

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Survey Trends: HIGHLIGHTS OF OIG REPORT ON PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES

What the OIG Found: In its report, "Psychosocial Services In Skilled Nursing Facilities," the **HHS Office of Inspector General** found that 39 percent of a sample of 299 newly admitted SNF residents had inadequate care plans to meet identified psychosocial needs. And 46 percent of residents with care plans didn't get all of their psychosocial services planned during the facility stay (5 percent of that number received none of the services). In addition, OSCAR data show over 15 percent of nursing facilities have been cited for psychosocial deficiencies each of the years from 1998-2001.

Study Methodology: OIG auditors interviewed facility social workers and reviewed medical records and care plans to determine if residents were receiving necessary psychosocial services.

OIG Recommendations: To correct the identified shortfalls in psychosocial care, the OIG recommends that the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** "strengthen" oversight of the psychosocial portion of the resident assessment and related care plans. In a letter to the OIG included in the report, CMS concurred, identifying training and other initiatives already underway in this area.

Cause for kudos: The OIG found that nursing facilities with more than 120 beds are meeting the social worker requirement by employing a full-time qualified social worker and a very high percentage of smaller facilities are also meeting this higher standard, even though they aren't required to do so.