Director of Hospice Consulting Operations for WellSky, is an RN and holds a Master of Science in Nursing with a major in Nursing Informatics and a focus on Homeland Security. She has served in advancing levels of hospice leadership within large, multi-site health systems both in the Midwest and on the eastern seaboard and has extensive expertise in regulatory, compliance, and operational issues. As the subject matter expert for WellSky, Ms. Morrison monitors the changing economic and regulatory changes that impact all areas of hospice. She is a passionate advocate for patients and providers of palliative care and hospice. Ms. Morrison holds a certificate in hospice compliance from the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and is

a Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse (CHPN) and an End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) trainer.

### **W14 - Transforming Home Health Care: The Power of Evidence-Based Protocols**

**Time:** 12:45 PM -2:00 PM

**Audience:** HH, Therapy

**Speaker:** Sheila Guither, MSN, RN, CWOCN & Bree Powers, DNP, RN, NE-BC, *OSF Healthcare-Home Care*

#### **Description:**

Transform your home health agency with the Home Health Universal Best Practice Protocol (HHUBPP), an evidence-based framework that integrates healthcare hotspotting with standardized acute-care hospitalization prevention checklists for visits 1–3. This approach supports measurable reductions in potentially preventable hospitalizations (PPH) while strengthening performance in value-based reimbursement models. HHUBPP promotes structured, consistent care that improves patient outcomes and can reduce avoidable emergency department utilization. By applying standardized checklists and risk assessment methods early in the episode, agencies can improve care reliability, support quality performance (e.g., star ratings), and strengthen referral growth and organizational sustainability. Integrating evidence-based models of care into home health ensures every team member practices at the top of their licensure in an efficient, coordinated way to optimize patient outcomes while supporting financial stewardship and compliance.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Design and operationalize standardized HHUBPP care plan templates that combine healthcare hotspotting with role-specific workflows for high-risk patients across visits 1–3.
2. Implement and evaluate structured hospitalization-prevention checklists and evidence-based protocols using an evidence-based model to support PPH reduction and cost-effective care.
3. Apply consistent quality standards by integrating HHUBPP into daily practice and documentation, reinforcing reliable, coordinated team execution.
4. Demonstrate patient safety and error-reduction strategies by using HHUBPP-driven risk identification and escalation pathways that promote timely interdisciplinary action, meet evolving patient expectations, and reinforce performance in value-based care.
5. Strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration and role delineation to ensure consistent top-of-licensure practice through standardized communication, handoff processes, and shared accountability.

#### **Bio:**

**Sheila Guither**, MSN, RN, CWOCN, brings 28 years of diverse experience in the Home Care industry, spanning clinical and leadership roles. She currently serves as the Clinical Practice

Manager for OSF Home Care, where she combines her expertise in patient care and organizational leadership. Sheila holds a Master's Degree in Nursing Education from OSF Saint Francis College of Nursing in Peoria, IL, a BSN from Mennonite College of Nursing in Bloomington, IL, and a certification as a Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurse from Emory University in Atlanta, GA. Sheila is the current President of the Board of Directors for the Illinois Home Care and Hospice Council (IHHC) and is committed to equipping Home Care clinicians to deliver safe, compassionate, and high-quality care to their patients.

### **Bree Powers DNP, RN, NE-BC**

Dr. Bree Powers, DNP, RN, NE-BC is a seasoned healthcare leader with 27 years of clinical experience and 13 years in transformational leadership, holding degrees from Illinois Wesleyan University and OSF St. Francis Medical Center College of Nursing. As Director of Home Health Operations, she leads high-performing teams and drives quality patient outcomes and beginning fall 2025 she expanded her impact as an adjunct professor at Illinois State University's Mennonite College of Nursing. Known for blending clinical excellence with operational efficiency, Dr. Powers is committed to mentorship and evidence-based practice, and outside of her professional life she resides in Heyworth, Illinois with her family and enjoys gardening, lakeside activities, and beekeeping.

### **W21 - Proactive Strategies for Preventing Medication Diversion in Hospice and Home Health**

**Time:** 2:15 PM - 3:30 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Therapy

**Speaker:** Dawn Futris & Brittany McGuigan, *Addus Hospice of Illinois LLC, DBA JourneyCare Hospice*

#### **Description:**

Medication diversion threatens patient safety, staff integrity, and regulatory compliance. This session examines CMS, DEA, and accreditation guidelines, highlights key risk factors, and presents common diversion scenarios involving patients, caregivers, and staff. Through case studies and practical tools, participants will learn three core mitigation strategies and develop a comprehensive action plan addressing staffing, legal, and discharge protocols. Emphasis will be placed on proactive planning and fostering team accountability to promote a culture of safety and compliance.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Understand regulatory guidelines related to medication diversion.
2. Identify key risk factors for medication diversion.
3. Discuss Common diversion scenarios.
4. Develop 3 mediation strategies for medication diversion.
5. Incorporate a medication diversion action plan.
6. Encourage proactive planning and team accountability.

