

## OASIS Alert

### Assessment: 6 Tips For Promoting Staff Ownership of OASIS

Use these strategies to improve accuracy.

You can successfully change your staff's approach to OASIS, **Lucy Andrews** said in her session, "OASIS: O Is For Ownership," at the recent **National Association For Homecare & Hospice's** National Policy Conference in Washington (see "If Your Agency is Sinking, Oasis is Your Lifeboat"). These tips will get you started.

Challenge:

Agencies need to show staff how OASIS assessments can benefit them and their patients, rather than portraying OASIS as a necessary evil causing extra work.

**Successful tactics:1. Don't skimp on individual face time.** One-on-one conversations with staff were critical to her agency's transformation, Andrews emphasized. Unless the clinician understands where her specific areas of difficulty are, it's too easy to dismiss the topic of accuracy as "someone else's problem," she said.

2. Stress how OASIS can put the clinician in charge. Teach staff how to use OASIS and the resulting HHRG to confirm their assessment of patient acuity, balance their case load and demonstrate productivity.

3. Share financial information. Focus on OASIS accuracy as a way of getting paid for the care provided, and focus on the importance of adequate payment to the agency's survival. Let staff know what factors go into the cost of a visit and how to determine the number of visits an episode payment covers (see "How To Translate The HHRG Into a Recommended Number of Visits").

4. Correct issues that make assessment accuracy difficult. While incorporating OASIS questions into the total assessment, Andrews' agency didn't notice that some of the agency's questions had answer choices starting from most impaired to least impaired, but OASIS answers are always ranked from least impaired to most impaired, she said. This discrepancy increased the chances that a hurried clinician would get the answer wrong.

5. Integrate the care plan process into OASIS. Clinicians are used to paying careful attention to the care plan process, Andrews said. Try to integrate as much of that process as possible into your OASIS assessment to take advantage of the behavior that already exists.

**6. Show staff how OASIS accuracy can demonstrate their success.** Staff who provide good care become frustrated when that effort is not acknowledged, Andrews noted. And experts agree that inaccurate OASIS answers lead to many outcomes that look bad, but really were not. So improving OASIS accuracy, even without any other action, is an excellent way to improve outcomes.