# MDS Alert

## Industry News To Use: Submit Your Suggestions On SNF Therapy Payments

**Plus: Get the scoop on the MDS manual and data specs.**

If you have ideas about how the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) should pay for therapy services in skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), now is your chance to be heard.

CMS has contracted with the **Brookings** I**nstitution** and **Acumen, LLC** in a research project to identify possible alternatives to the existing methodology used to pay for therapy under the SNF Prospective Payment System (PPS), according to a Feb. 14 CMS Open Door Forum (ODF). The researchers are just beginning the project  conducting a stakeholder outreach campaign and literature review.

Next fall, the researchers will begin the next phase of the project and start to identify ideas for designing a new system to pay for therapy in SNFs, according to the N**ational** A**ssociation for the** S**upport of Long** T**erm Care** (NASL).

You can get more information by visiting the project's webpage at [www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/SNFPPS/therapyresearch.html](www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/SNFPPS/therapyresearch.html). If you want to submit your comments or suggestions, you can email them to [SNFTherapyPayments@cms.hhs.gov](SNFTherapyPayments@cms.hhs.gov).

**In other news...**

**When You'll See Updates to the MDS Manual**

Also in the Feb. 14 ODF, CMS announced that it will post updates to the MDS manual on the QTSO website by the end of April. And CMS will post the updates to the RAI manual website by early May.

CMS also posted a new version of the data submission specs  MDS 3.0 (V1.13.0). Version 1.13.0 is a draft and could change before CMS publishes the final specifications, NASL says. The new version will become effective Oct. 1.

**Resource:** You can get more details at [www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/NursingHomeQualityInits/Downloads/MDS30TechnicalSpecsVersionHistory.zip](www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/NursingHomeQualityInits/Downloads/MDS30TechnicalSpecsVersionHistory.zip).