

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Reader Question: Get the Upper Hand During the QIS Exit Conference

Question: How does the exit conference for the Quality Indicator Survey typically work? What steps should a facility surveyed by the QIS take related to the exit conference?

Answer: "In the QIS, there is an informal meeting held with the lead surveyor and facility leader(s)," which providers refer to as the "pre-exit," says **Diane Vaughn, RN, C-DONA/LTC, LNHA**, director of quality initiatives at Pathway Health Services Inc. in White Bear Lake, Minn. At this meeting, surveyors let the administration and/or director of nursing know if they still have questions about certain areas. If the surveyors are going to cite an area or are considering the scope and severity of a citation, typically they will ask the facility for more information about those areas, Vaughn relays. (The surveyors will not, however, discuss the scope and severity decision with the provider in the pre-exit, she adds.)

At the exit conference, the facility may provide surveyors more information. "At times, surveyors will let facilities send them additional information, if the surveyors can't stay longer," says Vaughn. She notes that states differ in terms of whether they will share the scope and severity of a citation because "in many states the CMS 2567 goes through a quality review process" to help ensure the "continuity of citations."

Vaughn provides these two tips for making the most of the QIS exit conference: Have your medical director present.

Designate someone to document the details the surveyor(s) share with the facility staff during the exit conference, which may not be written on the exit report that surveyors leave providers in the QIS. This can help the provider draft a CMS 2567 plan of correction before receiving the official one, Vaughn advises.