



ADVANCING EXCELLENCE

IN AMERICA'S NURSING HOMES

TOP 10 IDEAS TO INVOLVE ALL STAFF IN ADVANCING EXCELLENCE

Advancing Excellence Long-Term Care Collaborative (AELTCC) is a not-for-profit organization made up of over 30 national stakeholders involved with nursing homes. Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign (AE) is a national campaign to improve the quality life and care for residents and staff. The participation of nursing homes staff in Advancing Excellence is essential to achieving the Campaign's quality goals.

Successful nursing homes tell us that one of the first steps on their road for excellence is involving and listening to staff. They name their process differently—culture change, person-centered care, Quality First, etc. And, sometimes, they use different guides. But the common element is that staff from all physical parts of the nursing home, all time slots, and all job descriptions and disciplines are actively asked about improving care and quality.

We have gathered some great ideas on how to involve your staff in your nursing home's Advancing Excellence Campaign. We have also posted on the Advancing Excellence Web site (www.nhqualitycampaign.org) more information and details for some of these ideas. We hope that this list helps jump-start and support your efforts for excellence in the lives of the people who live and work in your nursing home.

Top 10 ideas to involve all nursing homes staff in Advancing Excellence:

- 1** How to Distribute Advancing Excellence Campaign Information with Your Employees' Paychecks
- 2 & 3** Communicate Your Campaign Goals and Progress to Staff
- 4** Hold 10-Minute Stand-Up Meetings with Staff
- 5** Top 10 Ideas for an Advancing Excellence Kick-off Event
- 6** How to Form an Advancing Excellence Campaign Committee
- 7** How to Celebrate Your Nursing Home's Advancing Excellence Progress
- 8** How to Create an Advancing Excellence Campaign Recognition Program in Your Nursing Home
- 9** Provide Staff with Talking Points on the Campaign for Discussion with Residents and Families
- 10** Sample Articles for Your Employee Newsletter about Advancing Excellence

Please feel free to use, modify, add and tailor these ideas for your community. You can also use them to start discussions with your staff, and together, plan your strategy for bringing all staff on board.



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Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes is a national campaign to improve the quality of care and life for the country's 1.5 million people receiving care in nursing homes. Nursing homes, their staff and consumers can join in this effort by working on the Campaign goals, designed to improve quality.

www.nhqualitycampaign.org



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Introduction

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes is a campaign designed to improve the quality of life for both nursing home residents and the staff who serve them. The Campaign is led by an unprecedented broad-based coalition of organizations representing nursing home providers, nurses, caregivers/support staff, medical directors, quality-improvement experts, consumers, government agencies and foundations.

We all believe that every person and every organization has an important role and responsibility in making this Campaign successful—by bringing excellence to every nursing home in America. High quality nursing home care—where each resident gets personalized, appropriate care—is important to all of us. Nursing home residents, their families and people who may someday choose a nursing home should be able to expect the best possible care and quality of life. Nursing home staff members deserve the satisfaction of knowing that their hard work contributes to high quality of care and quality of life for residents.

The *Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes* Campaign is the first national effort to measure quality by setting measurable “clinical quality goals” and “organizational improvement goals.” Every nursing home may participate by voluntarily pledging to focus on two or more goals. Nursing homes that participate will have free access to assistance and information from quality experts to help them meet their targeted goals. Over 30 national organizations and 53 statewide groups are participating in this Campaign.

Clinical quality goals focus on health care issues that are familiar to many—reducing pressure ulcers, improving pain management, increasing mobility, reducing infections and reducing antipsychotic use in residents with dementia. Four organizational improvement goals are believed to be basic to achieving excellence—increasing staff retention and improving consistent assignment, reducing unnecessary hospitalizations and promoting person-centered care.



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How to Distribute Advancing Excellence Campaign Information with Your Employees' Paychecks

SAMPLE #1: TO ANNOUNCE CAMPAIGN

Advancing Excellence in [Name of Your Facility]

With your help, [facility name] has selected two excellence goals to work on. Your continued help, ideas, observations and brains are needed to:

- List selected goal
- List selected goal

For more information about how you can help, contact [name of person] or come to the next Advancing Excellence team meeting at [time] on 00/00/14 in [name location].

SAMPLE #2: TO ANNOUNCE GOALS' PROGRESS

With your amazing help and skills, [facility name] has made great progress on our excellence goals. Specifically, our progress to date is:

- More relief from pain among our residents; only two residents reported severe pain last month.
- More effective treatment of pressure ulcers; no pressure ulcers acquired in our home.
- Successful implementation of consistent assignment on Gettysburg and Philly wings on all three shifts. Work starts on Albany and Bay wings next week.

