

## Long-Term Care Survey Alert

### **MDS CORNER: Give Your MDS Software a Checkup for Coding Section M (Skin Condition)**

CMS says to be aware of this potential glitch.

If you ever blame your software for messing up your MDS accuracy, you may be on the mark when it comes to Section M.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has heard that some software vendor specs don't mesh with the agency's specs, according to an agency representative speaking at a SNF/LTC Open Door Forum.

Remember: You code skin ulcers caused by pressure or circulatory problems in M1 whereas the intent of M2 is to "record the highest stage for two types of skin ulcers, pressure and stasis" present in the seven-day lookback, the RAI User's Manual directs. Thus, you can have an arterial ulcer coded in M1, but it should not appear in M2.

The problem: "If the software vendor had an edit that did not allow M2 to be zero when M1 had a value, the facility would be required to report a pressure or stasis ulcer" when the resident didn't have one, says **Peter Arbuthnot**, an MDS software expert in Jackson, Miss. If that's the case with your software, let your vendor know, advised CMS at the ODF.

Resource: For a free copy of an article in **Eli's** MDS Alert explaining key ways to tell the difference between pressure and non-pressure ulcers, e-mail the editor at [KarenL@Eliresearch.com](mailto:KarenL@Eliresearch.com).