

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

MDS 3.0 CORNER: Be Prepared to Do Discharge MDS Assessments When the MDS 3.0 Goes Live

Find out what CMS may be able to tell based on this assessment.

Unless CMS makes a change before the MDS 3.0 rolls out on Oct. 1, your team will be doing MDS discharge assessments that make the current discharge tracking requirements seem like a breeze. The extra work will also provide additional information potentially to CMS and to surveyors.

The MDS 3.0 RAI manual requires doing the MDS assessments for residents being discharged regardless of whether they are expected to return, says **Rena Shephard, MHA, RN, RAC-MT, C-NE**, founding chair and executive of Nurse Assessment Coordinators and president and CEO of RRS Healthcare Consulting Services in San Diego. By contrast, the MDS 2.0 requires a few items to track resident discharges, she notes. That's one thing "that has folks a little stirred up due to the time it takes to do the additional MDS assessment. I keep hoping that [the time requirement] will balance out because the MDS 3.0 as it was tested took less time to do than the MDS 2.0."

What's behind the discharge assessment? Part of it may be that the assessments enable CMS to "analyze a beneficiary's status across settings in the continuum of care," Shephard surmises. "But right now each healthcare setting uses a different assessment tool and way to measure quality, so comparing assessments would be like comparing apples to oranges."

CMS could, however, compare residents' status on admission to their status at discharge from the SNF, says Shephard. "We don't know what the QIs/QMs are going to look like for the MDS 3.0," Shephard points out. "And we don't know if discharge assessments will be brought into that process."