And the resident council has noticed the changes. The President reports, "I know the changes have been hard for some, but the residents and families are very happy to see the same faces and caring hearts. Thanks and keep it up."



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Communicate Your Campaign Goals and Progress to Staff

Staff involvement is a core component of successfully attaining the Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign goals your nursing home has set.

Communicating the goals, and the progress toward meeting them, is critical to having the staff fully involved.

Each goal has a graph that can be printed. (Log in on the AE Web site, click on "View My Trend Graphs," choose your goal, and enter the year and other information requested. Once the graph is displayed, hit the PRTSC—print screen—on the top row of your keyboard). See example on the next page.

Add your target at the top. And, if you've made communication changes or process changes that resulted in a positive (or negative) impact on the movement of your data, include that information as a way of showing what activity you are doing to "move the needle."

To make the best use of the information, all posted data should be discussed with the employees shortly before or after each posting.

We recommend that you update the postings monthly, except for pressure ulcers. We recommend updating this information weekly.

Keeping posted information current confirms to your staff that you are committed to improvement.

Consult with your corporate management, board of directors, etc., if you have questions about posting any of the data.



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[Insert Facility Name] Consistent Assignment Trend Graphs

The trend report below shows the average number of caregivers for each resident in the measurement period. The Campaign defines “consistent assignment” for long-stay residents as having 12 or fewer caregivers in a 1-month period. For short-stay residents, it is 12 or fewer caregivers in a 2-week period.

Select a year:

2013

Select stay type(s) to display:

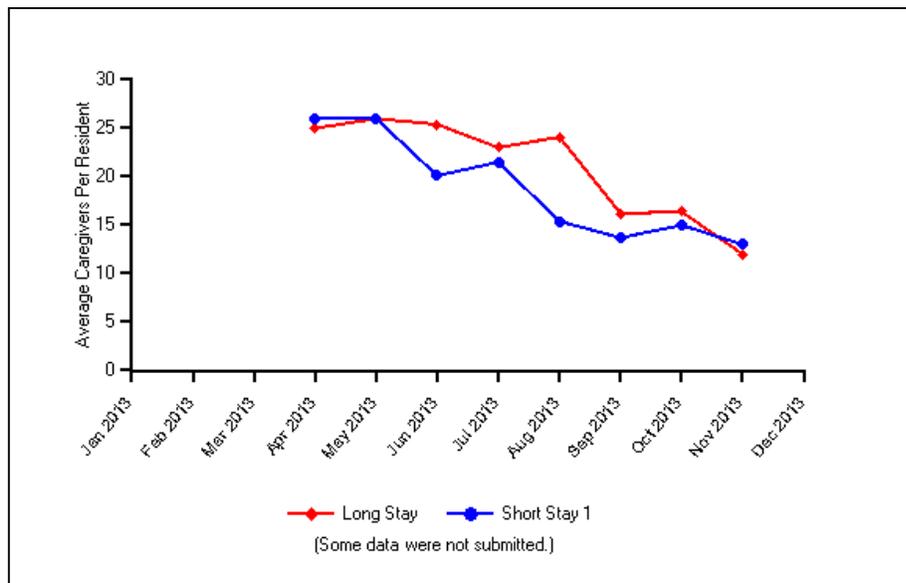
Long Stay
 Short Stay 1
 Short Stay 2

Average Number of Caregivers Per Resident

Month Year	Long-Stay	Short-Stay 1
Jan 2013	N/A	N/A
Feb 2013	N/A	N/A
Mar 2013	N/A	N/A
Apr 2013	25.0	26.0
May 2013	26.0	26.0
Jun 2013	25.4	20.1
Jul 2013	23.0	21.5
Aug 2013	24.1	15.4
Sep 2013	16.2	13.7
Oct 2013	16.4	15.0
Nov 2013	12.0	13.0
Dec 2013	N/A	N/A

N/A = Not available

[Insert Facility Name]





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[Insert facility name] Consistent Nursing Assignments

	Entire home	Unit/ Hall 1	Unit/ Hall 2	Unit/ Hall 3	Unit/ Hall 4	Unit/ Hall 5
This month (Month 1)						
Last month (Month 2)						
Month 3						
Month 4						

Tips for achieving consistent assignments:

- Be open to new ideas
- Give consistent assignments a chance
- Actively participate in the changes being made, offering suggestions to fix the problems you see
- Recognize the benefits for residents, families and staff



Hold 10-Minute Stand-Up Meetings with Staff

Engaging the staff so that your nursing home attains its goals is crucial. Once the staff is engaged, they should be kept informed to maintain their focus. Nursing home leaders have a variety of mechanisms to achieve this effect. Leaders may choose to: post results, incorporate the information into quality-assurance activities and/or address progress during the organizations stand-up communications meetings. Below are three approaches leaders may choose to use to inform during stand-up.

