

MANAGED CARE DIGEST SERIES[®]

SENIOR CARE DIGEST

2010-2011

INTERDISCIPLINARY REPORT
A SURVEY OF LONG-TERM CARE
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



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Senior Care Digest Interdisciplinary Report

Dear Colleague:

We are proud to share with you this 2010-2011 edition of the *Senior Care Digest Interdisciplinary Report: A Survey of Long-Term Care Health Professionals*, part of the nationally renowned sanofi-aventis Managed Care Digest Series®, now in its 24th year of publication.

The long-term care field continues to evolve, and a wide range of innovations, developments, and changes in this field reflect efforts to address the changing needs of a rapidly growing senior population, a move toward more homelike and person-centered care, and technological developments and new evidence-based treatments. More than ever, it is essential to understand how long-term care practitioners are addressing the challenges they face, implementing clinical innovations, and working with patients, families, and each other in the long-term care setting. This publication reports the results of a national interdisciplinary survey of long-term care professionals, including medical directors, pharmacists, directors of nursing, and nurse practitioners, who provide care for the elderly residing in nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and various other senior care environments.

The survey results and commentaries offer a unique and enlightening insight into the practices and attitudes of these dedicated health care professionals as well as their thoughts about the most pertinent trends, challenges, and issues. The commentaries highlight comparisons in responses from year to year, demonstrating how practitioners have changed their practices and attitudes as they gain experience and as new research and clinical/practice information comes their way. The overall result is an open and honest portrait of practitioners whose passion, knowledge, expertise, and energy make them unique and inspiring.

Your sanofi-aventis Senior Care account manager would be happy to provide you with additional information about our products and services. In the meantime, we hope this report will enlighten you about this vital health care field.

Thank you for your continuing commitment to quality care and quality of life for America's growing elder population. We look forward to continuing our role in this important mission.

Sincerely,



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Message from the Executive Editor



Dear Reader:

Welcome to the 2010-2011 *Senior Care Digest Interdisciplinary Report: A Survey of Long-Term Care Health Professionals*, presented by sanofi-aventis as part of its Managed Care Digest Series®.

In April and May 2010, health professionals from four key long-term care disciplines—medical directors, pharmacists, directors of nursing, and nurse practitioners—completed a survey designed to explore their perceptions on matters that are helping to shape the challenging and constantly evolving long-term care environment. The survey questions were developed with the participation of expert editorial advisory panelists representing their respective disciplines.

Now in its fourth year of publication, the *Senior Care Digest Interdisciplinary Report* has evolved into a unique tool for tracking trends, attitudes, and best practices in senior care. The 2010-2011 report begins with questions asked of all four disciplines, addressing topics such as controlled drugs, gradual dose reduction, social networking, and research. It is fascinating to see how respondents from the various disciplines agree and disagree on these issues, and the commentary following each section provides further insight.

The report next addresses issues pertaining to each discipline, including demographics, practice environments, and professional roles, to provide a current snapshot of each discipline's makeup and involvement in long-term care. The findings provide a unique opportunity for practitioners to learn more about what their interdisciplinary colleagues are thinking, feeling, and doing.

Many of the responses and open-ended comments were somewhat predictable, but even these offer useful information by validating what we had previously only assumed or expected. A number of unexpected findings emerged, and some eye-opening trends surfaced when this year's responses were compared with data from the 2007, 2008, and 2009 surveys.

While this report aims primarily to examine contemporary issues that affect the work of health professionals in the long-term care setting, it also helps educate professionals from each discipline about subjects of concern to their colleagues. Ideally, if all long-term care health professionals understand the challenges and issues faced by other disciplines in their common goal of providing quality care for our nation's seniors, they will be better able to work effectively as an interdisciplinary team.

It is my hope that the information in this publication will promote dialogue between professionals in the various disciplines, improve their understanding of their colleagues, and ultimately enable all interdisciplinary long-term care team members to collaborate more effectively and provide the highest quality of care for the seniors we serve.

Sincerely,



William Simonson, PharmD, FASCP, CGP
Executive Editor
Senior Care Digest Interdisciplinary Report

Methodology

More than 10,000 nursing facility medical directors, pharmacists active in practice with the elderly (long-term care and/or senior care), nursing facility directors of nursing, and geriatric nurse practitioners were invited to participate in a national survey through contact information provided by professional associations and a commercial firm specializing in targeted lists of health professionals.

Nationally prominent representatives from each of the four disciplines surveyed assisted in the development of the survey and also participated in data analysis and devel-

opment of discussion points pertinent to their respective disciplines.

Invitation letters sent by fax, U.S. mail, and e-mail provided instructions on how to access and complete the survey online. After undeliverable invitations were eliminated, the total number of respondents was 843, with the following response rates: medical directors, 10.3%; pharmacists, 12.1%; directors of nursing, 7.2%; and nurse practitioners, 8.3%.

Data in certain figures may not equal 100% due to rounding or may exceed 100% due to multiple responses.

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