**Bio:**

**Dawn Futris** has served as the Senior Quality Manager for Addus Hospice of Illinois LLC, DBA JourneyCare Hospice, since 2019. With a career in Home Health and Hospice dating back to 1991 and a focus on Quality since 2012, Dawn brings decades of experience and insight to her work. She holds a Master's Degree in Health Informatics, which she has leveraged to lead national technology and quality improvement initiatives.

Dawn is a seasoned presenter, having spoken at local, state, and national conferences on a wide range of home health and hospice topics. After a brief hiatus from presenting, she is thrilled to return to the podium at the IHHC Annual Conference - one of her favorite professional communities.

Outside of work, Dawn enjoys spoiling her dog and relaxing with her favorite crafts: crocheting and knitting.

**Brittany McGuigan** joined the Addus Hospice of Illinois LLC, DBA JourneyCare Hospice team in August 2024 as the Clinical Director for the Deerfield Branch. She has nine years of hospice experience, having served in a variety of roles including case management, admissions, response nurse, PCM, and administrator. From early in her career, Brittany felt called to hospice leadership and went on to earn her MSN in Executive Leadership in 2022. She is passionate about guiding and supporting clinical teams while remaining a strong advocate for patients, always prioritizing comfort and quality of life.

Brittany's world is a mix of sawdust, sippy cups, and college football. When she's not tackling a carpentry project, she's outdoors making memories or cheering on her favorite team with her husband and 1-year-old daughter.

**W22 - Advanced Concepts in Leadership**

**Time:** 2:15 PM - 3:30 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** J'non Griffin RN MHA, HCS-D, HCS-O, HCS-H, HCS-C, COS-C, *SimiTree*

**Description:**

Equip yourself with proven communication frameworks and leadership strategies to effectively manage distributed home care teams. Learn to navigate the unique challenges of supervising remote caregivers, conduct meaningful check-ins, deliver constructive feedback, resolve conflicts, and build a cohesive team culture - even when your staff works independently across multiple client homes.

**Objectives:**

1. Apply effective communication frameworks to support and manage remote home care teams
2. Conduct purposeful check-ins that promote engagement, accountability, and performance
3. Deliver constructive feedback and address conflict in a way that strengthens trust and relationships
4. Implement leadership strategies that foster connection, collaboration, and a strong team culture across distributed caregivers

**Bio:**

**J'non Griffin**, RN, MHA, HCS-D, HCS-C, HCS-H, COS-C, is a 34-year veteran of home care as a registered nurse. She received her Master's degree in Health Care Administration in 2005. She has experience as a field nurse, director, and executive with home health and hospice agencies, both large and small. She has served as Director of Staff Development and Appeals for home health and hospice agencies. She has taken part in mock surveys for agencies and prepared agencies for accreditation. She has been directly involved in accreditation surveys, acquisitions, and many regulatory crises with state survey agencies and the intermediary.

**W23 – EVV in Illinois: Compliance Updates, Troubleshooting, and Best Practices**

**Time:** 2:15 PM - 3:30 PM

**Audience:** HH, Therapy

**Speakers:** TBD

**Description:**

Join representatives from HHAeXchange and Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services for an informative session on Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) updates impacting Illinois home health providers.

This session will provide practical guidance on using the HHAeXchange system more effectively while maintaining compliance with state EVV requirements. Presenters will review common GPS discrepancies, explain how to reconcile visit exceptions, and walk through proven troubleshooting strategies for resolving system errors. Attendees will also learn how agencies can consistently meet EVV compliance thresholds and adopt best practices that reduce administrative burden while improving reporting accuracy.

Whether you oversee EVV compliance, billing, operations, or agency administration, this session will help you better understand the system, resolve common challenges, and ensure your agency remains aligned with Illinois EVV program requirements.

**Objectives:**

- Understand the latest EVV updates from HHAeXchange and Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services
- Learn how to identify and reconcile common GPS abnormalities within EVV visit data
- Develop practical strategies for troubleshooting EVV system errors and visit exceptions
- Understand how agencies can meet and maintain Illinois EVV compliance thresholds
- Explore best practices that improve EVV accuracy, compliance, and operational efficiency

**W24 - Safety You Can See: A Practical Model for WPV Prevention From Intake Through Reporting**

**Time:** 2:15 PM - 3:30 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** Jonas Fortenberry, *POM Safe*

**Description:**

Most workplace violence programs focus on policies and reactive tools, but the real risks are the ones leaders never see. Through real stories and practical examples, this session shows how safety challenges emerge across the care process, why some slip through the cracks, and how leaders can build a stronger, more connected system. Attendees will learn a clear model that spans intake risk assessment, field visibility, real time response, and reporting so any organization can put it into practice.