Once Weekly Stand-Up

Given that time is of the essence and that a wide variety of information must be covered, it is recommended that nursing home leadership focus their comments on the goal that has had the greatest improvement and the goal that has the greatest potential for improvement. As a caveat, it will be essential to ensure that progress on other goals is posted so that each member of the organization can grasp the overall progress.

Three-Times-a-Week Stand-Up

In a three-times-a-week format, leaders can sandwich the data. During the Monday stand-up meeting, the focus could be on the goal that demonstrated the greatest improvement. It will also be beneficial for leaders to explain what actions are required to sustain the current level of achievement, or actions that are likely to continue advancement. This information may set the tone for the remaining weeks efforts.

During the Wednesday stand-up meeting, it is recommended that nursing home leaders address the goal that has the greatest potential for improvement. It may be beneficial to invest a few minutes to gain feedback from the staff as to why the goal is not advancing, and their recommended approaches/actions to move it forward toward excellence. Leaders are encouraged to transition from this discussion by commenting on their degree of confidence in the ability to achieve the given goal.

It is encouraged to use the Friday stand-up as an opportunity to pair achievements with specific staff, departments or shifts as appropriate. This action will combine acknowledgement of progress on a particular goal while actively demonstrating the value of staff involvement. In addition, this approach gives the staff an opportunity to conclude the week with a sense of accomplishment.

Five-Times-a-Week Stand-Up

The benefit of a daily stand-up is that nursing home leadership may elect to cycle through the specific set of goals selected by the facility. It is recommended that the nursing home staff continue this process until attainment. If the facility elected to focus specific energy on a smaller number of goals, then it may be of virtue to use attainment as a signal to select a new goal for implementation.



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Top 10 Ideas for an Advancing Excellence Kick-off Event

1. Ask the resident and/or family councils to host the event, to welcome people to the area and to open the presentation.
2. Invite the nursing home's "governing board" to explain the facility's history and mission in service to your local community. A re-cap of "pioneer" achievements could be the focus of this part of the event.
3. If your nursing home is organized, invite the union steward or other local officials to talk about their support of the Advancing Excellence Campaign, and their support for the goals and targets selected.
4. Ask the state's QIO to participate by attending with posters explaining clinical goals and the stories of success in other facilities. Or, ask the QIO for its ideas on how to kick-off the Advancing Excellence Campaign.
5. Ask the local Ombudsman to participate by assisting the resident or family council in their work, being a part of the welcoming committee to the event, or in some fashion.
6. Invite the local area agency on aging to set up a booth to answer questions from the attendees about Medicare, Medicaid and other aging services programs.
7. Consider making the event a "community event" by asking residents, families, staff and the facility's vendors to bring their families to a picnic, ice cream social, afternoon tea, talent show, carnival or other party with "excellence" as the theme.
8. Invite elected political leaders (mayor, county commissioners, state legislators, federal legislators, etc.) to the event. Pair the elected leaders with a resident and frontline staff member for a tour of the facility, and explain the Advancing Excellence Campaign as well.
9. As for food and refreshments, ask the dietary department to cater the event using favorite resident recipes. Or, ask the facility's vendors to cater the event with in the selected theme—an afternoon tea leads to tea and crumpets; a carnival leads to funnel cakes and cotton candy.
10. Invite the local "film" class or public TV station to videotape the event. To connect with family and friends who cannot attend, make the videotape available through YouTube or on the facility's Web site.



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How to Form an Advancing Excellence Campaign Committee

It is very worthwhile to make the effort to form an Advancing Excellence Committee. Having people from all levels of the organization, departments, disciplines and from your governing Board, as well as from your resident and family councils, participate allows you to get input and buy-in from these groups. It helps people understand the many relationships that exist between organizational units and processes, and the impact of these relationships on quality, productivity and cost. It also makes the value of the committee apparent.

