

MDS Alert

CMS Updates: Watch for Upcoming CMS Deadlines, Reminders, Changes

Keep abreast of these important dates.

SNF Quality Data Reporting Deadline Looms

"MDS assessment data for April 1 - June 30 (Q2) of calendar year (CY) 2018 are due with this submission deadline. All data must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on November 15, 2018," the **Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services** (CMS) says on its website.

"It is recommended that the applicable CMS CASPER validation reports are run prior to each quarterly reporting deadline to ensure that all required data were submitted. We encourage you to verify all facility information prior to submission, including CCN and facility name," CMS says.

Important: If your facility is in a county affected by Hurricane Florence, you may be eligible for an extension or exception, but you need to know whether your facility is in a designated county.

The blanket exemption for designated counties adjusts the SNF Quality Reporting Program (QRP) data submission requirements for the MDS for the second and third quarters of 2018:

- Second Quarter 2018 (April 1, 2018 - June 30, 2018 for Nov. 15, 2018, submission deadline
- Third Quarter 2018 (July 1, 2018 - Sept. 30, 2018) for Feb. 15, 2019, submission deadline

"Please note that this exemption applies to quality data only, that is data used for the SNF Quality Reporting Program and to determine APU compliance and has no effect on the submission of the MDS for payment or other required purposes," CMS says.

"While you can continue to submit quality data to CMS, any data submissions for the above-listed exempt CY 2018 quarters(s) will not be considered when determining compliance related to the FY 2020 reporting requirements for your SNF," CMS explains.

The widespread nature of the exemption means that quality metric calculations on the whole may be skewed.

"We would like to also note that this exemption from quality reporting requirements for the SNF QRP may impact the minimum case threshold counts for calculation of quality metrics, in which case CMS would suppress the applicable data on the SNF Compare site, when quality measure target periods that include Q2 & Q3 2018 data are calculated and posted," CMS says.

CMS Announces New Strategies for Dementia Management and Care

CMS continues to focus on reducing the use of antipsychotics in long-term care facilities, with a renewed focus on facilities delivering better care to residents with dementia or schizophrenia.

"National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care: CMS has established a public goal of reducing the antipsychotic rate by 15% among those facilities that continue to have high rates of antipsychotic usage by the end of 2019," says the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Quality, safety, & oversight Group** (formerly Survey and Certification) in its Quality Assurance for the Medicare & Medicaid Programs FY2019 Mission & Priority Document (MPD).

CMS notes that facilities in some states may receive more scrutiny than others, and welcome states to take initiative in joining the observation of these surveys.

"Focused Dementia Care Surveys: FY2019, CMS plans to have federal contract surveyors conduct additional focused dementia care surveys in some states. Due to concerns about facilities using an inappropriate process to diagnose residents with schizophrenia, we also expect to conduct a limited number of surveys focused on this issue. We welcome States that may want surveyors to observe either of these surveys," the Quality, Safety, & Oversight Group says.