

## MDS Alert

### Industry News to Use: Watch Out SNFs: HIPAA Penalties Will 'Set Records'

**Plus: New research shines a light on the future of dementia care.**

Now that HIPAA audits are back in full swing, you need to be on your guard. And according to government officials, skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) are especially at risk for record-breaking HIPAA penalties.

The **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services'** chief regional civil rights counsel **Jerome Meites** warned that HIPAA penalties during the next 12 months should "set records," reported **Christopher Froeb** in a June 26 **Nixon Peabody LLP** blog posting. Meites made these comments during an **American Bar Association conference** in Chicago on June 12 and 13.

Meites urged SNFs and other providers to perform comprehensive risk analyses, particularly now that HIPAA audits have recommenced after the temporary suspension in 2012.

"SNF operators should take note of this increased enforcement and, if necessary, perform internal audits to confirm policies are in place regarding HIPAA compliance," Froeb advised.