



**NCPA is the voice of  
independent pharmacy  
on Capitol Hill**

**February 2018**

### Sponsor Spotlight



SoftWriters, an MHA company, develops innovative pharmacy management and ancillary software solutions designed to support the growth and operational efficiencies of closed door pharmacies. From order intake through delivery, SoftWriters' complete suite of fully-integrated, scalable solutions eliminate manual steps and enhance customer service capabilities for operators.

SoftWriters' suite of fully integrated and scalable products includes FrameworkLTC®, an advanced, configurable LTC pharmacy management software solution, integrated content management and workflow via FrameworkECM™, smart delivery with FrameworkPOD™, electronic communications with facility customers through FrameworkLink™, advanced reporting and business intelligence with FrameworkBI™, and sophisticated interfacing capabilities via FrameworkHL7™. These integrated software solutions communicate automatically, passing valuable information between modules, eliminating manual steps and enhancing customer service capabilities.

Discover the significant advantages of integrated vs interfaced solutions, all designed and maintained by SoftWriters, the software innovators for LTC pharmacies.

**Proud sponsors of the  
NCPA LTC Division:**



### Fine Tune Your LTC Growth Strategy May 3-4 in Alexandria, Va.

Discover how you can tap into long-term care's potential to grow your pharmacy business at [High Performance Strategies for LTC Pharmacies](#), sponsored by Pharmacists Mutual Companies, May 3-4 in Alexandria, Va. The program provides a deep dive into running and expanding an LTC pharmacy business in varied settings. If you've been thinking of expanding your LTC business, now is the time and this is the program. **\*\*Special LTC Division member pricing of \$695\*\*** Download a [registration form](#) and write "LTC member" to activate this discount. Please call 1-800-544-7447 with any questions.

### LTC Focus Webinar: Marketing Your Pharmacy to LTC Facilities

From targeting facilities to providing excellent customer service, business development in LTC can be challenging. Get tips and tools to growing your business in this free 30-minute LTC Focus Webinar.

**Date/Time:** March 22,  
2-2:30 p.m. ET

**Speaker:** Jeff Ehman, Vanzari Solutions

**Registration:** [Click here to register](#) (no fee)



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## Budget Agreement Enacted, Including Health Care Provisions

President Trump signed into law a sweeping budget measure enacted by Congress to fund the government through March 23 and increase budgetary caps through fiscal year 2019. Provisions include a two-year extension of the Medicare Independence at Home demonstration project supported by long-term care providers. The law requires a Government Accountability Office study of the prevalence and effectiveness of medication synchronization programs in Medicare Part D. The move comes in response to [recommendations NCPA previously provided](#) senators working to improve care for patients with chronic conditions.

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## CMS Part D Proposal Addresses Opioid Epidemic, Mail Order Pharmacy

The annual Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' "call letter" contains information on Part C and Part D programs that plans need to take into consideration in preparing their bids for the upcoming year. Of specific note, the draft 2019 call letter [released Feb. 1](#) focused on the following areas that may impact pharmacists:

- **Opioid Overuse:** CMS proposes new strategies to give plans "additional tools to better manage chronic opioid overuse among beneficiaries by ensuring patient-doctor-plan communication regarding opioid use." This includes revising Pharmacy Quality Alliance measures and implementing a supply limit for initial fills of prescription opioids for the treatment of acute pain with or without a daily dose maximum.
- **Part D Mail-Order Refill Consent Policy:** CMS is seeking comments on potential changes to its policy on beneficiary consent prior to shipping refills of mail-order prescriptions. Specifically, CMS requests data to show adherence or cost savings for beneficiaries under its current policy.
- **Enhancements to the 2019 Star Ratings and Future Measurement Concepts:** CMS adds parameters around the measures that plans can use to determine the quality of and reflect the experience of beneficiaries in Prescription Drug Plans. This year's enhancement proposals include the addition of the Statin Use in Persons with Diabetes measure. CMS also proposes the removal of the beneficiary access and performance problems measure.

NCPA will submit comments to CMS encouraging the agency to consider the impact on beneficiaries and pharmacies when setting



parameters for 2019 Part D plans.

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## Hand-Washing Protocols Can Decrease Nursing Home Deaths and Antibiotic Use

In a [new study](#) released by the American Journal of Infection Control this month, researchers show how hand-washing protocols help decrease nursing home deaths by 21 percent and antibiotic use by nearly 14 percent. Interventions included giving all parties greater access to hand sanitizer, launching a campaign to promote hand hygiene, and forming localized work groups at each care site to pour over guidelines and educate employees.



Each year, U.S. nursing homes tally upward of about 3 million infections, which are the No. 1 cause of death in this care setting. They add \$1 billion in extra health care costs, according to the Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology.

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## Come Give Congress a Piece of Your Mind About PBMs

Be part of the NCPA Congressional Pharmacy Summit April 11-12 in Alexandria, Va. Community pharmacists will storm Capitol Hill and make their voices heard on DIR fees, MAC transparency and more. [Sign up today.](#)

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