**Objectives:**

1. Learn the core components of a modern WPV Safety Committee, including intake risk assessment, field visibility, real time response, and reporting loops.
2. Understand how safety risks emerge across the full care process and where traditional programs break down.
3. Apply a practical, step by step model to strengthen safety culture, improve visibility, and support caregivers more proactively.

**Bio:**

**Jonas Fortenberry** is vice president of business development for POM Safe, a tech company that produces cutting-edge safety devices for healthcare workers. Jonas has

worked in the post-acute and health care industry for over 12 years and specializes in the areas of health care technology and healthcare software as a service solutions.

### **WE31 – Hot Topics**

**Time:** 4:00-5:15 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speakers:** Melinda Gaboury, *Healthcare Provider Solutions*; Sara Ratcliffe & Kristin Rubbelke, *IHHC*

#### **Description:**

Hot off the presses! Join Melinda Gaboury, Kristin Rubbelke and Sara Ratcliffe for up-to-the-minute Federal and State regulatory and reimbursement news impacting home health, hospice and private duty providers. This much anticipated and highly informative session will leave you knowing exactly what your agency's future holds.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Identify recent and planned regulatory and reimbursement changes impacting agencies in Illinois
2. Identify ways agencies can comply with new and updated regulations
3. Identify how IHHC advocates for its members on regulatory matters impacting care at home

#### **Bio:**

**Melinda A. Gaboury** is co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Healthcare Provider Solutions, Inc. (HPS). Melinda Gaboury and Mark Cannon founded the company in April 2001 to provide financial, reimbursement, billing, operational and clinical consulting to the home care and hospice industries.

Melinda A. Gaboury, with more than 30 years in home care, has over 22 years of executive speaking and educating experience, including extensive day to day interaction with home care and hospice professionals. She routinely conducts Home Care and Hospice Reimbursement Workshops and speaks at state association meetings throughout the country. Melinda has profound experience in Medicare PDGM training, billing, collections, case-mix calculations, chart reviews and due diligence. UPIC, RA, ADR & TPE appeals with all Medicare MACs have become the forefront of Melinda's current impact on the industry. She is currently serving as the Chair of the NAHC/HHFMA Advisory Board and Work Group and is currently serving on the Board of Directors for both the Home Care Association of Florida & Tennessee Association for Home Care. Melinda is also the author of the Home Health OASIS Guide to OASIS-E and Home Health Billing Answers, 2023.

Melinda attended Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee and received her Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting. She began her career in 1991 with a large Tennessee based home care chain as a staff accountant and later joined a national healthcare consulting firm as their Reimbursement Manager.

**Sara Ratcliffe** is the Executive Director of the Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council (IHHC), the Illinois Association of Community Care Program Homecare Providers (IACCPHP) and the Maine Alliance for Care at Home, where she leads advocacy, education, and member services. With a proven track record of successful lobbying at the federal level, she excels in coalition building and finding creative solutions. Sara is actively involved in national home care advocacy, and is a former board member of the National Alliance for Care at Home. Beyond her professional work, she is dedicated to community service, including coordinating the Springfield Old Capitol Art Fair and participating in the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln Young Philanthropists.

**Kristin Rubbelke** is a licensed social worker, lobbyist, and executive director with extensive experience in Illinois government. She currently serves as Legislative and Regulatory Consultant for the Illinois HomeCare & Hospice Council, supporting advocacy efforts that advance home care and hospice across the state. Since 2016, Kristin has cultivated strong connections with legislators, industries, and organizations, successfully advancing legislative initiatives, securing funding, and blocking harmful legislation to protect her clients' interests.

Kristin's diverse background equips her with a unique perspective in navigating policy, politics, and stakeholder engagement. Her experience as the executive director of a state association provides relatable insight for association clients, as well as expertise in association management, membership growth, and board development. As a licensed social worker, she approaches issues and relationships with a holistic and empathetic perspective.

Kristin serves on the Massey Commission in Sangamon County, where she co-leads the Community Education on Public Health and Safety Workgroup. She is a director on the Women's PAC and the PAC Chairwoman for the NASW-IL PAC. Her previous leadership roles include Delegate At-Large on the NASW-IL Board of Directors and Co-Chair of NASW-IL's Racial Justice Task Force. Kristin began her career as a hospital social worker and has many years of experience working with individuals with disabilities, enriching her approach to advocacy with deep compassion and practical expertise.

