National Nursing Home Week
May 11-17, 2014

“Living the Aloha Spirit”

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National Nursing Home Week is a special time of the year for all Activity Directors working in Long Term Care geriatric settings. It’s a time of the year to not only recognize the beauty of each resident individually but also the staff that passionately care for your residents every day. The theme for 2014 from the American Health Care Association is “Living the Aloha Spirit”. www.ahcancal.org  When we hear the word “Aloha” what comes to mind? Hawaii! What do we know about Hawaii:

- Hawaii is the only U.S. State made up entirely of islands
- Honolulu is the capital
- Hawaii was granted statehood on August 21, 1959
- The state fish is the Reef Triggerfish
- The state flower is the Hawaiian Hibiscus
Points of interest in Hawaii include: Pearl Harbor, volcanos, Diamond Head, USS Arizona memorial, Polynesian Cultural Center

Aloha in Hawaiian language means affection, peace, compassion and mercy; used in the English language as greetings for “hello” and “goodbye”

Hawaii has 750 miles of beach

Hawaii is known for growing various essential foods including; pineapples, sugar cane, macadamia nuts, coffee, papayas, bananas, and ginger root

Facts from www.wikipedia.com

So the true meaning of “Living the Aloha Spirit” with affection, peace, compassion and mercy are methods in which nursing home care providers are very familiar with and should be recognized for their outstanding service during this week. With some basic knowledge of Hawaii and endless possibilities to make your National Nursing Home Week a great success, here are some ideas to think about:

For Residents & Staff

Luau – Plan a Luau for your residents and staff to enjoy together. Contact Hawaiian dancers to perform during your Luau if available, if not have Hawaiian island music. Have a Hula contest with staff and residents for interaction and laughter. Food and beverage options:

✓ Pineapple Juice
✓ Hawaiian Chicken Kabobs
✓ Coconut Cake
✓ Coconut Ice Cream
✓ Coffee

Theme Days – Market and encourage participation in a special theme for each day of the week Monday – Friday that correlates to the national theme:

✓ Monday – Living the Aloha Spirit with a Smile
✓ Tuesday – Living the Aloha Spirit today by preforming a random act of kindness
✓ Wednesday – Living the Aloha Spirit through having one-on-one quality time with a resident today
✓ Thursday – Living the Aloha Spirit through assisting a resident to an activity program today
✓ Friday – Living the Aloha Spirit by greeting everyone I see today with “Aloha”

“How Well Do You KNOW Your Residents” Gameshow – Survey your residents on a variety of questions relating to your facility and other fun facts. This is similar to the popular “Family Fued” gameshow. Once the activity staff have surveyed all of the residents that are able to participate, the activity staff will compile the answers from each question into the top 5 answers.
At the beginning of NNHW post team sign-ups for the facility staff (nursing, C.N.A’s, housekeepers, dietary staff, maintenance, and ancillary staff) so that they can form teams, maximum 4 teams to compete. To begin you have 2 teams go head to head, the winner of the rounds go on to face each other for the grand winner. This game is fun and interactive for the residents and the staff. All you will really need for this event is the survey answers, teams of staff and a whiteboard.

Sample survey questions:

- What did the residents say is their favorite activity program
- What did the residents say is their favorite meal served from the kitchen
- What did residents say is their favorite “spot” to hang out in the facility
- What did residents say is their favorite TV show

For the winning team prize:

- Medals
- Certificates that state “I KNOW my Residents”

**BBQ** – Plan a BBQ for residents and staff that include some traditional foods:

Suggestions:

- Grilled Chicken
- Grilled Pineapple
- Assorted fruit and green salads
- Macadamia nut cookies

**Balloon Lift Off** – Nothing says celebration than a TON of balloons. To kick off your NNHW week staff can prepare a large amount of balloons. On the morning of the 1st day of NNHW have residents and staff all go to a safe area outside of your facility. With each resident and staff member holding a balloon make the officially announcement that NNHW 2014 has arrived “Living the Aloha Spirit” will be the theme for the week and on the count of 1…2….3….RELEASE! It’s great to follow up this activity with donuts and coffee.

*Fun Tip* – prior to blowing up your balloons insert a little note into each balloon stating: *The residents at [your facility name] are celebrating National Nursing Home Week 2014, if you’ve found this balloon please send a greeting to us [provide facility address]. Thank you, the Staff and Residents of [your facility name]*

**Exceptional People Craft** – Have residents and staff come and make their handprints on paper for you to display. Use various colors of paint and have sharpies or markers on hand for each participant to autograph their handprint. Attached is a sample form to use for this craft.
Leis – Leis are a staple when we think of Hawaii! Have Leis available to be worn by all staff and residents each day or during NNHW activities. This reminder helps everyone get into the “Spirit”!

Suggestions:

✓ Use real flowers to make homemade Leis with residents and staff

**For Residents**

**Movie Theme Nights** – To wind things down in the evening after eventful days offer movies that relate to the theme of the week.

