

Chiles Healthcare Consulting, LLC
Mary Chiles, RN
1908 Maple Shade Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23227
Telephone 804-355-1943, FAX 804-355-1859, Pager 804-997-1060
E-mail: marylhc@mindspring.com

FYI -- Updates

Date: April 2004



CMS Proposes Public Posting of Nurse Staff Hours

February 27, 2004 Federal Register; page 9282 "There is not enough data to establish minimum nurse staffing ratio requirements, but making the information available to the public may increase nurse staffing levels because of public demand, the Federal Register reported. The proposed rule would require nursing facilities and skilled nursing facilities to calculate the number of full-time equivalents for registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nurse aides directly responsible for resident care. The facilities would also record the daily resident census." [CMS is asking for comments by April 27](#). Go to <http://hcpro.com/content/37994.pdf> to see the proposed regulation. Written comments should be sent to CMS, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: CMS-3121-P, P.O. Box 8010, Baltimore, MD 21244-8010. If you need a copy of the proposed rule, please let me know.

On-line Training for Medicare Providers

CMS has implemented a new education publication for Medicare providers -- "Medlearn Matters . . . Information for Medicare Providers". Medlearn Matters is intended to keep providers informed of important changes to the Medicare system in an easy-to-read format. Clinicians and billing experts will prepare the articles. Go to <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medlearn/matters/> to see the online publication.

Fall Tracking Log

We have developed a new tracking log for falls. This log is intended to be a product of the facility's Quality Improvement/Quality Assurance program and used to facilitate the identification of trends and patterns related to specific residents that have experienced a fall. If you would like to have more information on this form, let me know. Cost is 50% of your hourly rate for the form and instructions.

Survey Focus – Thickened Liquids

When we notice trends during surveys, we like to share that information with you. During the past several months there has been an increased focus on the correct use of thickeners for fluids. Observations include monitoring that residents have accessible but appropriately thickened liquids at bedside; use of thickeners during medication pass, use of thickeners during meals, and use of thickeners during activities, etc. If you are not using pre-thickened liquids staff is being interviewed to evaluate their knowledge and competency at preparing liquids to the prescribed consistency. As a response to this observation, we have developed a quality improvement audit tool that we are using in our mock surveys to assist in identifying any concerns related to use of thickeners. If you would like to have more information on this form, let me know; cost is 50% of your hourly rate for the tool.

AIM for SUCCESS

A 2002 AHCA study found that the **turnover rate for DONs in Virginia is 142.7%; this is the highest in the nation**. The intent of the AIM for SUCCESS program is to assist the organization in ensuring that the nursing organization within the facility has knowledge and skills to establish and maintain a positive environment focused on continuous quality improvement, to effectively administer systems that will enhance daily operations and that will promote a sense of professionalism and desire for growth and commitment within the nursing department and facility. Supplemental outcomes of this investment include enhanced compliance with regulatory requirements and industry standards and organizational efficiencies. CHC is excited about this program and we plan to have it ready by mid summer. If you are interested and wish more information regarding this program, please contact me.



Facilitating Quality Health Systems Thru Care and Compliance