

Eli's Rehab Report

Industry Notes: Don't Substitute Therapy Asst. For Home Health Aides

Don't be so quick to substitute a therapist assistant for a home health aide when you are scheduling calls for it. CMS "has had a longstanding policy that states registered nurses and licensed practical (vocational) nurses are permitted to perform duties of a home health aide without having to meet aide training and/or testing requirements," the National Association for Home Care & Hospice says in its member newsletter.

But now CMS has told NAHC that the same doesn't go for physical and occupational therapists and therapy assistants. "Since a licensed therapist or therapy assistant is not a 'nursing personnel,' therapy personnel must [meet] all of the qualifications for a home health aide -- training and/or competency," CMS has told NAHC. Also, "supervision for aide (every 2 weeks) would apply assuming the person meets the qualifications."

Assess For Cognitive Issues When Stroke Is A Risk

If your patients have risk factors for stroke, particularly high blood pressure, you need to assess them carefully for cognitive issues, a new study suggests.

High blood pressure and other known risk factors for stroke increase the risk of developing cognitive problems, even among people who have never had a stroke, the Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke (REGARDS) study funded by the National Institutes of Health has found. "Individuals at risk for stroke may experience cognitive problems as their blood vessels deteriorate," explains the study that included 24,000 participants over an average of 4.1 years.