

Kirkhaven “Receives” Favorable Medicaid Rate from State

If you have been following my Blog, you know that we have been waiting (not so patiently) for the State to issue our new 2009 and 2010 Medicaid rates. Last month, nursing homes finally received written notice of their 4/1/09-12/31/09 and their initial 1/1/10-3/31/10 Medicaid rate.

As a quick refresher, the new rates were to incorporate several new rate-setting methodologies that would ultimately result in both winners and losers among nursing homes across the state. We were hopeful that the preparation and work we have put in over the past 2 years, to help maximize our Medicaid rate reimbursement, would make us a winner and result in a higher rate for us.

Although we had some guidelines to make some reasonable estimates, not enough was known to compute an accurate rate for 2009 or 2010. Until the actual rates would be published, we opted to use the existing rate of \$ 155 for the 2009 interim financial statements and established 3 budget scenarios for 2010 using a worse case (\$155 rate), moderate case (\$163 rate) and best case (\$171 rate). Based on these scenarios, we estimated we would need to enact a deficit reduction plan of \$300,000 under the moderate case and a \$600,000 reduction plan under the worse case.

Well, it looks like Christmas may have come late for Kirkhaven this year. Both our 2009 and 2010 rates calculate to \$183.00/day (better than even our best case scenario). This should result in a retro settlement payment for 2009 of around \$ 750,000. That will pay off our \$500,000 line-of-credit and other short-term borrowings and bring us to a decent surplus with our 2009 financial performance.

For 2010, the \$183 rate will eliminate our need to enact any immediate deficit reduction plan, and result in enough of a surplus to resume fully funding our depreciation expense (reserving for future capital replacements) and perhaps enact a wage increase for staff. How and when we would spend any projected surplus will still need to be evaluated and approved by the board.

The issue still for 2010, is that the \$183 rate is only “solid” until 4/1/10, at which time a whole new rate methodology (regional pricing) is expected to be put in place. Similar to what we just went through in 2009, nobody really knows the impact of this methodology and thus our rates could go down, up or stay consistent. Since the 4/1/10 rate will have a significant impact on our 2010 budget assumptions,

we may have to still be cautious with granting wage increases or other spending until we have a clearer picture.

Regardless, we are at a much better place now than we were before. 2009 has been salvaged and 2010 is off to a good start. We still don’t know when these new rates will actually be paid. They must be approved by CMS and run through the Medicaid administrative process. It could be weeks or months, but as far as we know, it is just a matter of standard process and protocol. I’ll be “dancing on the tables” when we actually receive the cash, but in the interim, I’m still smiling on the inside and will sleep a little sounder.

Kudos to all the staff at Kirkhaven who have worked tirelessly and professionally as new strategies, policies and procedures were implemented in preparation for maximizing our reimbursement rates. Our higher rates are not an accident or a whim; we earned them!

UPDATE! State Delays Payment Again

The Department of Health has discovered more errors in the rate calculations (primarily with some downstate facilities), which will subsequently impact all the other rates and require a re-issuance of “final” 2009 and initial 2010 rates. Unfortunately, they can’t say how significant the revisions will be. I don’t believe they will be that significant to us, but it could drop our rates another dollar or two a day.

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Kirkhaven Revels in Mardi Gras!



"Going Green" Tips



Properly Dispose Your Old Electronics

Computers, televisions, cell phones, compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), batteries, and other discarded household items are considered hazardous waste. They contain toxic materials that should not be sent to landfills where they pollute the surrounding land and ground water. A single computer monitor may contain as much as 5 pounds of lead, as well as other toxic heavy metals. Batteries, cell phones and CFLs contain cadmium and mercury.

Placing an unwanted home computer at the curb for disposal also gives identity thieves an opportunity to learn a lot about you. Your account numbers, passwords and social security number can still be retrieved off the hard drive, even if you think you have erased everything. When your computer is taken to be recycled, however, your hard drive is reformatted and all of your history removed.

Many local merchants will take your consumer recyclables, for example:

Home Depot - CFLs

Radio Shack - batteries

Wegmans - cell phones & ink jet cartridges

Goodwill - computer equipment

Do not put these items out with your trash! For more info on disposing of hazardous waste in Monroe County log on to:

<http://www.monroecounty.gov/des-electronicsrecycling.php>

hr update

Back by Popular Demand

Kirkhaven's Biggest Loser Challenge is back!