#### **WE40 – Exhibitor Reception**

**Time:** 5:15-7:00 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

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**Wednesday, April 9, 2026**

#### **TH01 – Breakfast in Exhibit Hall**

**Time:** 7:30-8:30 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

## **TH02 – Panel - Challenges in Today’s Care Environment - and How to Overcome Them**

**Time:** 8:30-9:30 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speakers:** Cheryl Adams, RN, BSN, MBA, *At-Home Health Care of Sparta Community Hospital*; Sheila Guither, MSN, RN, CWOCN, *OSF Healthcare- Home Care*; Shelly Taylor, RN, *Cass County Health Department*

### **Description:**

This panel brings together industry experts to address the realities of today’s care landscape and share strategies for success. From staffing and compliance to communication and culture, panelists will explore common challenges and provide actionable solutions agencies can apply immediately to improve operations and outcomes.

### **Objectives:**

1. Identify common operational challenges impacting home care and hospice agencies today
2. Evaluate practical strategies for addressing staffing, compliance, communication, and workplace culture
3. Apply panelist-shared solutions to improve efficiency, team engagement, and service delivery
4. Develop actionable next steps to strengthen agency operations and outcomes

### **Bio:**

**Cheryl Adams, RN, BSN, MBA**, brings an impressive 46 years of clinical nursing and healthcare executive experience to her role as the administrator of At-Home Health Care of Sparta Community Hospital, a position she has held since the agency's inception in 1996. In this capacity, Cheryl has been instrumental in developing, implementing, and sustaining the business plan for this hospital-based home health agency.

Cheryl is deeply committed to advocating for the home care industry and the individuals it serves. She believes that it is vital for leaders in home care to not only ensure access to care but also maintain high standards of quality for the services provided.

**Sheila Guither, MSN, RN, CWOCN**, brings 29 years of diverse experience in the Home Care industry, spanning clinical and leadership roles. She currently serves as the Clinical Practice Manager for OSF Home Care, where she combines her expertise in patient care and organizational leadership. Sheila holds a Master’s Degree in Nursing Education from OSF Saint Francis College of Nursing in Peoria, IL, a BSN from Mennonite College of Nursing in Bloomington, IL, and a certification as a Wound, Ostomy, and Continence Nurse from Emory University in Atlanta, GA. Sheila is the current President of the Board of Directors for the Illinois Home Care and Hospice

Council (IHHC) and is committed to equipping Home Care clinicians to deliver safe, compassionate, and high-quality care to their patients.

**Shelly Taylor** graduated from St. John's School of Nursing in 1991. She started with the Cass County Public Health Department in 1996 as a home health nurse. Over the last 30 years she has moved from staff nurse to Home Health Director to Home Health and Hospice Director. Shelly also sits on the IDPH Hospice and Palliative Care Advisory Board. She is a member of Home Care Across Illinois and is on the Education Committee for IHHC.

### **TH03 – Are You Ready for Your Next Survey? Preparing for Success in Home Health & Hospice**

**Time:** 8:30-9:30 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice

**Speakers:** Alisha Morrison, *ACHC*; Siji Varghese, *Illinois Department of Public Health*

#### **Description:**

Survey readiness is not a one-time event—it's an ongoing process. With increasing regulatory expectations and evolving state and accreditation requirements, home health and hospice providers must stay informed and proactive.

Join Siji Varghese from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) as she reviews the most common survey deficiencies identified in home health and hospice agencies. She will also highlight new initiatives and regulatory updates from IDPH that providers need to understand to remain compliant.

In addition, Alisha Morrison from Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) will share practical guidance on how to prepare for a home health or hospice survey. Attendees will learn what surveyors look for, how to organize documentation, how to conduct internal readiness reviews, and strategies to ensure staff confidence and compliance.

This session will provide actionable insights, regulatory clarity, and preparation tools to help agencies approach their next survey with confidence.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Identify the most common deficiencies cited during home health and hospice surveys.
2. Describe new initiatives and regulatory updates from IDPH impacting providers.
3. Explain key components of effective survey preparation for home health and hospice agencies.
4. Outline the essential documentation required during a survey.
5. Implement practical strategies to improve ongoing survey readiness and compliance.

#### **Bios:**

**Alisha Morrison** is a seasoned healthcare professional with more than 13 years of experience working across multiple facets of the healthcare industry. As a Business Development Manager at ACHC, she partners with home health, hospice, and other healthcare organizations to support accreditation readiness, regulatory compliance, and performance improvement initiatives.

Alisha brings extensive expertise in sales, relationship management, process improvement, team building, public speaking, organizational leadership, and management. Her collaborative approach and deep understanding of healthcare operations enable her to guide organizations through complex accreditation processes while fostering strong, long-term partnerships.

