

MDS Alert

MDS 3.0 Update: Look For A Rollback In MDS 3.0 Implementation

CMS official says agency rethinking 2004-2005 deadline.

How often have you heard it said that something worth doing is worth doing right? CMS appears to be heeding that advice in deciding to rethink the December 2004 implementation date for the MDS 3.0.

The agency is looking at coordinating the MDS 3.0 with other initiatives coming online, according to **Mary Pratt**, a policy specialist with the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid**, addressing the **American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators** on Sept. 11 in Las Vegas. While Pratt didn't come out and say when the instrument may debut, CMS' public announcement appears to pave the way for a potential delay in implementation.

CMS Administrator **Tom Scully** got the deadline rolling when he announced at an open door forum that the revised MDS would be ready for use in 2004. CMS subsequently posted a draft version of MDS 3.0 on April 2, 2003. A week later, CMS awarded a contract to RAND Corporation to field-test and evaluate the draft instrument.

Changes on the horizon that would require CMS to revise the MDS 3.0 if released in late 2004 include:

1. A RUGs refinement report, expected out in January 2005.
2. The Consolidated Health Informatics initiative to adopt government-wide standards for clinical health data. CMS will be incorporating SNOWMED, a uniform terminology system, into the MDS.

CMS is also in the early stages of looking very carefully at the impact of the draft MDS 3.0 on RUGs payment, Pratt reported. "The agency is looking at the possibility of doing another time study to look at the effects of items on payment."