Use the **Staff Fact Sheets** for the nine goals to inform staff about the individual goals.

Here are some ways that the committee can add value:

- More synergistic process design and problem-solving
- Objective analysis of problems and opportunities
- Promotion of cross-functional understanding
- Improved quality and productivity
- Greater productivity
- Reduced operating costs
- Increased commitment to the organization's mission
- More flexible response to change
- Increased ownership and stewardship
- Reduced turnover and absenteeism

In addition, individuals gain the following benefits from serving on committees:

- Enhanced problem-solving skills
- Increased knowledge of business processes
- New skills for future leadership roles
- Increased quality of work life
- Feelings of satisfaction and fulfillment
- A sense of being part of something greater than what one could accomplish alone¹

¹ Duke Okes and Russell T. Westcott, editors, *Certified Quality Managers Handbook: Second edition*, ASQ Quality Press, 2001, Pages 37-41



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The committee will be most effective if it includes the:

- Administrator
- Director of Nursing
- Medical Director
- Department heads
- Frontline caregivers from all shifts and disciplines including environmental and food service departments
- Mid-level managers and supervisors
- Unit nurses
- Residents
- Family members
- Members of your governing Board

The committee should include staff who are both senior and junior in seniority in the facility:

- If the committee only includes representatives from management, then how will frontline staff be empowered?
- If the committee is only representative of nursing, then how can cross-discipline collaboration occur?
- If the committee only includes long-term experienced staff, then how can new ideas and energy in your organization be tapped?
- Finally, if the committee only includes frontline workers, then how can they commit the whole organization to the achievement of the goals of Advancing Excellence?

Consider allowing groups to pick their own leaders through a democratic process. As a result, the members of the committee will have some authority to speak for their group. For this committee to be effective, the members of the committee need to have roles and responsibilities between meetings, such as communicating with their departments and disciplines about the importance of achieving the Advancing Excellence Campaign's goals.



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The committee needs to work through a process, which should include:

- Describing the purpose of the committee
- Establishing the measurable results desired and the timeline for achieving those results
- Determining the level of decision-making authority of the committee
- Clarifying the important roles played by each member of the committee
 - Who are the co-chairs? (one of these should be from the line staff)
 - Who will facilitate the meeting?
 - Who is the scribe?
 - Who is the timekeeper?
- Determining the resources available to the committee
 - Special training or information to be given to the committee?
 - Designated advisors, trainers, facilitators, etc.?
 - Working capital budget
 - Clerical or other personnel support
- Clarifying expectations for communication and reporting

Tips for effective meetings:

- Have a regularly scheduled time and day.
- Start and end on time.
- Circulate minutes from the previous meeting to committee members prior to each meeting.
- Develop an agenda for each meeting with input from members of the committee.



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How to Celebrate Your Nursing Home's Advancing Excellence Progress

One way to show to your staff that working to achieve the goals of Advancing Excellence is important to your nursing home's residents is by starting a program, which celebrates the progress you are making in achieving your goals. A celebration program can create a spirit of community in your nursing home.

It is important that your Advancing Excellence committee initiates the program and that all members of the committee be personally involved. The celebrations should be public and become woven into the culture of your nursing home. The committee should be present at all of these celebrations.

- Here are some ways to plan celebrations:
- Have regularly scheduled celebrations, not just a one-time event.

Use the ideas in *Top 10 Ideas for an Advancing Excellence Kick-off Event* as a way to begin discussions about celebrations that would be right for your facility.



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How to Create an Advancing Excellence Campaign Recognition Program in Your Nursing Home

An Advancing Excellence recognition program is a way of showing that your nursing home expects the best of everyone. The Advancing Excellence Campaign is a great vehicle for doing this because when the “goals” are chosen by your nursing home, it focuses the staff’s attention on what is expected of them. By giving recognition to staff working in an exemplary way, it reinforces that this initiative is important to the organization.

A successful recognition program will personalize the recognition given to people. This will differentiate this program from previous quality-improvement efforts.

Spend more time than you are accustomed to walking the halls of your nursing home and meeting with individuals and small groups of people. Give verbal approval to people in front of their peers.

Use other visible awards such as certificates, plaques and other tangible objects. Try giving a spontaneous award from time to time to acknowledge people who are going the extra mile.

