

## MDS Alert

### STAFF TRAINING: Prepare for MDS 3.0 Without Digging Into the Nitty Gritty

Here's what your facility can do now without having to backtrack later.

Talk about frustrating: The final MDS 3.0 is out, but CMS strongly advises facilities to hold off on MDS 3.0 training until after the agency conducts its train-the-trainer sessions next spring.

So how can you comply without falling behind in preparing for the new assessment instrument?

Focus on the big picture, advise MDS experts. People can begin to get familiar with the MDS 3.0 without getting into the "final detailed training," says **Rena Shephard, MHA, RN, RAC-MT, C-NE**, founding board chair and executive editor for the American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordinators. For example, take a look at the changes in assessments themselves in terms of when they have to be done, she says.

"There's [also] a brand new assessment: the discharge assessment with an item set" that the MDS team will have to complete.

Say goodbye to this form:

Currently, facilities not in case-mix states use a two-page quarterly form, Shephard notes. And while the MDS 3.0 has a quarterly form that is shorter than the comprehensive assessment, it doesn't provide "an equivalent of that very [abbreviated quarterly form]."

Other potential general areas of MDS 3.0 discussion include looking at how many sections require interviews, advises **Sandra Fitzler, RN**, senior director of clinical services for the American Health Care Association. People could, for example, also "look at the section on pressure ulcers and see how much more in-depth that is" but without focusing on the coding specifics.

Brace for the Magnitude of Changes Ahead

"The important thing for people to keep in mind is the MDS 3.0 isn't just an update of the MDS 2.0," stresses Shephard. "It's much more significant in terms of items changes, changes to the assessments, and the assessment philosophy itself with the emphasis on interviewing the resident for key care areas" of the assessment, Shephard continues.

The MDS 3.0 also interfaces with the RUG-IV system, "which complicates matters even more," she says.