Governor’s Gold Seal Award
By Carol Berkowitz

Last month, the Agency for Health Care Administration announced that seven Florida nursing homes had earned the Governor’s Gold Seal Award. Two of the seven facilities listed were FHCA members, bringing the total to nine FHCA members achieving this elite distinction (out of 22 facilities statewide).

The Governor’s Gold Seal Award for Excellence in Long Term Care recognizes nursing facilities that demonstrate excellence in long term care over a sustained period, promotes the stability of the profession and facilitates the physical, social, and emotional well-being of nursing facility residents.

The Gold Seal Award program was established in 2002. It was developed and is implemented by the Governor’s Panel on Excellence in Long Term Care, which is comprised of persons appointed by the Governor’s Office, Agency for Health Care Administration (Agency), Department of Health, Department of Elder Affairs, LeadingAge Florida, Florida Health Care Association, Florida Life Care Residents Association and the State Long Term Care Ombudsman. FHCA Past President Bobby Rosenthal serves as a member of this distinguished panel.

Facilities that wish to be considered for the Gold Seal Award must submit an application to the Agency, which is reviewed by the Governor’s Panel on Excellence in Long Term Care. The Panel considers these statutory criteria and makes recommendations to the Governor.

- Meet a quality of care scoring and ranking that places them in the top 10 percent in their region or top 15 percent in the state and be a 5-star facility in the Nursing Home Guide
- Have no Class I or II deficiencies within 30 months preceding application
- Provide evidence of financial soundness and stability
- Participate in a consumer satisfaction process involving residents, family members and guardians
- Involve families and members of the community in the facility on a regular basis
- Have a stable workforce
- Have an outstanding record with the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Council within the 30 months preceding application
- Provide targeted in-service training to meet training needs identified.

Gold Seal recipients must be in operation a minimum of 30 months prior to the date of application. Applications are reviewed in two periods — by March 15 and September 15 each year. For more information about the Governor’s Gold Seal Award, including a Gold Seal Application, visit the Agency’s website at http://ahca.myflorida.com/ and search for “Gold Seal Award.”

For a complete listing of Gold Seal facilities, visit FloridaHealthFinder.gov then click on Find a Facility or Provider.

FHCA Legislative Calendar

Because this year is an election year, the Florida House and Senate have decided that there will be no interim committee meetings until January 2015. The organizational session is scheduled to convene on Tuesday, November 18, 2014, and the regular legislative session will convene on Tuesday, March 3, 2015.

The interim House and Senate legislative meetings are scheduled as follows:

- The week of January 5
- The week of January 20
  (Begins on Tuesday in observance of the Martin Luther King Holiday)
- The week of February 2
- The week of February 9
- The week off February 16

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