



## Diamond Accreditation Program

### FAQ

#### 1. What is the Diamond Accreditation Program?

The Diamond Accreditation Program is available to all WALA members. It is a quality management program in which you set your own quality improvement goals based on the needs of your community. You will receive quality resources and tools and be able to network with other assisted living communities in your area and share best practices through the Peer Partner program. The goal of the program is to improve quality for your residents, their families and your staff.

#### 2. How will this program benefit my assisted living community (i.e., “What’s in it for me?”)

The Diamond Program offers many benefits, including :

- Improved care for your residents
- Consumer recognition of your commitment to quality care for your community
- Effective and efficient operations which positively impact your bottom line
- Quality improvement resources and tools to assist you in achieving your quality goals
- Discounts on WALA educational events and products
- Networking opportunities with other similar communities in your area

*NOTE: While abbreviated surveys may eventually be a result of the quality improvement performance that your community demonstrates, membership in the Diamond Program does not guarantee that this will occur.*

#### 3. How do I know the Diamond Program will work for my community?

Through data collection and analysis, the Diamond Program helps you identify areas in which you would like to make improvements and enables you to pinpoint the quality improvement area where you choose to direct your resources. The time and commitment you devote to the Diamond Program will determine how much your community will benefit from participating.

#### 4. What are the prerequisites for membership?

In order to join the Diamond Program, you must:

- Be a current and paid WALA member
- Be a regulated entity in the state of Wisconsin as an AFH, CBRF or RCAC
- Have a computer/device and Internet access on-site
- Be willing to participate in all components of the Diamond Program

## **5. How do I join?**

The application process is easy! You need to submit the following to the WALA office:

- A completed Diamond Program application for each participating community (each licensed community requires a separate application)
- A copy of your most recent state survey (including a plan of correction if deficiencies were found)
- The Diamond Program enrollment fee

## **6. What is the cost associated with the Diamond Program?**

In addition to your WALA membership fee, the 2014 Diamond Program rates are:

- 3-8 bed communities – \$75 fee per community
- 9-60 bed communities – \$125 fee per community
- 61+ bed communities – \$175 fee per community

Each year, you will be required to submit a renewal fee in order to remain in the Diamond Program.

There will also be a separate fee to apply for accreditation. At this time, that rate has not been determined.

## **7. What work does the Diamond Program entail?**

Within two weeks of joining the Diamond Program you will receive a Planning Workbook. The Planning Workbook will provide you with a step-by-step guide to building a quality improvement program within your community. It is expected that you will continue to work on at least one quality initiative goal for as long as you are involved in the Diamond Program.

## **8. I want to join the Diamond Program, but the work seems a bit overwhelming. What can I do?**

The work will be challenging, especially at first. However, the best advice is to follow the steps outlined in the Planning Workbook. Also, you will have support from your Peer Partners and the Diamond Program Manager. Be aware that quality improvement takes time. Progress will occur in increments and it is worth the effort.

## **9. What is WCCEAL?**

The Wisconsin Coalition for Collaborative Excellence in Assisted Living is an innovative collaborative partnership between state regulatory agencies for assisted living, provider associations, and advocates for long-term care. The core of WCCEAL is the implementation of an “association-developed, department-approved” comprehensive quality assurance, quality improvement program.

In 2012, the Wisconsin Coalition for Collaborative Excellence in Assisted Living (WCCEAL) and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services-Bureau of Assisted Living (DHS-BAL) presented a challenge to the four Wisconsin assisted living associations to develop guiding values for the provision of care in assisted living communities. WALA joined the coalition, recognizing the value of participating in a collaborative effort to support assisted living

providers who are dedicated to developing quality improvement programs that produce high quality services for residents. The Diamond Accreditation Program is part of WALA's continued commitment to promote excellence in assisted living.

#### **10. What is CHSRA?**

The Center for Health Systems Research & Analysis (CHSRA) is a University of Wisconsin-Madison institute in which researchers seek to improve long-term care and health systems by creating performance measures and developing information and decision support systems. CHSRA is the collaborative partner of WCCEAL whose function is to provide a research component to enable participants to understand the effectiveness of their quality improvement initiatives.

