

QIES News You Can Use

Important Information for Nursing Homes

March 16, 2020

(webpage links are in red)

APRIL MDS BASIC CLINICAL TRAINING CANCELLED

Based on the updated CMS guidance to nursing homes to restrict visitation, cancel all group activities, and practice social distancing, we are cancelling our April MDS training as a precaution to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We feel this step helps protect those we serve, and supports nursing homes by not pulling staff away from caring for residents during this difficult time.

We plan to provide a webinar in the near future for new MDS Coordinators and those needing assistance with obtaining and using their CASPER Reports. Please look for the upcoming announcement and visit our website in the next few weeks for further information.

CORONAVIRUS INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES

Should you have a resident who develops more severe symptoms from COVID-19, and requires transfer to a hospital for a higher level of care, there are steps you should take to ensure the safety of the resident and the receiving facility. Prior to transfer, emergency medical services and the receiving facility should be alerted to the resident's diagnosis, and precautions to be taken including placing a facemask on the resident during transfer. If the resident does not require hospitalization they can be discharged to home (in consultation with state or local public health authorities) if deemed medically and socially appropriate. Pending transfer or discharge, place a facemask on the resident and isolate him/her in a room with the door closed.

CMS states that nursing homes should admit any individuals that they would normally admit to their facility, including individuals from hospitals where a case of COVID-19 was/is present. Also, if possible, dedicate a unit/wing exclusively for any residents coming or returning from the hospital. This can serve as a step-down unit where they remain for 14 days with no symptoms (instead of integrating as usual on short-term rehab floor, or returning to long-stay original room).

The situation regarding COVID-19 is still evolving worldwide and can change rapidly. Stakeholders should be prepared for guidance from CMS and other

agencies (e.g., CDC) to change. Please monitor the relevant sources regularly for updates.

CMS has provided the following infection control resources for nursing homes:

- **Please check the following link regularly for critical updates, such as updates to guidance for using PPE:** [Link to Critical Updates](#).
- Guidance for use of Certain Industrial Respirators by Health Care Personnel: [Link to Guidance for Respirator Use](#)
- Long term care facility – Infection control self-assessment worksheet: [Link to Infection Control Self-Assessment](#)
- Infection control toolkit for bedside licensed nurses and nurse aides (“Head to Toe Infection Prevention (H2T) Toolkit”): [Link to Head to Toe Infection Prevention Toolkit](#)
- Infection Control and Prevention regulations and guidance: 42 CFR 483.80, Appendix PP of the State Operations Manual. See F-tag 880: [Link to Infection Control and Prevention Regulations](#)

MDS ASSESSMENT TIMEFRAME RELIEF

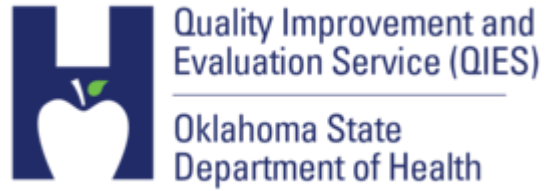
CMS is waiving 42 CFR 483.20 to provide relief to SNFs on the timeframe requirements for Minimum Data Set assessments and transmission. 42 CFR 483.20 is the regulation related to completion of the MDS in a timely and accurate manner. This guidance is offered to help nursing homes that may experience multiple admissions at once due to the coronavirus or may have staff members who are ill and unable to get the MDS completed and transmitted in the required timeframes. If you find you need to take advantage of this relief due to COVID-19, be sure to document and explain why the assessments are late so that surveyors will have this documentation to refer to during their next survey.

If you are not experiencing these issues, it is recommended that you continue to complete and submit your assessments in the required timeframes.

**Do you have MDS questions?
Contact the QIES Help Desk at (405) 271-5278
or MDShelp@health.ok.gov**

Your Oklahoma QIES Help Desk team -

Diane Henry, State RAI Coordinator
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