

## OASIS Alert

### Assessment: OASIS May Become Part Of Unified Post-Acute Assessment Tool

Phase II testing is beginning soon.

A new demonstration project will pit home care effectiveness and cost against other post-acute settings.

The **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** is moving forward with its \$6 million Post Acute Care Payment Reform Demonstration (PAC-PRD), mandated by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The project is scheduled to continue through 2009 in an attempt to understand the costs and outcomes for similar diagnoses across different post-acute care settings.

The PAC-PRD demonstration results "may influence how Medicare pays for care across PAC settings and how patient assessments occur at hospital discharge and through subsequent PAC settings," CMS says in its invitation to the July 26 Special Open Door Forum on the project.

The plan: The demonstration will use a uniform patient assessment instrument (the CARE tool) that will "measure outcomes in physical and medical treatments while controlling for factors that affect outcomes, such as cognitive impairments and social and environmental factors," reports **RTI International**, the contractor CMS is using for the project.

The CARE tool "is being designed to eventually replace similar items on the existing Medicare forms, including the OASIS," RTI says. This assessment tool will have a "web-based submission system É designed to be used on any computer with web access and will allow direct transfer of data to CMS," the contractor reports.

Phase I Began This Summer

RTI has already tested the CARE tool with home health agencies in Chicago this summer, according to the company. Chicago area acute care hospitals, long term care hospitals, intermediate rehab facilities and skilled nursing facilities also tested the tool, which RTI will refine for a second phase scheduled to begin in Jan. 2008.

**To participate:** During Phase II 10 market areas will collect data using the CARE tool as well as cost and resource use data, RTI says. Providers wishing to participate in the 2008 demonstration can send an email to [pat-comments@rti.org](mailto:pat-comments@rti.org).

**Find out more:** In addition to the usual ENCORE replay available for several days after the forum, an audio replay as an MP3 file will be accessible for downloading on July 31 at [www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/05\\_ODF\\_asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/05_ODF_asp), a CMS spokesperson tells **Eli**.