She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Healthcare Management from **Robert Morris University** and is Yellow Belt certified in Lean Six Sigma, with training in Robust Process Improvement. Alisha is passionate about helping healthcare providers strengthen systems, enhance quality outcomes, and achieve survey success with confidence.

**Dr. Siji Varghese** is a Registered Nurse with extensive clinical and leadership experience spanning both India and the United States. Throughout her career, she has worked across multiple specialties, bringing expertise in bedside care, case management, healthcare administration, and nursing education.

In her role as OASIS Education Coordinator at IDPH, Dr. Varghese provides guidance and education to home health providers on OASIS accuracy, regulatory compliance, and quality reporting standards. She is dedicated to strengthening provider knowledge, improving documentation practices, and supporting agencies in meeting state and federal requirements.

Dr. Varghese earned her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nursing Education from **Capella University**, where she received the President's Award. She also holds a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) in Health Systems Management and Nursing Informatics from **Loyola University Chicago**, and was active in Kappa Nu.

### **TH11 – When Education Isn't Working: Breaking the Cycle of OASIS Corrections**

**Time:** 10:00-11:15 AM

**Audience:** HH, Therapy

**Speakers:** Cindy Krafft PT, MS, HCS-O and Sherry Teague MESS, ATC, PTA, HCS-D, HCS-O, *K&K Health Care Solutions*; Dr. Tonya Miller, PT, DPT, PhD, *TYM Coaching*

**Description:**

OASIS corrections represent a significant cost of both time and dime to home health agencies and a source of frustration for clinicians and reviewers. Education is a key component of OASIS accuracy but there is a point where it is not having the intended impact. This session will discuss

leadership strategies for managing the correction process, the impact of emerging technologies on OASIS data collection accuracy, and strategies for decreasing the burden of the correction process.

**Objectives:**

1. Define the leadership skills that directly influence the OASIS review process
2. Explore technology being used for OASIS data collection and weigh benefits and risks
3. Identify strategies for decreasing the burden of OASIS corrections

**Bio:**

**Cindy Krafft PT, MS, HCS-O** is an owner of K&K Health Care Solutions based in Florida. She brings 30 years of home health expertise that ranges from direct patient care to operational / management issues as well as a passion for understanding regulations. Years spent in the direct patient environment solidified that this was the optimal setting for the provision of effective and efficient interdisciplinary care as it focuses on functionality and patient centered care delivery. Recognition that the providing care in the home environment presents both unique opportunities and challenges is clearly evident in both training and consultation activities.

For the past nearly 20 years, Cindy has been a nationally recognized educator in the areas of documentation, regulation, therapy utilization and OASIS. She has and currently serves on multiple Technical Expert Panels with CMS Contractors working on clinical and payment reforms and bundled payment care initiatives. Her focus is on providing the knowledge and tools critical to the post-acute continuum of care to operationalize external requirements while keeping the driver of care where it needs to be – the needs of each patient being cared for.

**Sherry Teague MESS, ATC, PTA, HCS-D, HCS-O** is an owner K&K Health Care Solutions. Sherry brings a wealth of operational expertise as a previous owner of a home health agency for 10 years. As a credentialed ICD-10 coder, Sherry oversees the quality of our outsourced coding services. She spearheads our newsletter, YouTube Channel, and podcasts as she is passionate about sharing information in as many ways as possible. Sherry is dedicated to taking the pain out of continuing education for health care clinicians and administration by leveraging technology and meeting customer needs.

**Dr. Tonya Miller, PT, DPT, PhD** is the owner of TYM Coaching. Tonya Miller is an internationally recognized speaker and the visionary founder of TYM Coaching. With a PhD in Leadership Studies and decades of executive leadership experience, she masterfully blends practical know-how with academic insight. Whether coaching front-line teams, mentoring students, or guiding executives through strategic planning, Tonya designs customized professional development programs that empower individuals and organizations. A passion for personal growth, integrity, accountability, and self-awareness drives her work.

Throughout her dynamic career as a healthcare executive, academic leader, researcher, and author, Tonya has coached healthcare professionals, students, and small business owners, always focusing on cultivating robust leadership qualities.

## **TH12 – Workforce Insights: Generational Motivators in Healthcare at Home**

**Time:** 10:00-11:15 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speakers:** Cindy Campbell, MHA-Healthcare Informatics, BSN, RN, COQS, CHHCM & Katherine Morrison, RN, MSN, CHPN, *WellSky*

### **Description:**

WellSky and global research firm, The Center for Generational Kinetics, have released a new landmark report on today's healthcare workforce — what motivates workers and how organizations can attract and retain top talent. Based on a 2025 nationwide survey of 1,200 workers, the report uncovers surprising truths about compensation, culture, career expectations, and the role of technology in combating burnout. This session will review key findings of this report and reveal how healthcare organizations across the care continuum can better attract, engage, and empower a sustainable workforce. By understanding what truly motivates your teams, you can take actionable steps to build loyalty, boost recruitment, and ensure long-term success at your organization and for those you serve.

