An Industry Leader and Dear Friend – a Tribute to Dr. Ethel Mitty

In April, we lost a true industry leader and dear friend – Dr. Ethel Mitty, EdD, RN.

Ethel’s enthusiasm, vibrant personality and dedication to the field are just a few of the things we’ll miss about her. More than a visionary industry leader, Ethel was a cherished mentor to so many. During her years of distinguished service, Ethel left an indelible mark on all who knew her. Join us at AALNA in celebrating the life she lived well by honoring her contributions to the nursing and senior living fields.

Her successful career included being Research Associate and Adjunct Clinical Professor of Nursing in the College of Nursing at New York University (NYU), a Consultant in LTC at the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing, College of Nursing, NYU, and 25 years as a Director of Nursing in Long-Term Care.

Ethel wrote a “best seller” on how to “do” nursing leadership and management in nursing homes, and taught bioethics research at the College of Nursing at NYU. Her research projects included the role and opportunity for nurses in culture change initiatives, cross-cultural issues in end-of-life decision making, the use of ritual to transform everyday care into resident-centered care, and development and evaluation of a Bill of Rights for Hospitalized Older Adults. She was published extensively in peer review journals and wrote several book chapters on long-term care, health care decision making, and ethical issues.

Ethel was active on the advisory boards of several state and national associations, the Research and Advisory Boards of the Foundation for Long Term Care, the Center for Excellence in Assisted Living and the American Assisted Living Nurses Association (AALNA).

As an AALNA board member, Ethel developed the association’s definitive statement regarding scope and standards of practice for assisted living nurses, and worked with Barbara Resnick to establish the association’s assisted living nurse certification exam.

In 2007 she received the Distinguished Alumni Award from her alma mater, the Mt. Sinai School of Nursing, New York City.

Ethel’s extraordinary and unique contributions to care for older adults were far reaching and will continue to have an impact on the industry. While saddened by her passing, join us at AALNA in honoring her memory by continuing to provide seniors with the highest level of care, compassion and innovative service.
A “Nightmare” Bacteria

According to a report recently published in the HealthDay News, nearly 200 U.S. hospitals and nursing homes are fighting against a “nightmare” bacteria that is resistant to antibiotics and kills half of those it infects.

The article goes on to report that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 4 percent of U.S. hospitals and 18 percent of nursing homes had treated at least one patient with the bacteria, called Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE). Federal officials believe that the bacteria is a growing threat and that we have to work together to stop the virus from spreading.

To prevent the spread of these bacteria, the CDC suggests the following steps:

• Enforce infection-control precautions.
• Group together patients with CRE.
• Segregate staff, rooms and equipment to patients with CRE.
• Tell facilities when patients with CRE are transferred.
• Use antibiotics carefully.

The pulse of AALNA
Early Assessment Key to Identifying, Managing Wandering & Elopement

(News Source – ECRI News Alert)

Admission assessments should assess new residents’ risk for wandering and elopement as well as the facility’s ability to manage those risks given existing security mechanisms, according to a May 1, 2013, Provider: Long-Term & Post-Acute Care article.

Assessments should look not only for cognitive impairment or dementias such as Alzheimer’s disease but also for psychological factors, the resident’s mobility and ability to communicate, and medication and physiologic history.

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CDC Investigates Outbreak of Pneumococcal Disease in AL

In May 2012, six of the 12 residents of an assisted-living facility and one staff member developed probable pneumococcal disease, reports an article in the March 29, 2013 Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.

The state public health department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) investigated. Two of the residents had confirmed pneumococcal disease; the other four residents and the staff member had probable pneumococcal disease. All seven had been vaccinated. Three of the six residents who became ill died.

The staff member who got sick had responsibilities that required close contact with all residents of the facility. The staff member had the earliest onset of respiratory symptoms and continued to work while symptomatic, raising concerns that he or she might have introduced the infection into the facility. The facility had an employee sick leave policy, but staff members may have been unaware of the policy and its role in infection control, the article states.

The facility did not have a written infection control plan.

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Congratulations to the following professionals for successfully completing the Assisted Living Nurse Specialty certification exam this quarter:

Patricia Banta
Ramona Hendricks
Lisa Laturell

Career Center

Visit our free online Career Center to gain access to the best employers and jobs in the Assisted Living industry. Visit www.alnursing.org/careers.html to get started.

You Passed!
AALNA is lead by a diverse group of volunteer nurses from around the United States.

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AALNA – Not Just a Resource for Individual Nurses

For more than 13 years the AALNA has been a trusted resource for nurses serving seniors. With the goal to maximize and maintain the assisted living resident’s well-being and pursuit of quality of life, AALNA provides nurses with tools, tips and a nationwide network of experts.

Now, AALNA is offering Corporate Memberships to further promote successful nursing practices in assisted living that benefits nurses and residents alike.

To learn more about the various levels of membership, or how we can tailor a program to your organizations needs, call Calvin Groeneweg at 707-253-7299, or email him at calvin@alnursing.org. For general information, click here.

Early Assessment Key (cont.)

Prior wandering or elopement behaviors are significant in assessing the resident’s risk of repeating those behaviors; families may need to be educated about the importance of accurately conveying these past behaviors, particularly since some may hide them for fear that past behaviors may unjustly influence the nursing home’s admission decision.

When residents are found to be at risk for wandering or elopement, the organization should assess whether its security mechanisms and procedures are sufficient to safely manage the resident’s risks; an individualized care plan should address specific steps for combating each resident’s behaviors (e.g., redirecting, providing safe areas for wandering).

Assessment should be repeated whenever the resident’s condition changes, the author notes. In addition, warning behaviors (e.g., shadowing staff or other residents, hovering near exits, expressing boredom or feelings of imprisonment) should trigger further assessment and adjustment of the care plan.

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The American Assisted Living Nurses Association (AALNA) values your ongoing support, and we are committed to providing the best value possible for your membership. AALNA members receive the following benefits:

• **STAY CONNECTED!** As an AALNA member you will have access to a nationwide network of assisted living nurses.

• **MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!** - AALNA is actively involved in the national policy discussion, and provides assisted living representation on numerous national organizations, boards of directors, committees and initiatives.

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• **FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO NCAL FOCUS** Through our partnership with the National Center for Assisted Living (NCAL), AALNA members receive NCAL Focus each month.

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