



# **Tips to Start and Sustain a Successful Local Area Network of Excellence (LANE)**

The Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes Campaign was created in 2006 by what is now the largest coalition of nursing home stakeholders in the country. Today, 30 national leaders including government, consumer, provider, practitioner, quality improvement, foundation and other representatives meet regularly for the sole purpose of making nursing homes better places to live, work and visit. In 2010, AE became a not for profit organization, the Advancing Excellence Long-Term Care Collaborative.

While the Board of Directors of the Campaign is responsible to create policy, provide overall direction, and create national technical assistance tools, the Campaign relies on a national network of stakeholders at the State level to provide the infrastructure to work directly with nursing homes and achieve Campaign goals. These local networks are called LANEs or Local Area Networks of Excellence.

The following information is designed to assist members of the LANEs in promoting the tools and resources found on the Campaign's website, [www.nhqualitycampaign.org](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org)

## **What Is a LANE (Local Area Network of Excellence)?**

The LANE is a state-based coalition of key stakeholders who come together to focus on nursing home quality improvement and the goals of the Advancing Excellence Campaign.

The LANE is the central organization within each state that supports participating nursing homes in achieving progress on the 9 Campaign goals and helps the Campaign succeed within the State.

Regular LANE meetings provide a forum for the stakeholders to come together in a way that is unique to each state.

*The LANE is:*

- *A learning network*
- *A coalition of key nursing home stakeholders*
- *Creative*
- *Made of partnerships*
- *Collaborative*

An Advancing Excellence LANE is responsible for:

1. Being the Campaign's cheerleader and highlighting the positive aspects of AE
  - a. Marketing the value of the Campaign and sustaining the state's efforts
  - b. Acting as a technical support for the Campaign
  - c. Bringing the community of stakeholders together to see how AE fits with other national efforts.
2. Inspiring staff in nursing homes to do quality improvement and using the Campaign's Circle of Success as a template for quality improvement
3. Providing a way for all partners to connect
4. Celebrating successes

***Simply put, a LANE is made up of diverse organizations, often with different agendas, that come together at the state level to improve quality of care and life for nursing home residents.***

## **Why do LANEs exist?**

- LANEs are the effectors arm of the national campaign, providing local support and leadership for nursing home quality improvement at the state level
- Interaction between AE campaign staff and the LANE conveners creates a mechanism to disseminate successes, and share best practices for implementing the campaign across states (e.g., the accelerated LANE performance report)
- LANE conveners working with other state and local partners can align quality initiatives for nursing homes within their respective states.
- LANEs can implement/pilot special projects for the national campaign (e.g., critical access NH project, special focus facilities project)

### **What Do LANEs Do?**

- Provide statewide leadership to coalition of stakeholders
- Focus on meaningful goals identified for each state
- Raise and maintain awareness about the Campaign
- Recruit nursing homes to join the Campaign
- Provide technical assistance and educational programs
- Communicate key Campaign messages
- Act as a “change-agent” to improve nursing home quality

### **How do individual LANEs strengthen the national network of LANEs?**

- LANE best practices
- Participate in monthly LANE call
- Develop tip sheets for use
- Complete accelerated LANE performance reports
- Model performance improvement

### **Who Are The Core LANE Members?**

- The LANE is composed of a broad spectrum of long term care stakeholders and typically includes representatives and groups interested in quality of care and life for nursing home residents and staff. LANE membership is voluntary. All members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings.
- Although LANE membership can vary from state to state, participation by the following organizations is crucial:
  - Nursing home provider associations (AHCA, LeadingAge affiliates, and others, if available)
  - Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs)
  - State Survey Agency
  - State Long Term Care Ombudsman
  - State Culture Change Coalition

Some states include other members on the LANEs such as representatives of consumer advocacy groups, medical director groups, nursing organizations, unions, etc. In addition, individual consumers, practitioners and residents may also serve. The composition of the LANE is dependent on the unique character of the State.

### **What is the Role of the LANE Convener?**

The LANE Convener(s) is the leader or facilitator of the Local Area Networks of Excellence (LANE) and brings together key stakeholders to help nursing homes improve quality of life and quality of care.

Each LANE designates one or more participating organizations, and an individual representing that organization, as a LANE Convener. Designation can be through an electoral process, or simply by a representative of an organization "stepping-up." There are no formal rules governing LANEs.

Most LANES have one or two conveners. LANES with two co-conveners are able to share the workload and provide a backup if the other co-convener is unable to perform her or his duties. More than two conveners can cause confusion and miscommunication. If more than two organizational representatives wish to serve as a convener, it may be a good idea to rotate the convener role every six or twelve months.

The LANE convener is the facilitator of the LANE. As such, he or she is responsible for

- Providing leadership for the LANE – creating a joint vision and compelling reasons for the LANE to exist, establish strong sense of purpose, working with the LANE to set goals and identify their resources and develop plans.
- Bringing LANE members together
- Maintaining the focus on the Advancing Excellence Campaign goals
- Serving as the primary “point of contact” for the Campaign
- Acting as the liaison between the LANE and the national Campaign staff
- Communicating key Campaign messages to LANE members
- Responding to critical issues, and
- Providing updates to the National Campaign about recruitment progress, challenges, innovative approaches and best practices.

The importance of the role of LANE convener /co-convener is crucial to success of the LANE. It is important to select an organization and individuals who can willingly spend time and energy focusing on coordination of nursing home quality improvement.

