

Beacon Institute's *Wellspring Program* Awarded State Grant to Improve Nursing Home Quality in Facilities Serving Low Income Populations

"The Office of Health Care Quality continues to maintain its collaborative relationship with LifeSpan and The Beacon Institute. We look forward to the impact that the State Grant monies will have on improving the culture, and ultimately, the quality of care for Maryland's senior population" says Nancy Grimm, Director of the Office of Health Care Quality.

Columbia, Maryland, December 21, 2009: The Maryland Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ) has awarded a \$150,000 grant to LifeSpan and its education affiliate, The Beacon Institute, to improve clinical outcomes and enhance the quality of life for residents in 20 challenged nursing homes in the state. Beginning in January 2010, the grant will apply nursing home culture change principles to facilities with limited resources. Funds for the grant derive from a fund comprised of civil penalty monies paid by nursing homes and other entities resulting from a variety of Medicare and/or Medicaid infractions. The Office of Health Care Quality is committed to seeking additional funds to support a second year of the project. LifeSpan is also seeking additional funds from major foundations to support full implementation.

LifeSpan believes that residents and staff in facilities with limited resources deserve the high quality environment that results from implementing the core components of The Beacon Institute's *Wellspring Program*: resident-centered operational structure, an empowered workforce that utilizes bottom-up decision-making, and best practices in clinical and managerial areas. The grant will be used to extend these core components, enabling participating nursing homes to transform the culture in their facilities, improve resident health and quality of life and reduce staff turnover. Participating facilities have a minimum of 100 beds and serve a high percentage low income residents. They lack the funds to utilize existing long term care educational opportunities.

The nursing home "culture change" movement, which began about one decade ago, continues to grow throughout the United States. Various culture change models exist, focusing on creating a home-like environment where residents' needs and preferences drive facility operations. In order to meet these goals, direct care workers are given greater autonomy to care for residents. Many culture change models require that the physical structure of the facility be transformed to attain the desired deinstitutionalized effect. A

unique characteristic of the *WellSpring Program* is that it does not require renovations and can, therefore, be implemented in any setting including those without the resources for large construction projects.

LifeSpan is the association of Maryland and D.C. senior care providers, across the continuum of care. Its members are Nursing Facilities, Continuing Care Retirement Communities, Assisted Living Facilities, Affordable Housing Buildings, Independent Senior Living providers and Community Based programs.