



LONG TERM CARE (LTC) E- NEWSLETTER – April 2015: Volume 13, Number 3

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[LTCCC Releases Primer on Nursing Home Quality for Managed Care Organizations & Other Stakeholders](#)

In April 2015, LTCCC released a primer on nursing home quality standards. Though expected to be useful to a variety of nursing home stakeholders, including consumers, families and advocates, the primer is geared to Managed Care Organizations (MCO). Starting in New York City in early 2015 and proceeding across the state over the following months, New York is transitioning access to nursing home care for Medicaid beneficiaries to mandatory managed care. Rather than accessing nursing homes independently, New Yorkers who receive Medicaid benefits will be required to access care through an MCO. Importantly, MCOs are not required to contract with all licensed facilities. Thus, it is important for them to have the knowledge that they need to help their members make appropriate choices for nursing home placement.

The goal of the primer and resources, produced with funding from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, is to provide useful information on nursing home quality of care and quality of life

requirements and a framework for understanding and assessing a nursing home’s quality. The primer provides general and specific information on laws and regulatory standards that we have identified as important to quality. All of the standards discussed in the primer are listed in the Table of Contents with a brief descriptive. The Table of Contents has imbedded links, to assist in quickly locating the provision of interest. It is highly recommended to use the primer as a resource in electronic form, so that relevant information is readily available and accessible when needed.

[\[http://www.nursinghome411.org/?articleid=10093\]](http://www.nursinghome411.org/?articleid=10093)

Nursing Home Compare Gets “PBJ” to Improve Accuracy of Reported Nursing Home Staffing

Background

A nursing home’s level of care staff is an important – perhaps the most important – indicator of the quality of care provided to residents. Staffing levels are also critical to quality of life and dignity for both residents and care staff. For these reasons, the level of direct care staff that a facility has is an important component of Nursing Home Compare and the federal Five Star Rating System for Nursing Homes.

Unfortunately, the veracity of these staffing data have long been questioned, and are widely considered to be, as a whole, inflated. Staffing levels are self-reported by facilities and are unaudited by either the states or the federal government.

To address this issue, CMS (the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) has been working for many years on a system to improve the quality of information provided to the public on Nursing Home Compare. The 2010 Affordable Care Act (so-called ObamaCare) mandated that CMS require facilities to electronically submit direct care staffing information (including information with respect to agency and contract staff) based on payroll and other verifiable and auditable data. LTCCC, working with other resident advocates, has been advocating for CMS to develop and implement this system as expeditiously as possible, based on our concerns that staffing and other important nursing home quality information reported to the public contains significant inaccuracies that are misleading to individuals and families that are trying to find a nursing home that provides decent care and dignity.

What’s Happening Now?

On April 8, 2015, CMS announced its plans to implement an improved system for collecting staffing information. Following is an excerpt from the statement on CMS’s website.

Section 6106 of the Affordable Care Act requires facilities to electronically submit direct care staffing information (including agency and contract staff) based on payroll and other auditable data. The data, when combined with census information, can then be used to not only report on the level of staff in each nursing home, but also to report on employee turnover and tenure, which can impact the quality of care delivered.

Therefore, CMS has developed a system for facilities to submit staffing and census information – Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ). This system will allow staffing and census information to be collected on a regular and more frequent basis than currently collected. It will also be auditable to ensure accuracy. All long term care facilities will have access to this system at no cost to facilities.

CMS intends to collect staffing and census data through the PBJ system on a voluntary basis beginning on October 1, 2015, and on a mandatory basis beginning on July 1, 2016. Registration for voluntary submission will begin in August 2015....

[\[http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/NursingHomeQualityInits/Staffing-Data-Submission-PBJ.html\]](http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/NursingHomeQualityInits/Staffing-Data-Submission-PBJ.html)

We're on the Web!

www.ltccc.org: Our main website, with access to all of our issues, policy briefs and research.

www.assisted-living411.org: For information on assisted living, including consumer issues and policies.

www.nursinghome411.org: For information on developments in nursing home care, regulation and policy issues.

LTCCC Links of Interest

[View](#) the latest enforcement actions against nursing homes in New York State.

[Read](#) the latest edition of LTCCC's quarterly newsletter, *The Monitor*.

LTCCC's dedicated [webpage on antipsychotic drugs and dementia care](#).

LTCCC Reports & Resources

[***Left Behind: The Impact Of The Failure To Fulfill The Promise of The National Campaign To Improve Dementia Care***](#)

[***Improving Nursing Home Care: Consumer Priorities for CMS***](#) (Policy brief of the [Coalition for Quality Care](#), written by LTCCC's executive director, Richard Mollot)

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[*Antipsychotic Drug Use in NY State Nursing Homes: An Assessment of Progress in the National Campaign to Reduce Drugs and Improve Dementia Care*](#)

[*NY State Nursing Homes in Managed Long Term Care*](#)

[*The New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program: An Assessment of Current Performance, Issues & Obstacles*](#)

[*Piecing Together Quality Long-Term Care: A Consumer's Guide to Choices & Advocacy in NY*](#)

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