



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact

Karen Linden

klinden@connect2amc.com

847.375.4722

**Association of Rehabilitation Nurses
Responds to Office of Inspector General’s Report: Adverse Events in
Rehabilitation Hospitals: National Incidence Among Medicare Beneficiaries**

CHICAGO (July 22, 2016): Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN) represents more than 5,400 rehabilitation nurses and more than 13,000 Certified Registered Rehabilitation Nurses (CRRN) who work to enhance the quality of life for those affected by physical disability and/or chronic illness.

Rehabilitation nurses practice in all post-acute care (PAC) settings, including freestanding inpatient rehabilitation facilities (IRFs), hospitals, long-term subacute care facilities/skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), long-term acute care facilities, comprehensive outpatient rehabilitation facilities (CORFs), home health agencies (HHAs), and private practices.

ARN President Cheryl Lehman, PhD RN CNS-BS RN-BC CRRN, offers the following in response to the Office of Inspector General’s recent report, “Adverse Events in Rehabilitation Hospitals: National Incidence Among Medicare Beneficiaries.”

“The overall issue that needs to be addressed is that the rate of adverse events is occurring at similar rates across the PAC continuum and in all healthcare settings. We know that every year, more than 10 million Medicare beneficiaries are admitted to a PAC setting. These beneficiaries are some of the frailest and most vulnerable individuals who are living longer in their disease trajectories. In addition, patients admitted for rehabilitation care are leaving hospitals sooner and many are not medically stable and require more intensive needs. Transitions in care leave these patients even more vulnerable.

This increased utilization of PAC settings has made care coordination a critical component of favorable patient-centered outcomes, but unfortunately the current case management model has failed to promote the consistent utilization of clinicians skilled in advocating on behalf of the best interests of patients and their families. Our philosophy is such that rehabilitation is a team approach with the patient at the center of the team.”

To reduce the incidence of adverse events across the PAC continuum, ARN makes the following recommendations:

- Integrate a competency-based requirement to ensure nursing staff have the competencies, skill sets, and appropriate licensure necessary to provide nursing and related services to patients.
- Require meaningful and useful Quality Measures.
- Improve communication between settings during patient “hand-offs” so that information about any emerging patient issues is effectively documented and shared.
- Implement quality improvement endeavors to support staffing as it relates to positive patient outcomes, functional improvement, patient satisfaction, nurse satisfaction, and prevention of patient readmission.

ARN continues to follow this important issue and is actively working with the rehabilitation community and other stakeholders to decrease the incidence of adverse events.

###

Association of Rehabilitation Nurses (ARN)

ARN is a professional healthcare association dedicated to promoting and advancing professional rehabilitation nursing practice through education, advocacy, collaboration, and research to enhance the quality of life for those affected by disability and chronic illness. For more information about ARN, please visit www.rehabnurse.org or call 800.229.7530.