

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Don't Forget to INTERACT

Interventions to Reduce Acute Care Transfers (INTERACT) is a quality improvement program developed by the **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** (CMS). Its goal is to reduce the frequency of costly and care confounding transfers from the nursing home to the acute care setting.

"By improving the identification, evaluation, and communication about changes in resident status, some, but not all, acute care transfers can be avoided," notes INTERACT on its home page (<http://interact2.net/>).

The program includes free tools designed to improve 1) communication, 2) clinical care, and 3) advance care planning. The tools have been adapted for use in home care and assisted living settings, as well as nursing homes.

INTERACT also links providers to a number of additional educational tools, including training materials that can help you meet requirements set forth in Section 6121 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010, which calls for nurse aides to receive regular training on caring for residents with dementia and on preventing abuse. The training module, CMS Hand in Hand: A Training Series for Nursing Homes Toolkit, is available for download at www.cms-handinhandtoolkit.info.

INTERACT also offers valuable tools designed to encourage conversation between providers and patients about end-of-life care decision.

Pink slip: Starting October 1, 2014, California requires providers to use the new pink POLST form, available through the INTERACT web site. POLST, which stands for Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment, is a physician order that must be signed by both a doctor and patient that specifies the types of medical treatment a patient wishes to receive toward the end of life.

"POLST is a tool that encourages conversation between providers and patients about their end-of-life treatment options, and helps patients make more informed decisions and communicate their wishes clearly," say the tool's developers. "As a result, POLST can prevent unwanted or medically ineffective treatment, reduce patient and family suffering, and help ensure that patient wishes are followed."