

# Long-Term Care Survey Alert

## SURVEY & CLINICAL NEWS

CMS posts draft version of MDS 3.0. Check out the draft version of the MDS 3.0 on the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** Web site. The draft form, which CMS will use for validation purposes, has a new look, new questions and other changes. Highlights include:

Activities of daily living: Combines self-performance and support in assessing ADLs.

Pain: Maps a standardized pain scale assessment and assesses the extent to which pain interferes with functional status. Includes new pain assessment items, including medications orders.

Depression: Validates that depression exists by using a self-reported five-item Geriatric Depression Scale in cognitively intact individuals. If the five screening questions point to depression, then staff would do a full GDS assessment as part of the RAP for cognitively intact residents.

Pressure ulcers: Staging language reflects definitions from the NPUAP-sponsored consensus conference including a category for unstageable pressure ulcers.

Quality of life: A new quality of life section assesses the resident's perception and enjoyment of life in the facility.

Next on the agenda: CMS will solicit public feedback on the draft form during a Town Hall meeting in Baltimore in June or July, according to an agency spokesperson. The Federal Register will report the meeting time, date and other specifics, and CMS will notify provider groups of the information. Following validation testing, CMS will hold a follow-up Town Hall meeting, probably in October.

Tips: The MDS 3.0 draft isn't a done deal although the final draft will probably be substantively the same, says **Deborah Taylor**, a former nursing home administrator who is with **Quick Care**, a long-term care software company in Dallas.

Providers should thus review the draft carefully and share their reactions and suggested changes with professional groups and CMS. Watch for the Town Hall meeting and also dial into CMS' nursing home/long-term care open door forums to share your input (to register for the open forums, go to [www.cms.gov/opendoor/snf-ltc.asp](http://www.cms.gov/opendoor/snf-ltc.asp)).

Promising new Alzheimer's drug under review. The **Food & Drug Administration** is evaluating a medication that has been shown to help people with moderate to severe Alzheimer's disease improve their cognitive and functional status.

The medication, Memantine, has also been shown to reduce caregiver time by more than 45 hours a month, according to a study reported in a recent New England Journal of Medicine.

Memantine appears to protect the brain's nerve cells against excess amounts of glutamate, a chemical messenger released in large amounts by cells damaged by Alzheimer's disease or certain other neurological disorders, according to the **Alzheimer's Association**. Editor's Note: For more information, go to [www.alz.org/ResourceCenter/ByTopic/memantine.htm](http://www.alz.org/ResourceCenter/ByTopic/memantine.htm).

Tip: Consider preparing a handout for residents with AD and their family members providing information and resources to explain existing treatment options and promising new treatments under FDA review, such as Memantine.