#### **11. How is CHSRA involved in the WCCEAL program?**

CHSRA and the Division of Quality Assurance were awarded a grant to help launch WCCEAL and provide a research component to study its effectiveness. CHSRA has developed a research protocol to collect quality indicator data from providers. With the data, CHSRA will produce benchmarking reports for the WCCEAL program and participants.

#### **12. What are Quality Indicators?**

Quality Indicators are statistical measures that give an indication of the quality performance levels within a community. Quality indicators are used by providers to help monitor and/or improve their performance. For a comprehensive view of the quality indicators included in the Diamond Accreditation Program, please visit the WALA website.

#### **13. What is the expected duration for your participation in the Diamond Program?**

The Diamond Program is never truly "completed" because you will continue to work on quality improvement initiatives as long as you are a Diamond Program member. You will set your own quality initiative goals. Once those goals are achieved, you will monitor to make sure progress continues in those areas and you will begin working on a new quality improvement objective.

#### **14. What tools and resources are included in enrollment in the Diamond Accreditation Program?**

As a member of the Diamond Program, you will receive:

- A Planning Workbook which is a step-by-step guide for establishing a Quality Improvement Program
- One complimentary Standards of Practice (NOTE: This is only available through the end of 2013)
- A standardized resident satisfaction survey
- Benchmarking reports
- Peer Partner Program benefits
- Invitations to participate in regional roundtable discussions
- Assistance from the Diamond Program Manager
- Discounts on all WALA products and all educational opportunities (including Standards of Practice)

- A Certificate of Participation in the DAP  
The Diamond Program will provide additional tools and resources as the program develops.

**15. What can I expect from the Peer Partner Program?**

The Peer Partner Program provides you with external peer support for your Quality Improvement Program initiative. Peer Partners can serve a sounding board for your ideas, share their expertise to help you achieve your objectives, and reinforce the value and effectiveness of your practices and the service you provide residents.

**16. How will my Peer Partner be matched?**

Peer Partners will be assigned based on geographic region. All Peer Partners will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement when participating in the program.

**17. What information about my community am I required to provide?**

Once you enroll in the Diamond Program, you will be provided login information for the WCCEAL website. There you will be able to view all the required quality indicators and definitions, examples and formulas for each. You can also view the current list of quality indicators and definitions on the WALA website.

**18. Who sees my community's data?**

- **YOU** are able to view and utilize your data in the ways that are most useful for your community.
- WALA is able to view your data as part of its efforts to assist you in your quality improvement work.
- CHSRA is able to view your data as part of the statewide initiative.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) **WILL NOT** see any information specific to your community. DHS will **only** be able to see the quality indicator data aggregated from the entire Diamond Program membership.

**19. How do I know when to report my information to WCCEAL?**

Once you join the Diamond Program, you can view the reporting deadlines on the WCCEAL website. Additionally, you will be sent reminders from WCCEAL (and WALA) informing you when you will need to submit information.

**20. What if I don't get my information to WCCEAL by the deadline?**

Communities who do not submit data for two of the four reporting periods within the same calendar year are automatically removed from the WCCEAL program. Additionally, these communities may risk their eligibility to remain in the Diamond Program. Timely data collection enables CHSRA to produce benchmarking reports and other information critical to the success of the Diamond Program.

**21. What is accreditation?**

Accreditation is a process in which a professional association or other agency grants recognition to an organization for demonstrated ability to meet predetermined criteria for

established standards. In the Diamond Accreditation Program, achieving accredited status means an assisted living community has voluntarily undergone a formal evaluation process by an impartial professional association (in this case WALA) and has been awarded official recognition for meeting or exceeding specific quality standards.

## **22. How do I become accredited?**

To qualify for accreditation, you must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Enrollment in the Diamond Program with an established quality improvement program in place for a minimum of three years.
2. Participate in all eligible data submission requests by WCCEAL and WALA.
3. Participate, at minimum, in the two required Peer Partner meetings each year.
4. Participate in at least one WALA educational event offered and at least one Diamond meeting each year you are involved in the program.
5. Maintain your QI process that supports your community determined initiatives.
6. Be in good standings with state surveys done within the tenure of the Diamond Program.

*NOTE: The accreditation application process is still being developed. Further questions regarding accreditation can be discussed with the Diamond Program Manager.*

## **23. What if I have other questions regarding the Diamond Program?**

Contact the Diamond Program Manager, who will be happy to assist you with any questions or concerns.