### **Objectives:**

1. Identify underlying generational behavioral drivers which impact performance in healthcare at home
2. Discuss integration of motivational steps, by generational group, which boost clinician retention
3. Explain how the use of artificial intelligence can help burnout reduction across generational groups

### **Bios:**

**Cindy Campbell** is a nationally recognized home health leader and management consultant. She supports home health providers across the country, guiding them toward best practice structure, clinical modeling, and revenue cycle process efficiencies. She is a passionate advocate for shifting advanced levels of care to the home – the least restrictive setting, with the lowest cost, that yields the greatest patient satisfaction. Cindy's focus is grounded in patient experience and outcomes, with an emphasis on integrating and leveraging innovative technology into advancing clinical models to better manage patients where they live.

**Katherine Morrison** is the Director of Hospice Consulting Operations for WellSky, is an RN and holds a Master of Science in Nursing with a major in Nursing Informatics and a focus on Homeland Security. She has served in advancing levels of hospice leadership within large, multi-site health systems both in the Midwest and on the eastern seaboard and has extensive expertise in regulatory, compliance, and operational issues. As the subject matter expert for WellSky, Ms. Morrison monitors the changing economic and regulatory changes that impact all areas of hospice. She is a passionate advocate for patients and providers of palliative care and hospice. Ms. Morrison holds a

certificate in hospice compliance from the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and is a Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse (CHPN) and an End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) trainer.

### **TH13 – Section 125 Plan - How to Increase Employee Pay and Save Agency Money**

**Time:** 10:00-11:15 AM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Private Duty, Therapy

**Speaker:** Deely Varble, *Fueled Growth Partners*

#### **Description:**

This Fueled Growth Partners education session explains how Section 125 plans can help employees take home more of their paycheck while helping employers reduce payroll taxes. These plans allow certain benefits - like health insurance premiums and flexible spending accounts - to be paid with pre-tax dollars, creating savings on both sides.

We'll break down how these plans work in simple terms, what options are available, and what steps are needed to set them up correctly. The session will also cover basic IRS rules, required paperwork, and easy ways to help employees understand and use their benefits wisely.

If you're looking for practical ways to offer stronger benefits, control costs, and improve employee satisfaction, this session will give you clear, actionable guidance.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Understand how Section 125 plans save money.
2. Recognize the different benefit options available.
3. Identify the basic rules and documents required.
4. Communicate plan details clearly to employees.
5. Take practical steps to implement or improve a Section 125 plan.

#### **Bio:**

**Deely Varble** is an executive at Fueled Growth Partners, where he works alongside an innovative team focused on transforming employee health and well-being through cost-effective insurance solutions. He specializes in helping organizations implement supplemental health and wellness programs that enhance access to preventive care while reducing overall healthcare costs—without adding financial burden to employers or employees.

Through FGP's fully funded, fully insured programs, Deely supports businesses in creating healthier, more engaged workforces while delivering tangible benefits such as payroll tax savings, improved employee retention, and increased take-home pay for participating team members. His work

centers on building win-win solutions that strengthen workplace culture by addressing both the physical and financial health of employees.

Deely is passionate about helping organizations attract and retain top talent while fostering environments where employees can thrive, making him a trusted partner in workforce wellness and organizational growth.

#### **TH14 – Becoming a Hospice of Excellence in an Era of Heightened Scrutiny**

**Time:** 10:00-11:15 AM

**Audience:** Hospice

**Speaker:** Lindsay Doak, *Netsmart*

#### **Description:**

Hospice providers are facing increased scrutiny as federal and state fraud investigations intensify across the industry. In this environment, it is no longer enough to simply meet minimum requirements—hospices must proactively implement best practices that ensure regulatory compliance, clinical integrity, and high-quality patient care.

This session will explore the current enforcement landscape and discuss practical clinical and operational strategies hospices can use to strengthen compliance, reduce risk, and demonstrate excellence. Participants will learn how to align care delivery, understand operational metrics, and maintain growth while continuing to deliver compassionate, patient-centered care. The discussion will focus on what it truly means to operate as a Hospice of Excellence—and how to position your organization to thrive under increased oversight.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Describe the current hospice enforcement and oversight landscape, including areas of heightened scrutiny related to fraud investigations.
2. Identify key clinical and operational best practices that support regulatory compliance while ensuring high-quality, patient-centered hospice care.

