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## **Avera Morningside Heights Receives ICan Award from LeadingAge Minnesota**

Saint Paul, MN (Nov. 9, 2018) – Avera Morningside Heights recently placed second in the ICan Innovation Contest for its quality improvement initiative to increase person-centered care through workflow efficiency.

“Performance improvement starts with those who are closest to residents. As leaders in caregiving, Health Support Specialists are the perfect staff to identify performance improvement opportunities, solutions and action plans,” said Gayle Kvenvold, President and CEO, LeadingAge Minnesota. “We congratulate Avera Morningside Heights for their collaborative team effort and innovative approach to improving care for older adults.”

The Avera Morningside Heights ICan team, led by Health Support Specialist Krischelle Larson, set out to improve communication in the 12-bed short stay unit. The communications boards used by the team were not always up-to-date, which could result in negative communication and potential negative outcomes. The team examined the situation without blame, a cornerstone of quality improvement, and delved into solutions that included the entire interdisciplinary team of doctors, nurses, direct caregivers, therapies, social workers, and -- most importantly -- residents and their families.

Through the project, communication between the therapy department and the nursing department improved. Avera Morningside Heights staff continue to work together to complete and update the boards promptly and correctly, and the staff often see resident’s and families utilizing the boards for their information throughout the day.

In addition to Larson, other members of the Avera Morningside Heights ICan team included Josiah Nelson, Maria Cifuentes, Andrei Wogen, Renne Larson, Amina Ali, Belinda Pochardt, Hayle Christianson, Tracy Larson, Deb DeYonge, Laura Fuhrmann, Pat VanOverbeke, Drew Osborne, Teresa Drey and Elle Weber.

A total of nine projects were judged as part of the ICan Innovation contest. Judging the competition was Rich Davy, Senior Field Representative, Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry; Terri Foley, Program Manager, LeadingAge Minnesota; Allison Buersken, Program Manager, The Good Shepherd Community in Sauk Rapids, and Barbara Spurrier, Senior Vice President at Delos Ventures and Chief Strategy Officer at the Well Living Lab: a Delos/Mayo Clinic Collaboration.

ICan, developed by LeadingAge Minnesota, builds on an innovative program developed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in collaboration with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement called Transforming Care at the Bedside. The program engages leaders at all levels of the organization, with a special focus on front-line staff, in four improvement pillars:

- Improve quality and safety of care provided;
- Increase staff vitality (“joy in work”) and retention of staff;

- Engage and improve the care experience for the people served and their families;
- Improve the effectiveness of the entire care team.

ICan is being piloted through the Health Support Specialist (HSS) Registered Apprenticeship program. HSS is redefining how senior living providers are preparing their workforce to serve older adults by creating opportunities for highly capable caregivers to advance in their careers through cutting-edge skill training, rich on-the-job experiences, redesigned job descriptions, improved working environments, accessible career pathways and meaningful wage increases.

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#### **About LeadingAge Minnesota**

Driven to transform and enhance the experience of aging, LeadingAge Minnesota is the state's largest association of organizations serving older adults. Together with more than 50,000 caregivers, our members provide quality, compassionate services and support to nearly 70,000 older adults every day in all the places they call home.