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**Contact: Rebecca Reid**  
410-212-3843

## **Texas Long Term Care Leaders Kick off Statewide Campaign To Reduce the Use of Off Label Antipsychotics in Skilled Nursing Facilities**

*Data Show Texas Skilled Nursing Providers Made Strides during the Month of June, 2015 to Reduce the Use of Off Label Antipsychotics Used in the Treatment of Nursing Home Residents*

(Austin, TX) – State long term care leaders today launched the ***One a Month*** campaign aimed to build on recent success in lowering the use of off label antipsychotics in the treatment of some Texas nursing home residents. The effort involves partnering with nursing home providers statewide to commit to transitioning at least one resident a month off of these medications by using non- pharmacological interventions.

“Given Texas’ recent success in outpacing the nation on an average monthly reduction of the use of antipsychotics in the treatment of nursing home residents, the ***One a Month*** campaign will build statewide momentum in utilizing the appropriate resident centered non-pharmacological interventions,” said Kevin Warren, President and CEO of the Texas Health Care Association (THCA) which also leads the Commitment to Care initiative.

Antipsychotics are a medication that works in the brain, which may help to block certain chemicals that can cause symptoms of psychosis, such as hallucinations or delusions. Studies in nursing homes show many times it is safe to gradually reduce the dosage of these medications and ultimately discontinue their use, for residents who do not have a diagnosis for which the medication is designed to treat and is considered off label. During this gradual dose reduction

process care gives individualize non-pharmacological interventions to assist with the symptoms the antipsychotic medication was prescribed to address.

Spearheading the *One a Month* campaign are Leading Age Texas, the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), THCA and TMF Health Quality Institute (TMF), the regional Quality Improvement Organization (QIO).

“Texas long term care providers must strive to implement a culture change within nursing homes to reduce the use of off label antipsychotics,” said George Linial, President and CEO of Leading Age Texas. “Through compassionate care and individualized resident approaches, Texas nursing homes can consistently yield better outcomes in the treatment of nursing home residents.”

“While we recognize that 0% is not the goal, as some residents have appropriate diagnoses for the use of antipsychotics, the reduction of the use of off label antipsychotic medications in nursing homes is a quality care metric that Texas nursing homes have needed to improve upon,” said Michelle Dionne-Vahalik, Quality Monitoring Program and Initiatives, Director at the Department of Aging and Disability Services. “The *One a Month* campaign is an excellent objective and productive approach to galvanizing providers across the state to continue to make headway in care improvement.”

“TMF’s goal in working with Texas nursing homes to reduce antipsychotics is to educate staff and provide resources for the use of non-pharmacologic approaches to caregiving and person-centered dementia care practices.” said Susan Purcell, Project Director for TMF.

TMF’s concurrent review of quality measures in August 2015 revealed Texas nursing homes outpaced the nation’s average reduction of the use of antipsychotics during the month of June 2015. The National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes report in August 2015 lists Texas at 22.7% usage, compared to the national average of 18.3%. Texas has improved in this area since the data from the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2012, when antipsychotic use was at 28.9%.

The *One a Month* campaign points out that in one quarter **3500** + residents could be released from the effects of off label antipsychotics and in one year, **14,000** + residents - or approximately 15% - could be antipsychotic free.

A website focused on the *One a Month* campaign is in the process of being developed where nursing facility providers committed to the *One a Month* goal, can learn more about the *One a Month* campaign. Providers will also be able to download strategies to help them appropriately reduce the use of off label antipsychotic medications, thereby improving the quality of life for their residents.

To view a One a Month Infographic, click [here](#).

For more information on long term care leaders leading the *One a Month* campaign, visit their respective websites: <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/>, <http://www.txhca.org>; <http://www.leadingagetexas.org>; <http://www.tmfqin.org>