

MDS Alert

Medicare: Beware--Auditors Can 'Stumble' Across Your OMRA Missteps

Don't let undetected snafus wreak havoc.

An unintentional pattern of errant OMRAs that tip the payment scales in your facility's favor can turn into a major compliance headache. "For example, an FI selected one facility for a probe review due to its high volume of Medicare days and ultra-high rehab residents," says **Theresa Lang, RN, BSN, PHN, RAC-C, WCC**, a consultant with **Specialized Medical Services** in Milwaukee. "But the reviewers are identifying OMRAs that should have been done--or that were done incorrectly--in ways that benefited the facility," Lang tells **Eli**. "In another case, the OIG has gone onsite and copied charts related to inappropriate OMRAs."

A facility's problems with the OMRA are often due to a disconnect between the clinical and billing side, in the experience of **Nancy Augustine, RN, MSN**, a consultant with **LTCQ Inc.** in Lexington, MA, who has done audit work for the OIG. (For strategies to ensure your facility bills OMRAs correctly, see the April 2006 MDS Alert.)