#### **Bio:**

**Lindsay Doak** is a healthcare data and strategy leader with deep expertise in analytics, research, and performance improvement across the post-acute care continuum. As Vice President of Data and Research at Netsmart, she leads initiatives focused on advancing data-driven insights that support home health, hospice, and other healthcare providers in improving quality, efficiency, and outcomes.

Prior to joining Netsmart, Lindsay served at **BerryDunn**, where she led and managed the National Healthcare at Home Best Practices Study. She also oversaw BerryDunn's Data Analytics Portal, as well as the firm's Online Learning and Consulting Division. In these roles, she partnered with

healthcare organizations nationwide to translate complex data into actionable strategies for operational and clinical excellence.

Lindsay is passionate about helping providers leverage meaningful data to drive informed decision-making, strengthen performance, and navigate the evolving healthcare landscape.

## **TH21 – 2026 VBP Measures-Determining and Monitoring What Measures Matter**

**Time:** 11:30 AM -12:45 PM

**Audience:** HH, Therapy

**Speaker:** J’non Griffin RN MHA, HCS-D, HCS-O, HCS-H, HCS-C, COS-C, *SimiTree*

### **Description:**

The Home Health Value-Based Purchasing (HHVBP) model continues to evolve, with significant changes impacting reimbursement and quality performance beginning in 2026. In this comprehensive and interactive session, participants will gain a deep understanding of how to interpret, audit, and improve the key measures that matter most under HHVBP.

Led by industry expert J’non Griffin, this session will guide attendees through an in-depth review of the proposed 2026 measure changes, including the addition of M1800 ADL items, the MSPB-PAC efficiency metric, and the revised HHCAHPS survey. Using real-world audit methodologies and documentation validation steps, participants will learn how to improve accuracy, consistency, and outcomes across the OASIS functional items (M1810–M1830, M1400, M2020, GG items) and claims-based measures (Discharge to Community, Potentially Preventable Hospitalizations, MSPB-PAC).

By the end of the session, participants will be equipped to implement targeted performance improvement initiatives that enhance patient outcomes, prevent rehospitalizations, and maximize reimbursement under HHVBP.

### **Objectives:**

1. Explain current HHVBP measures and their impact on agency reimbursement.
2. Apply effective audit techniques to ensure OASIS accuracy and measure integrity.
3. Identify common documentation errors that negatively affect quality outcomes.
4. Interpret performance data to drive interdisciplinary quality improvement.
5. Utilize new 2026 audit and education strategies to improve HHVBP results and compliance.

### **Bio:**

**J'non Griffin**, RN, MHA, HCS-D, HCS-C, HCS-H, COS-C, is a 34-year veteran of home care as a registered nurse. She received her Master's degree in Health Care Administration in 2005. She has experience as a field nurse, director, and executive with home health and hospice agencies, both large and small. She has served as Director of Staff Development and Appeals for home health and hospice agencies. She has taken part in mock surveys for agencies and prepared agencies for accreditation. She has been directly involved in accreditation surveys, acquisitions, and many regulatory crises with state survey agencies and the intermediary.

### **TH22 – Maintenance Therapy: Is Your Agency Providing What the Patient Needs?**

**Time:** 11:30 AM -12:45 PM

**Audience:** HH, Therapy

**Speaker:** Cindy Krafft PT, MS, HCS-O, *K&K Health Care Solutions*

#### **Description:**

Implementation of PDGM followed by the pandemic dramatically changed how therapy services are provided in home health. Utilization has not rebounded significantly, and CMS has noticed - using this as one of the driving factors behind the need for "behavioral adjustments". Pre PDGM utilization was impacted by payment thresholds and may have a bit more than what patients really needed but now the pendulum has swung too far the other way. This session will examine the scope of what therapy can do in the home and focus on utilization that matches the needs of the patients we serve with a particular focus on a maintenance approach to care.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Examine therapy utilization shifts and the impact on payment methodology
2. Explore what maintenance therapy is and is not
3. Establish key considerations for therapy referrals and care planning

#### **Bio:**

**Cindy Krafft PT, MS, HCS-O** is an owner of K&K Health Care Solutions based in Florida. She brings 30 years of home health expertise that ranges from direct patient care to operational / management issues as well as a passion for understanding regulations. Years spent in the direct patient environment solidified that this was the optimal setting for the provision of effective and efficient interdisciplinary care as it focuses on functionality and patient centered care delivery. Recognition that the providing care in the home environment presents both unique opportunities and challenges is clearly evident in both training and consultation activities.

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Technical Expert Panels with CMS Contractors working on clinical and payment reforms and bundled payment care initiatives. Her focus is on providing the knowledge and tools critical to the post-acute continuum of care to operationalize external requirements while keeping the driver of care where it needs to be – the needs of each patient being cared for.

