

# the LiNC

*Pittsburgh*

*Chapter*

<http://www.aalncpittsburgh.org/>



" I attribute my success to this- I never gave or took any excuse." ~Florence Nightingale

Source: Wikipedia

# The LiNC

*Pittsburgh Chapter*

*The Link between Health Care and the Legal Profession*

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## **Board of Directors:**

### ***From our President***

Diane Mead RN, BSN, ACC, LNC

#### **President**

Everyone has heard the phrase, you must have a good foundation to build a strong house. When I look back over the last year, I am grateful to Audrey Lalli and the Board of Directors for building a solid foundation for the Pittsburgh Chapter to experience another successful year in 2017.

Our biggest goal for 2017 is to build a great conference for nurses from all walks of life and back grounds, to educate about liabilities in today's ever-changing healthcare arena.

The local conference entitled "C.Y.A. - Cover Your Assets" will be held on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at Duquesne University and will provide Nursing CE credits. It will cover aspects of documentation and include a "mock" trial.

Stephanie Kress (President-Elect and Conference Committee Chair) is charged with a monumental task and is looking forward to working with other volunteers to make this conference a huge success. Please contact her directly ([sakress@verizon.net](mailto:sakress@verizon.net)) if you are interested in helping in any capacity.

The Board has been very enthusiastic about the possible development of new committees as well as, enhancing our current ones. Three committees that are a current focus are the Membership, Education, and an Outreach Committee. If any of these topics are of interest to you, please contact me directly as I would love to hear from you. ([dmead@bethanyhospice.com](mailto:dmead@bethanyhospice.com)).

We remain the largest chapter of the AALNC. We want to attract future talented individuals to keep the legacy

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that founder Sondra Fandray began in 1989.  
Get involved! We promise that you will meet a lot of great people and have fun while learning about the wonderful world of Legal Nurse Consulting.  
Thanks for your continued support of our Pittsburgh Chapter!

## *Closing the Gap: The Role of the Care Transition Nurse*

Lori Trunzo RN, BSN, CSN, LNC

We all know the story, a patient is discharged home from the hospital, home health nursing is ordered upon discharge but despite this measure, the patient readmits in less than a week's time. This is very frustrating to the patient, family, and hospital staff. Not to mention the excessive cost and poor patient outcomes! What can be done to better ensure the transition from hospital to the post-acute care setting is successful? Enter the Care Transitions Nurse.

As a Care Transitions Coordinator (CTC), I am responsible for a hospital territory. Referrals are generated by case managers via a variety of methods. A CTC reviews the medical record, patient discharge needs, and makes contact with the case manager to either outright accept the referral, or to schedule an onsite visit to transition the more complex patient. A CTC will meet with the case manager, patient, and often the patient's family to discuss any outstanding needs.

Equipment that is needed is confirmed so it is already available to the patient at the time of discharge. The CTC also schedules follow up visits with the patient doctors before the patient is discharged home and makes sure appropriate transportation is available so the appointment is not missed. Medications are also reconciled. Report is then given to the receiving clinical team to communicate all needs. Within twenty-four hours after discharge the CTC calls the patient to make sure all needs have been met. If appropriate, the doctor is informed of any concerns.

I have worked as a CTC for both home health agencies and skilled facilities. This role in nursing care is a crucial component in managing all the resources needed to carry out patient care activities, prevent rehospitalization, avoid poor patient outcomes, and close the gaps with critical health communication. Please visit Joint Commission's Transition of Care Portal for additional information and updates:

<https://www.jointcommission.org/toc.aspx>

## *National Conference: Portland, Oregon*

### **AALNC 2017 Annual Forum Review**

By: Tiffany Tomkowitz BS, BSN, RN, LNC

For years, I've heard other members share their experiences from the national conferences. I have always looked forward to attending the post-conference meetings where the attendees shared the interesting things they had learned and recant the funny stories from their networking dinners. The one piece of advice every attendee shares is "if you have the chance, you really should go yourself." Fortunately, my chance came this year. On April 6th, I left for Portland, Oregon. Alone on a plane, a jumbled mix of nerves and excitement, I was headed across the country all by myself to attend my first ever National Conference.

Truth be told, sometimes I get shy around new people. I wish I didn't. I keep pushing myself to get over it, but it's always in the back of my mind - what if "shy Tiff" shows up and becomes a wallflower. To my relief, the conference planners took every effort to make newbies like me feel totally comfortable. When registering we were given bright pink ribbons labeled "1st time attendee" to wear on our lanyards. Yes, we stood out, but I found it was a great way to meet other first timers and a great conversation starter when people approached us.