Consider inviting people to an Advancing Excellence Committee meeting or sharing a meal. Consider starting one of the following:

- Advancing Excellence Champion of the Month award celebrated with a photograph of the individual in your lobby.
- A column in your newsletter featuring a story about individuals whose support of the Campaign warrants recognition.
- Consider just taking the time to work along side the person and offer some assistance with their work.
- Write someone up for exceptional work.
- Create special buttons or pins for people who are on the committee or who have made a significant contribution to achieving the campaigns goals to wear.



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Provide Staff with Talking Points on the Campaign for Discussions with Residents and Families

Providing your staff with talking points about your nursing home's participation in the Advancing Excellence Campaign has two important benefits:

- It helps involve your staff in the Campaign.
- It ensures that residents and their families know how committed you are to improving quality.

The first step in this process is to meet with staff to review and discuss the overall Campaign goals and the specific quality goals you have chosen. See *Hold 10-minute Stand-Up Meetings* for ideas on organizing these meetings. This discussion about the goals should not be a one-time conversation, but should be incorporated into meetings involving care planning, quality measures and staff responsibilities.

The next step is to prepare talking points the staff can use to discuss the Campaign with residents and families. One way of accomplishing this is have a small group of direct-care workers and other caregiving staff develop the talking points. Each goal has a **Consumer Fact Sheet**. Make sure the work group has access to these. Since they have day-to-day relationships with residents and know them well, their input would be very valuable in helping to focus on what's important to residents regarding quality measures.

This work group can then present it to your Advancing Excellence committee or another larger group for approval. Once this is achieved, staff can begin talking with residents about the Campaign and the home's specific goals.

Here are some ideas of what to include in the talking points:

- Advancing Excellence Campaign description
- The nine goals, why they are important, how they improve quality of life and quality of care
- The specific goals of the nursing home
- What changes the nursing home is making to reach their quality goals
- How residents and consumers can help
- We are all partners in caring



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Sample Articles for Your Employee Newsletter about Advancing Excellence

STAFF NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SAMPLE #1—
TO ANNOUNCE AND HELP IN SELECTION OF GOALS

[Name of facility] is joining the national Advancing Excellence (AE) in America's Nursing Home Campaign. We believe that the Campaign shares our commitment to quality for the residents, families and staff here at **[name of facility]**.

The AE campaign is a coalition-based campaign to improve the quality of life for residents and staff in America's nursing homes. The Campaign's national leaders believe it will strengthen the public trust in nursing home care by focusing on quality improvement and self-regulation.

The Campaign acknowledges the critical role of nursing home staff and consumers in improving quality of care and quality of life for nursing home residents. We share that belief.

The Campaign's excellence goals are:

1. Reducing high risk pressure ulcers
2. Increasing mobility
3. Improving pain management
4. Reducing unnecessary hospitalizations
5. Decreasing infections
6. Increasing staff retention
7. Improving consistent assignment of nursing home staff, so that residents regularly receive care from the same caregivers
8. Increasing person-centered care, and
9. Reducing the use of antipsychotic medications in persons with dementia.

We would like to include all staff in selecting the two goals we want to work on. This discussion will be part of all department meetings in the next month. You can also fill out a general comment card or talk directly with your supervisor **[or fill in the various methods your facility wants to use to collect input]**. I am particularly interested in understanding why you picked the particular goal or goals for us to work on.

Thanks for helping us make **[name of facility]** a better place to live, work and visit!



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STAFF NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SAMPLE #2—
TO ANNOUNCE SELECTED GOALS AND SEEK INPUT ON HOW TO REACH GOALS

Thanks to all the great input from you, **[name of the facility]** has selected our Advancing Excellence (AE) Goals. The AE Campaign here at **[facility name]** and nationally is designed to improve the quality of life for residents and staff in America's nursing homes.

Your commitment to improving the care and quality of life experienced by the residents of **[your facility]** showed through once again in this discussion. Our AE goals are:

- **[Name your goals here]**

Even with all the great work you do now, we have room for improvement in these areas. For example, we want to reduce turnover among RNs, LPNs and CNAs by half in the next year.

And, in our second goal, while we feel we are doing a good job of keeping our residents mobile, working on this goal will provide us with data to show whether we are on target or not.

Now, it is time to hear your ideas on how we meet the targets. This discussion will be part of all department meetings in the next month. You can also fill out a general comment card or talk directly with your supervisor **[or fill in the various methods your facility wants to use to collect input]**. I am particularly interested in understanding why you picked the particular goal or goals for us to work on.

Again, we will be most successful with your input.

Thanks for helping us make **[name of facility]** a better place to live, work and visit!