

MDS Alert

Watch For New Proposed Competency-Based Staffing Requirements

CMS wants your facility to provide mandatory staff training topics.

Although currently the focus is on the number of direct care staff members and their hours worked, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** (CMS) wants to fine-tune its staffing focus on the quality of nursing home staff, not the quantity.

A proposed regulation for nursing facilities specifically addresses "sufficient" staffing requirements, according to a recent analysis by the **CMS Compliance Group Inc.** (CCG). The proposed regulation, "Medicare and Medicaid Programs: Reform of Requirements for Long-Term care Facilities," emerges in the midst of much controversy regarding staffing hours and the implementation of the Payroll Based Journal (PBJ) for staffing data.

Although facilities may have sufficient numbers of staff members, resident care quality may still not improve if staff don't have the skills and competencies to provide high-quality care, CMS maintains. So the proposed regulation would shift the focus to staff competencies instead of a static number of direct care employees at a facility.

The proposed regulations use the Facility Assessment as a guide to provide an alternative method for calculating staffing, according to CCG. Specifically, CMS proposes to use a competency requirement for determining sufficient nursing staff, dietary services and behavioral health services based on the Facility Assessment.

CMS also wants to institute the following mandatory staff training topics:

- Communication;
- Resident rights and facility responsibilities;
- Abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- QAPI and infection control;
- Compliance and ethics;
- In-service training for nurse aides on dementia management and resident abuse prevention training; and
- Behavioral health training.

Resource: You can read more about the proposed regulation regarding quality of staff competency in long-term care facilities at

www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/07/16/2015-17207/medicare-and-medicaid-programs-reform-of-requirements-for-long-term-care-facilities.