**Tiki Time** – Design a small cart with coconuts, mini tiki’s, shells, etc. as a “Tiki Time” juice cart. The cart can go out once a day room to room and person to person with activity staff offering beverages.

Suggestions:

✓ Pineapple juice
✓ Coconut water
✓ Sweet or regular tea
✓ Coffee
✓ Mango juice

**Snapshots of Life** – Provide disposable cameras to residents during NNHW activities. Show them and encourage them to take photos throughout the program. At the end of NNHW have all of your cameras developed and use the photos as a reminiscing activity or make photo boards to display in the activity room of your residents “snapshots of life” during a special time in your facility.

**Coconut Hunt** – Using a real coconut or a large picture of a coconut inform your residents that each day of NNHW a coconut will be hidden somewhere within the facility. Residents should be on the lookout. Whoever finds the coconut each day receives a prize. This is also a good activity that staff can assist with. Coconuts should only be hidden in common areas and at wheelchair eye-level.

**Vacation to Hawaii** – This type of activity would include a lot of pre-planning, approval, time and possible budget expenses. There are various ways to provide this activity from the comfort of the facility.

✓ Design your activity room to look like the interior of a cruise ship with port holes that have a tropical view/have a list of ports of call along with facts about various Hawaiian destinations for each day would be a new port
✔ Show travel documentaries of Hawaii scenery – in conjunction with themed activity room
✔ Design your activity room to look like the sandy beaches of Hawaii (sea shells, inflatable palm trees, etc.
✔ Hawaiian cooking – in conjunction with themed activity room

**Resident Appreciation Party** – With invitations, cordially invite your residents and their family to attend a resident appreciation party hosted by the facility.

Suggestions:

✔ Food – fruit platters, kabobs
✔ Beverages – tropical juices, tea, coffee
✔ Have raffles during the party to keep everyone involved
✔ Activity staff provide a welcome and appreciation speech to attendees explaining the importance of NNHW

**Spirit Flag** – As all states the “Aloha State” has a state flag. Discuss the Hawaiian flag with residents and some basic facts that make Hawaii what it is today. Instruct residents that they are going to make a flag that represents them, their life and spirit. Provide needed craft items such as: paint, markers, paper or card stock. This is a great activity to provide freedom of expression through art.

Hawaii Flag

**Aloha Glamour Shots** – Photo shoots are great! Design an area in your facility that provides a beach/tropical background. Assist residents with preparing for the shoot with hair and make-up,
hats, leis, etc. This activity would be better for the beginning of the week so that the residents can have their photos during NNHW.

**Aloha Bingo** – There are a couple different ways you can do this activity.

**For Staff**

**Staff Appreciation Party** – With invitations cordially invite your residents, staff and their family to attend a resident appreciation party hosted by the facility.

Suggestions:

- Food – fruit platters, kabobs
- Beverages – tropical juices, tea, coffee
- Have raffles during the party to keep everyone involved
- Activity staff provide a welcome and appreciation speech to attendees explaining the importance of NNHW

**Aloha Daily Raffle** – Host special daily staff raffles for gift certificates, gift basket, coupon for facility meal, coupon for extra time off for one lunch break, etc.

Suggestions:

- Daily raffle tickets are given to all facility staff on duty
- Additional tickets are given throughout the day to staff for their participation in NNHW events and when they bring a resident to a NNHW event
- Theme the gifts/prizes with the week’s theme

**Staff Olympic Games** – Any preferred various games can be included in the staff Olympics to make it fun for the staff and the resident audience.

Suggestions:

- Wheelchair races
- Speed bed making
- Wii games
- Cracker whistle
- Cake walk
- Egg pass
- Balloon volleyball
- Let’s make a deal
- Any group activity games are great for this event
Thank you Scavenger Hunt – Prior to NNHW have an activity where residents write thank you cards to staff (general/not a specific person). Hide the cards in special places throughout the facility and provide clues for the staff to go on a search for the “Thank You’s”.

Aloha Potluck – Host and organize a facility employee potluck during NNHW.

Who am I – Several weeks leading up to NNHW send out a mass memo to all employees to submit a copy of a baby picture to the activity department. The activity staff will keep track of everyone’s photos with their name. In a common area in your facility during NNHW post all of the baby photos with an attached “Who Am I” sheet of paper where people can guess who the baby is. This is a fun interactive activity for all to participate in, enjoy looking at, and reminisce.

Outreach Programs

National Nursing Home Week is a great way to market your facility and have community involvement and positive exposure. Some suggestions for programs include but aren’t limited to:

- Community Luau
- Open House
- Meet and Greet (hosted by staff and resident council officers)
- Newspaper and other media marketing/articles/features
- NNHW event sponsors

National Nursing Home Week is a week that Activity Professionals can not only market their department but also the extraordinary creative programming that they offer. Enjoy National Nursing Home Week 2014!

Come celebrate: “Hele mei hoohiwahiwa” National Nursing Home Week in Aloha style!

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