

## Long-Term Care Survey Alert

### Quality of Life: MEASURING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR VISION-IMPAIRED RESIDENTS

Vision impairment and blindness reduce the quality of life for many nursing home residents, but new research could help improve care for this population. Published in the August 2002 issue of *Quality of Life Research*, two University of Alabama researchers studied how to perfect a proposed visual-targeted health-related quality of life measurement.

The study's purpose was to establish core content areas for the HRQOL instrument. Conducting in-depth interviews with 40 residents, the two researchers audiotaped, transcribed, and coded comments about vision problems; they also assessed binocular distance and near visual acuity in order to test the measurement capabilities of HRQOL. The 1,070 vision-related comments were grouped into 13 categories, including ocular symptoms (18 percent of comments), reading (15 percent), general vision (13 percent), psychological distress (12 percent) and daily living activities (7 percent).

Compared to published material on vision-specific areas, the new study found that nursing homes residents focused more on ocular symptoms and basic living activities, and didn't mention issues related to driving, home care, and financing.

Because the comments made by those with "good" and "poor" vision didn't differ between categories, the study concluded that a one vision-specific HRQOL instrument would do the job for measuring vision quality.