Greetings,

The Center for Excellence in Assisted Living had a busy 2016. We not only saw several projects started in 2015 come to fruition, but CEAL also undertook a number of significant activities designed to take our organization to the next level. At the heart of this activity was a comprehensive strategic planning process carried out throughout the year. Once the CEAL board had decided to undertake this process, we were able to hire a new Executive Director, Mr. Randall G. Slikkers, MBA, with over three decades of experience in developing strategic, operational and public policy in the non-profit sector. Randy helped facilitate the process resulting in a strong plan for the future of CEAL.

We were excited to welcome two new organizations into CEAL. The addition of the National Association of States United for Aging and Disability (NASUAD) and The Society of Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine (AMDA), makes the CEAL board stronger and more diverse as it moves towards the future. Both Martha Roherty, Executive Director of NASUAD, and Christopher F. Laxton, Executive Director of AMDA, bring such a wealth of knowledge and passion. They have already had a significant impact on our organization, and we look forward to the expertise they will bring going forward.

CEAL continued to engage in important research for our profession, including: releasing the report Measures and Instruments for Quality Improvement in Assisted Living, serving as advisors on an NIH study on antipsychotic use in assisted living, and working with RTI on a project examining the impact of minimum wage increase on assisted living. CEAL submitted two requested reports to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on the Home and Community-Based Services Final Rule. Finally, CEAL focused on strengthening the operation infrastructure to better support CEAL’s mission and vision. This work included revamping of the CEAL website and reformatting of the CEAL Advisory Council, a vital part of CEAL.

Lastly, it has been a great honor to serve as the first female Chair of this exceptionally talented Board of Directors, as this profession uniquely impacts women as the majority of caregivers and residents are female. I am grateful to the Executive Committee, Executive Director, and the past chairs who have been inspiring and supportive through their leadership. With the passion and expertise of our Board of Directors and Advisory Council, I am confident that CEAL will continue to make significant contributions to the assisted living field.

Sincerely,

Lindsay B. Schwartz, Ph.D.
Board Chair, Center for Excellence in Assisted Living
Senior Director, Workforce & Quality Improvement
National Center for Assisted Living
VISION

Assisted living communities that support a high quality of life for all individuals and their right to age with respect and dignity.

MISSION

CEAL is a national coalition of diverse stakeholder organizations dedicated to advance programs, policies, advocacy and research to ensure high quality person-centered care for all residents.

PRIMARY GOALS

- **PRACTICE:** CEAL will serve as an objective national center to disseminate current resources covering a wide array of information including research reports, training materials, consumer information, case studies, consensus documents and more to foster and promote quality improvement.

- **RESEARCH:** CEAL will promote research in gap areas affecting assisted living.

- **PUBLIC POLICY:** CEAL will advocate and provide a forum to discuss issues affecting assisted living.

- **TECHNICAL EXPERTISE:** CEAL will provide technical expertise about assisted living to help inform research projects and national initiatives. CEAL will promote the highest level of quality and excellence in assisted living.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CEAL supports assisted living communities that:

- Are licensed and operate in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Are person-centered, consumer driven and actively engaged with the community at large.
- Foster the professionalism of their workforce through education, training, sharing of best practices, as well as providing competitive wages and benefits that reflect the local market area.
- Provide access to high quality assisted living for all individuals, regardless of income.
- Operate in a responsible, ethical, and professional manner.
CEAL is a non-profit collaborative of 11 national organizations representing a unique balance of key stakeholders in assisted living including: consumer advocacy organizations; assisted living provider organizations; and other stakeholders in the AL community. A member from each organization comprises the 11-member volunteer Board of Directors.

The Center for Excellence in Assisted Living (CEAL) was created as an outgrowth of a national initiative known as the Assisted Living Workgroup (ALW). The ALW was formed at the request of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging in 2001. Nearly 50 organizations representing a broad range of stakeholders came together over the course of 18 months to develop consensus recommendations to assure quality in assisted living. The ALW Report included 110 recommendations that were presented to the Senate Special Committee on Aging at a hearing in April 2003.

The first ALW recommendation was to form and fund an entity to continue the work of the ALW and to serve as an ongoing information clearinghouse. The recommendation further stipulated that the entity should include a governing board comprised of diverse key stakeholders. Eleven of the key stakeholder organizations involved in the ALW formalized this recommendation to create CEAL. CEAL was incorporated in the District of Columbia in November 2004 and subsequently granted 501(c)(3) status by the IRS.

CEAL promotes high-quality assisted living in a variety of ways. Serving as a convener, CEAL brings together diverse stakeholders and thought leaders to examine issues related to assisted living. CEAL also helps to bridge research, practice and policy gaps that foster quality and affordability, and maintains an objective national center of information and resources about assisted living.
2016

IN REVIEW

Research:

**Measures and Instruments for Quality Improvement in Assisted Living** - CEAL contracted with the University of North Carolina to conduct a comprehensive environmental scan of the array of quality tools that are currently available to the AL community. The report was delivered in 2016 and contains a vast amount of information. CEAL is now working with UNC to distill this information into an easy to use toolkit. [Click here to access the report](#).

**What Increases in the Minimum Wage Would Mean for the Assisted Living Community** - CEAL is working with RTI International to conduct research to analyze the potential impact of increases in the minimum wage on assisted living communities. The report is expected in 2017.

**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services:** CEAL provided two reports (February 2016’s report; June 2016’s report) to CMS on the HCBS Final Rule. By providing CMS with feedback from a broad group of AL stakeholders, CEAL was able to provide valuable guidance to this process.

**Strategic Planning:** CEAL undertook an extensive strategic planning process during 2016. All aspects of the organization were reviewed with the mindset to ensure that they were in accordance with the current needs of the AL community. Our focus continues to be:

- **Practice** - Serving as an objective national center to disseminate current resources covering a wide array of information including research reports, training materials, consumer information, case studies, consensus documents and more to foster and promote quality improvement.
- **Public Policy** - Providing a forum to discuss issues affecting assisted living
- **Technical Expertise** - Providing technical expertise about assisted living to help inform research projects and national policy initiatives
- **Research** - Promoting research in gaps areas affecting assisted living

**Internal Operational Infrastructure:** With the development of our strategic plan came the need to review the existing CEAL operational infrastructure (fiscal, staff, policies and procedures, marketing, communication, etc.) and ensure we have the capacity to move towards vision and mission achievement. One of the key aspects of this infrastructure was our website. CEAL is proud to have launched our upgraded site, and looks forward to continued development for ease of use by the AL community.
In 2016, CEAL remained fully staffed to continue its commitment to achieving its strategic goals. A new strategic plan was developed and executed, the CEAL website underwent a complete upgrade and redesign, our work continued with the University of North Carolina on the Quality Measures Tool, and we worked with professionals in the AL community to provide invaluable comments and feedback to CMS for the HCBS Final Rule.

In 2016, the majority of our revenue continued to come from annual dues contributed by our member organizations. We saw a decrease in revenue due to two members cycling off our board and two new members joining late in 2016. The dues structure for these organizations was very low due to reflect a partial year. We continue to receive a small percentage of revenue from the sales of the Pocket Medication Guide, which CEAL helped produce and publish, with an updated version expected in early 2017.
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