

MDS Alert

Sort Out ARDs & Signatures With These Scenarios

Learn when you can't allow an individual staff member to sign only once.

If the completion dates and Assessment Reference Dates (ARDs) have thrown you for a loop when it comes to signatures in Section Z, learning through examples will give you some clarity. Here are three helpful scenarios from the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services' (DADS) June edition of The MDS Mentor.

What to Do If Completion & Encoding Dates Differ

Scenario #1: A staff member is assigned to complete the mood interview in Section D □ Mood. Although the staff member understands the requirement that she must conduct interviews in the look-back period, page D-4 of the RAI manual states that the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) prefers staff conduct this interview on "preferably the day before or day of the ARD."

Therefore, the staff member conducts the resident interview on the ARD, which is a Friday, and gathers all the information and determines the correct coding of the mood interview items. The staff member then leaves for a three-day weekend and returns on Tuesday to code the Section D interview items on the MDS.

Question: Based on this scenario, what completion date should you use in Z0400 □ Signatures of Persons Completing the Assessment or Entry/Death Reporting for the mood interview items?

Answer: "If you answered that it would be the date the items were originally completed, which was the ARD (the previous Friday), you would be correct," DADS stated.

You would input the date the MDS data was encoded as the date completed only when the staff member completes and encodes the items on the same day, DADS noted. Otherwise, the staff member would use the date she originally completed the items, which would be the date she gathered the data and determined the coding.

When the Same Person Must Sign Multiple Times

Scenario #2: Only one staff member completed an entire section of the MDS, but she did not complete all the items in that section on the same date.

Question: How would this staff member complete Z0400 for this MDS section?

Answer: This is a case in which a single staff member would need to sign two or more times for the same section in item Z0400, DADS pointed out. "Because it is possible items within a section were completed on different dates, the same staff member may have to sign multiple times to reflect accurate dates of completion for each subset of items."

Double-Check Completion Dates On And After the ARD

Scenario #3: The staff member who conducted the interview in Section C □ Cognitive Patterns on the ARD was also the staff member responsible for coding the rest of the active items in Section C and determining coding for those items three days after the ARD.

Question: What completion date would you use?

Answer: In Z0400, the staff member would indicate that she completed the mental status interview items on the ARD

and then make another entry documenting that she completed the rest of the items in Section C on the date of three days following the ARD, DADS said.