

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Quality Oversight: CMS DIRECTS STATES ON HOW TO SPEND CIVIL MONETARY PENALTIES

Ever wonder what states do with the civil monetary penalties they collect from facilities for survey deficiencies?

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** recently instructed states to use such funds for any project that directly benefits facility residents, including funding an increase in ombudsman services.

States should not finance loans to deficient facilities that are having financial difficulties in meeting payroll or paying vendors, CMS warns. However, states could prevent facilities' continued noncompliance by developing videos, pamphlets, or other publications to promote best practices, including the development of public service announcements related to "deficient areas" and employing consultants to provide training to deficient facilities. CMS notes, for example, that North Carolina and other states have issued grants to several nursing facilities to fund **Eden Alternative** projects involving pets and gardening.