#### **Successful LANE Conveners and/or Co-Conveners:**

- Are passionate and committed to the work of the Advancing Excellence Campaign
- Are knowledgeable about nursing homes and the AE Campaign
- Are strong leaders
- Have good facilitation skills
- Are respected
- Are respectful of others
- Are good communicators
- Are accessible and responsive
- Involve and listen to those working in nursing homes
- Value the wisdom of the group
- Are cheerleaders for the Campaign
- Are focused on all 9 Campaign Goals — Not just the clinical or organizational goals
- Understand the true importance of this work
- Are provided adequate support and time by their employer to work on the Campaign
- Are able to navigate the AE website and provide resources to registrants
- Meet or communicate regularly

#### **How are LANES Structured?**

Governance structure on the local level can take many shapes. At a minimum, each state LANE designates one or more participating organizations as a LANE Convener. The LANE Convener is the

facilitator of the LANE or statewide coalition. As such, he or she is responsible for bringing LANE members together and for maintaining their focus on Advancing Excellence Campaign goals.

### **How Often Should a LANE Meet?**

As often as necessary! It is recommended that the LANE meet face-to-face at least 4 times per year. Strong LANE's usually meet monthly.

Use of technology including conference calls, Skype, e-mail, Go-To-Meeting and other methods can help the LANE continue to work effectively between face to face meetings

### **What resources are available to support LANEs:**

- Carol Scott, AE's National Coordinator and LANE liaison; [cscott@leadingage.org](mailto:cscott@leadingage.org) 816-830-0094
- Alice Bonner, Contractor with AE; [a.bonner@neu.edu](mailto:a.bonner@neu.edu) 508-269-3879
- [help@nhqualitycampaign.org](mailto:help@nhqualitycampaign.org) - Support for data entry and technical issues with data submission
- State Quality Improvement Organization (QIO), for resetting passwords and assistance with root cause analysis or PDSA

### **How can the LANE work with other coalitions and collaboratives?**

Simply stated, the Advancing Excellence Campaign encourages LANEs to work with partners, stakeholders, and other coalitions whenever and however possible. We encourage collaboration of these groups to unify efforts in a state, to avoid duplication, to maximize scarce resources, and to ultimately improve the quality of care and quality of life of nursing home residents.

### **How does the work of the LANEs complement other CMS initiatives?**

LANEs align and support CMS initiatives, such as:

- QIO Scope of Work
  - 47 QIOs serve as AE LANE conveners or co-conveners
  - QIOs encourage membership in the AE Campaign and support use of all AE tools and resources.
  - Opportunity for LANEs to support and provide a model for state collaborations such as the *CMS National Nursing Home Quality Care Collaborative*
- Survey & Certification
  - ☐ LANEs are in a good position to support QAPI and could assist in preparing for the QAPI regulation and national rollout as the process for implementing an AE campaign goals follow a data-driven, active quality improvement model that is grounded in QAPI principles
  - One State Survey Agency serves as a co-convener and 34 other states have SSAs that attend the LANE meetings
- CMS Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes
  - Many LANE conveners/members serve as State Coalition leads
  - State Coalitions in the *Partnership to Improve Dementia Care* encourage membership in the AE Campaign and support use of the AE tools and resources.

- In Georgia, a partnership was formed between the Georgia's LANE, Georgia Health Care Association (GHCA) and Alliant GMCF to "Reduce Off-Label Use of Antipsychotics in Nursing Homes."

### **How do LANEs support Culture Change?**

At the state level, many LANEs work closely with their Culture Change Coalition, and other partners to collaborate

- Maine Culture Change Coalition/LANE has supported various national initiatives from CMS, Advancing Excellence Campaign, AHCA/NCAL, QIO, Pioneer Network, and Partnership to Improve Dementia Care, etc.
- Some LANEs work at integrating family members and residents in LANE membership, and events

### **What Topics Should A LANE Address at a Meeting?**

Meetings typically include discussion statewide data around recruitment and participation, data submission and sharing, to identify areas of concern, planning of educational programs focused on one or more of the Campaign goals where the state needs improvement, development of action plans that support Campaign participants, updates on state and national progress made toward Campaign goals, and sharing of best practice recommendations, issues, solutions, and lessons learned.

See the sample LANE agenda below to help focus your group's work.

### **Sample LANE Meeting Agenda**

I. Welcome

II. Introductions

III. Review of Focus Goals for Our State

IV. Review of Our Statewide Data:

- Registration Numbers — Review of Unregistered Nursing Homes
- Participation Numbers – Which homes are Entering Data?
- Review of Selected Goals
- Review of Quality Measure State and National Averages, and any Other Pertinent Data

V. Identify Areas of Concern or Focus Based on this Data Review

VI. National Update on Advancing Excellence Campaign

- Monthly National LANE Convener Call Information
- New Campaign materials
- Power Point presentations

VII. Recognition for Nursing Home Achievement in Our State

#### VIII. Projects Our LANE is Working On

- Planning educational programs focused on one or more of the Campaign goals where the state needs improvement
- Identify Opportunities to Present on Advancing Excellence at Upcoming Forums and Conferences
- Development of action plans that support Campaign participants
- Create a State LANE / Advancing Excellence Display
- Best practice recommendations, issues, solutions, and lessons learned
- Accelerating LANE Performance Project(s)

#### IX. Other Items

- Updates from related initiatives in our State (e.g., Partnership to Improve Dementia Care, Culture Change Coalition)
- Strategize to enhance consumer engagement in work of the LANE
- Do we have the participation and expertise we need to enable the LANE to adequately focus on our current goals? (e.g., nursing, therapy, CNAs, residents, administration, physician)

#### X. Next Meeting Date and Location