

MDS Alert

MDS NEWS

CMS is making headway on its STRIVE (National Staff Time Study To Recalibrate RUG III). In the study underway, researchers are collecting national data in nursing facilities about the nursing and therapy time and ancillary resources required to care for postacute and long-term care residents. The on-site STRIVE study should be completed during spring/summer of 2007, a **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** spokesperson tells **Eli**. The agency expects the analysis report should be finished by the winter of 2007/2008. "CMS would consider moving forward with rulemaking no earlier than spring 2008 for fiscal year 2009," according to the spokesperson.

The electronic handwriting is on the wall for a move to EMRs. **Optimus EMR**, an electronic medical record vendor, will soon be publishing results of a CMS-sponsored study that showed point-of-care data collection using mostly hand-held PDAs improved patient care "as demonstrated by the MDS-driven quality indicators," **Robert Davis**, CEO of the Irvine, CA-based company, tells **Eli**.

Ready for new publicly reported flu and pneumococcal vaccination quality measures? The Nursing Home Compare Web site is now reporting two new QMs that look at the percentage of "willing and eligible" long-stay and short-stay residents who received influenza and pneum-ococcal vaccinations.

Residents excluded from the flu vaccination measure include those who were not in the facility during the flu season (Oct. 1 through March 31); those not eligible for the vaccination; those who declined the vaccination; or instances where the facility could not obtain the vaccine. Exclusions from the pneumococcal vaccination include residents who aren't eligible to receive the vaccine, and those who were offered the vaccine but declined it.

Review the instructions for the new vaccination QMs at www.cms.hhs.gov/NursingHomeQualityInits/downloads/NHQIVaccinationSupplement.pdf.