Lose weight, get healthier and win fabulous gifts in the process! The contest, which begins March 1 and runs through June 1, is open to all employees, volunteers and regular consultants (i.e. OT/PT)

Employees will weigh-in between March 1-8, with someone from Human Resources; an entrance fee of \$15.00 is required at the weigh-in. (Arrangements will be made for individuals on evening and night shifts who want to participate.)

There will be 3 winners in order of highest percentage weight lost. Prizes to be determined.

A complete list of contest rules will be located in the SDR. Please pick up and read a copy of these rules before making your decision to join the challenge.



FOR SALE

Seniorsfirst is auctioning off one of its Services cars at Valley Manor. The **2004 Chevrolet Impala** has 101,006 miles on it and includes: power steering and anti-lock brakes; factory keyless entry and alarm; cloth interior; power windows, door locks, and mirrors; AM/FM radio; cruise control; front wheel drive; separate passenger and driver climate control; dual air bags and all mechanical records from date of purchase. Passed NYS inspection in February. A test drive is available to interested parties.

Forward your bid to Eric O'Connell at 770-1961 or via email at eoconnell@seniorsfirstonline.com. **We will start bidding at \$2,500 and accept bids until March 15.**



Zero is a Beautiful Number!

Kirkhaven had **ZERO** injuries in January and **ZERO** so far in February!

Injuries cause our employees to miss work and income, work short, experience pain and discomfort, and be unable to perform normal activities at home. It's worth avoiding, so think about your safety every time you are working! Thanks to all of you for making SAFETY a priority.

March is Residents' Rights Month

Share Your Story!

This year's Residents' Rights mandatory in-services will continue my 17 year history of meeting with you for this purpose. I find myself reflecting on my years at Kirkhaven, even as I know there are many who have been here longer than me, and some are just getting started. Maybe, like me, you look back and ahead with a sense of pride and privilege to be a small part of the work we do in serving elders. If you have been here for any length of time at all, I am sure you have a favorite "elder story" to tell about someone you met along the way and whose memory is etched forever in your heart. Maybe like me, you feel there are never enough hours in the day to do all you would like to do as you struggle to balance work and life.

Working at Kirkhaven, you probably like the people you work with—both elders and co-workers—and you accept both the challenges and the many, many blessings. If you work at Kirkhaven, you are more than likely a team player willing to extend a helping hand and you also know when to *ask* for a helping hand. You strive to treat others the way you yourself would want to be treated. And, since none of us is perfect and we fall short at times, more than likely you, like me, have had to extend forgiveness along the way and have asked to be forgiven. This is The Kirkhaven Way!

As we continue our Pathways for Meaningful Living journey to transform our "institutional" culture toward one of "home" culture, we will again engage in Resident's Rights in-services. *One of the things we will be doing this year is sharing an Elder story, so please be thinking of an Elder in your life who touched you—either at Kirkhaven or anywhere along your life's journey.*

Last year, we introduced our Pathways for Meaningful Living value statements at Residents' Rights and talked about changing our institutional language—and then we danced! Along with sharing an Elder story this year, we will discuss "The Kirkhaven Way". The Kirkhaven Way is exactly what it implies. It is all the standards and expectations that have existed since we opened our doors in 1987. You have probably heard "this is the way we do it at Kirkhaven".

This year, on paper, each of us will be asked to commit formally to these standards and to accept our individual responsibility for knowing, modeling and supporting these expectations. This is the next step on our culture change journey to keep us together on the same path. I look forward to seeing you at one of the in-services, which will begin March 8; additional dates and times will be posted by the 1st. As always, I am excited to have this opportunity to gather and talk. God Bless!

—Paula Henry,
Dir. Social Work

Medicaid Rate *(cont. from pg. 1)*

The bigger issue is it is yet another excuse for delaying our payment.

There is a big debate across the State and with many of the accountants concerning the validity of booking these revised rates in the 2009 audited statements of nursing homes. Since the rates are really only "notice rates" and have technically not been approved for the State budget and now may be revised somewhat, many CPA firms are recommending that the rates not be booked until actually approved or perhaps even paid. If this becomes the case, we will then show a Kirkhaven loss of about \$500,000 versus a surplus of \$250,000 (a rather significant difference). Of course, we would then show a big surplus in 2010 when we do book it, but it creates perception and timing concerns. Our board has not decided yet and is waiting it out a few more weeks to see what might develop to make a more informed decision.