Another ice breaker that helped me feel at ease was the "attendee match game". Each attendee had a tiny sticker on their nametag. The object of the game was to find someone else with the same sticker and ask them questions. If you found your match you were eligible for a prize. I never did find my match but I *did* meet a lot of people while searching.

In the age of social media and smartphones, the conference kept up with cool-kid technology by providing attendees with its very own app! The app was loaded with information about the conference, a hotel map, social media features, speaker bios and a schedule of events that you could use to set up a personalized agenda. I used it throughout the conference to check out session topics that interested me and plan out my day. Two thumbs up: one for cool factor, and the second for convenience!

The sessions themselves were packed with useful information. They were broken down into different tracks:

- "Professional and Business Issues"
- "Practice Issues"
- "Clinical Issues".

With such an immense range of services LNC's offer, the conference did a great job of covering issues that were useful to each specialty. As a cardiac nurse expert, I was most excited for the sessions "Cardiology Malpractice Claims: The Heart of the Matter" and "Wanted, LNC Expert: Help Us Choose You." Both gave me a ton of useful information that I will most certainly put into practice.

I also really enjoyed the panel discussions. The first, "Finding the Right Path as an LNC", highlighted the different paths each of the 7 LNC speakers took in their careers. The second,

"Non-Disclosure Clauses in Med Mal Lawsuits: Are They a Barrier to Patient Safety?" had a lively panel discussion fueled by audience questions. The session that probably stood out to me the most was called "LNC Cycles of Business - Successfully Weathering Adversity and Electrifying Growth." During this session, Rosie Oldham gave an honest and unfiltered reflection on her 25 years in business - the good, the bad and the almost bankrupt. Her determination and clever business strategies really came through during her presentation and left me feeling inspired for what my business might be one day.

Last but not least, the final presentation for the conference was "Surviving Mile Marker 97" presented by Miss America International and LNC, Tracy Rodgers. (Yes, Miss America was at the AALNC conference, big hair and all.) And you know what? She was awesome! I wouldn't be able to do her story justice in a few sentences but I'll give you a major highlight - after a serious, life-threatening car accident (almost every bone broken), Tracy found the courage to move on - in a custom made AFO that fits into her high heel!

Overall the conference was a major success - both for me personally and for the AALNC organization. I made lots of new friends, brought back useful information and have a renewed enthusiasm for our profession and this organization. The only thing left I can say is, "If you have the chance, you really should go yourself".

## **Joint Commission Corner**

The Joint Commission website has a plethora of information on topics like accreditation, certification, standards, and measurements. There is a tab for daily updates and many links to great resources, case reviews, and articles. Please find the following website URL for fast access to the Joint Commission website:

[www.jointcommission.org](http://www.jointcommission.org)

## **Announcements**

A. The Pittsburgh Chapter is planning their biennial conference on November 4, 2017. Please contact Stephanie Kress if you are interested and willing to help. sakress@verizon.net

B. Our Pittsburgh Chapter will be having a summer dinner in August. Please stay tuned for more details. This is a fun evening and great way to network with other AALNC members!

C. The Pittsburgh Chapter Bylaw updates are available. If you would like a copy, please contact Lori Trunzo: loritr4@yahoo.com

D. The National Chapter continues to offer Webinars for contact hours for members of the National Organization. For more information, please visit the National's Website:

<http://www.aalnc.org/>

5. Don't forget the monthly meetings held at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote on the second Wednesday of the months of January, February, March, April, May, September, and October to take advantage of the offering of contact hours. We also have a business meeting the second Wednesday in November, not to mention the past president and board meeting in June; a networking dinner in August; and a Christmas party in December!

## Happy Nurses Week 2017!

### *Opportunity*

1. Educational scholarship: Financial support to attend the National Chapter AALNC conference for next year in Clearwater, Florida April 12-14 2018! Please review the criteria for applying.

2. Write an article for the LiNC, always appreciated and great for credit towards the educational scholarship. Thanks to all who have contributed for this issue.
3. Tiffany Tomkowitz is our web mistress. Please forward any information to her that you would like to see added to the website. Check it out!  
<http://www.aalncpittsburgh.org>
4. Became a “volunteer” in the organization. Offer to help out when asked. After one year of membership, consider running for a Board position. Keep connected.

The Editor, Lori Trunzo RN, BSN, CSN, LNC would like to thank all those that contributed to the LiNC and also to thank you the editing board of Dana Bissontz MS, BSN, RN, CLCP, MSCC and Carrie Codelka RN, BSN