### **TH23 – Beyond the Buzz: Technology-Powered SOC Workflows That Improve Everything Downstream**

**Time:** 11:30 AM -12:45 PM

**Audience:** HH, Hospice, Therapy

**Speaker:** Mike Carr, PT, Axxess

#### **Description:**

The start-of-care (SOC) visit sets the clinical, operational, and financial foundation for every home health episode. Under PDGM and VBP, the accuracy, timeliness, and completeness of SOC documentation have direct consequences on outcomes, reimbursement, and overall patient success. This session explores how agencies can optimize their SOC workflows using practical strategies, streamlined processes, and emerging technologies — including real-world applications of AI. Attendees will learn how technology can support clinicians during the assessment, reduce documentation burden, surface risk factors earlier, improve OASIS accuracy, and automatically trigger operational follow-up tasks. The session highlights actionable, high-impact practices that nurse leaders, clinical managers, and quality teams can implement immediately.

Participants will leave with a clear understanding of how to transform the SOC from a high-stress encounter into a predictable, standardized, and coordinated process that improves efficiency, strengthens quality, and drives measurable results.

#### **Objectives:**

1. Describe how the SOC visit influences PDGM reimbursement, VBP outcomes, LUPA risk, and episode success — and why consistent SOC performance is essential for operational efficiency.
2. Identify the most common SOC breakdowns that lead to documentation delays, incomplete assessments, care plan gaps, and missed high-risk indicators.
3. Explain how technology and AI can support clinicians during the SOC by guiding assessments, improving OASIS accuracy, identifying risk factors, drafting care plans, and reducing documentation burden.
4. Apply a model SOC workflow that integrates standardized checklists, risk scoring, and automated tasking to improve coordination between nursing, therapy, scheduling, and quality teams.

5. Implement at least three immediate changes within their agencies — such as structured SOC templates, early risk identification, and improved communication pathways — that strengthen SOC quality and operational performance.

**Bio:**

**Mike Carr** is the Senior Director of Training and Education for our Axxess e-learning product. His clinical expertise and industry knowledge has been critical to the development and implementation of the Axxess Training and Certification program. Mike has been intimately involved in the program's design, development, and creation and now oversees an international team of content developers, engineers and support personnel.

Mike joined Axxess in 2018 through the acquisition of Home Health Gold. Mike had worked directly for Home Health Gold for more than a decade where he served in a variety of roles. Mike's background as a physical therapist was instrumental to the development of many of the Home Health Gold and Axxess analytics related to functional scoring, therapy thresholds, PDGM, VBP and episode management.

**TH24 – MCO Policy and FIDE-SNP Transition**

**Time:** 11:30 AM -12:45 PM

**Audience:** HH, Medicaid HCBS

**Speaker:** Jill Hayden, *IAMHP*

**Description:**

Managed care policies and program transitions can significantly impact provider operations and patient care. In this session, Jill Hayden from the Illinois Association of Medicaid Health Plans (IAMHP) will provide an overview of Managed Care Organization (MCO) policy and offer practical guidance on how providers can effectively communicate and collaborate with MCOs.

The discussion will include best practices for reaching the right contacts within MCOs, resolving policy or claims issues, and building productive working relationships. Jill will also review the transition from the Medicare-Medicaid Alignment Initiative (MMAI) to the Fully Integrated Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (FIDE-SNP) model, explaining what the change means for providers, reimbursement, and care coordination.

This session will help providers better understand managed care expectations and prepare for ongoing changes within Illinois' Medicaid and Medicare integration landscape.

**Objectives:**

- Describe the role of MCOs and how policy decisions impact providers.
- Identify effective strategies for communicating with and resolving issues through MCOs.
- Explain the key differences between MMAI and the FIDE-SNP model.

- Recognize how the transition affects provider processes, billing, and care coordination.
- Apply practical steps to navigate managed care changes more confidently and efficiently.

**Bio:**

**Jill Hayden** has spent most of her career in health policy, government affairs, and Medicaid managed care. Before joining IAMHP, she was a consultant for both Sellers Dorsey, a national Medicaid consulting firm as well as her own Illinois based company, the Medicaid Policy Network, where she provided technical expertise to various stakeholders with an interest in Medicaid policy and innovative approaches to meeting health related social needs.

Previously, Jill served in a number of Government Affairs and Public Policy roles with several Medicaid health plans, including Meridian Health Plan in Illinois, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois and Cigna HealthSpring. She also worked in various roles in state government and served as Vice President of Governmental Affairs for the Illinois Primary Health Care Association.

Jill earned her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Southern Illinois University and her Master's Degree in Human Resources and Industrial Relations from the University of Illinois.