So, the news is still very positive and I continue to stress that we are in a far better position just knowing that the rates will be much more favorable for us when they *are* finalized and paid. The challenge continues to be that in the interim, we are still only receiving the \$155/day rate and may have to close our 2009 books using that rate, which still leaves us cash poor and with a deficit from operations until we receive and can book the retroactive settlement sometime in 2010 (I hope!).

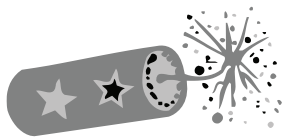
—Jim DeVoe,
CEO/President

Get Ready to Sign Up!



The Seniorsfirst Employee United Way program will be coming very soon to both Valley Manor and Kirkhaven, so watch for details and be ready to sign up!

—Gerri Smith, RHIT



Seniorsfirst Salutes Congratulations!

Jose Ruiz won 1st prize and **Michael Day** won 2nd prize for the Black History Month Quiz 2!

The winners for our Mardi Gras celebration were **Bobbi Blake** - \$10.00 meal ticket and **Gayle Hoover** - 2 movie tickets. Thank you all for your contribution in making Mardi Gras fun for our residents. The floors looked great!!!

—Karen M. Lasky

Please Remember!



No Food or Drink

Staff are welcome to enjoy quiet time in Kirkhaven's Meditation Room off the Lobby. It is a very welcoming and peaceful place for prayer and reflection.

However, just as we would not sit and eat in a church, please *do not bring food or beverages into this sanctuary. Thank you.*

This is your newsletter!

The **LINK** is published by and for the staff of *Seniorsfirst*. Submit your ideas, articles, photos and news items to Cilla Drinkwater, Director of Marketing at 770-1954 or email to cdrinkwater@seniors-firstonline.com



March Birthdays

1	Christine Brady	Receptionist, Kirkhaven
	Elisha Jackson	per diem LPN, Kirkhaven
	Kelvin Seawright	Security/ES Ass't, Valley Manor
2	Paula Henry	Dir. Social Work, Kirkhaven
	Kayrina Jones	LPN, Kirkhaven
4	Alicia Scott	CNA, Kirkhaven
8	James Sample	Laundry Ass't, Kirkhaven
9	Nadine Reich	Dir. of Nursing, Kirkhaven
	Gerri Smith	Dir. HIM, Kirkhaven
	Earl Thompson	CNA, Kirkhaven
10	Travara Johnson	LPN, Kirkhaven
12	Lynetta Hollomon	per diem LPN, Kirkhaven
13	Ann Marie Ligozio	RN Clinical Care Mgr, Kirkhaven
	Kisla Mitchell	per diem CNA, Kirkhaven
14	James Rollins	Housekeeper, Kirkhaven
15	Mariblanca Rosario	Program Ass't, Valley Manor
16	Nina Nicholson	CNA, Kirkhaven
	Pauline Oliver	Housekeeper, Valley Manor
17	Patricia Brown	RN, Kirkhaven
	Phillip Childs	F&NS Aide, Kirkhaven
	Vivian Cruz	CNA, Kirkhaven
	Lorraine Smith	per diem CNA, Kirkhaven
18	Priscilla Smith	CNA, Kirkhaven
19	Denise Williams	CNA, Kirkhaven
	Gail Wilson	LPN, Kirkhaven
20	Mimi Torres	Empl -Vol Recruiter, Kirkhaven
21	Willie Boykins	Driver, Valley Manor
23	Norma Palmer	CNA, Kirkhaven
	Betty Wilson	CNA, Kirkhaven
24	Ann DiCesare	Mgr. Ass't Living, Valley Manor
25	Beverly Folkes	CNA, Kirkhaven
26	Joan Batzold	HR Mgr, Valley Manor
	William Day	Housekeeper, Kirkhaven
27	Venus Davis	CNA, Kirkhaven
28	David Sliney	Sales/Wknd Mgr, Valley Manor
29	Ann Barr	CNA, Kirkhaven
30	LaShawn Miller	F&NS Aide, Kirkhaven