

OASIS Alert

Education: Heed The Latest Word On M0440 And Ostomies

You thought you knew the answers, but are you sure?

Questions: **A)** When answering M0440 (Does this patient have a skin lesion or an open wound?) is a tracheostomy or a thoracostomy counted?

B) In M0440, does peristomal skin breakdown around an ostomy count as a skin lesion?

Answers: A) No. The word from the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** is that tracheostomies and thoracostomies are not skin lesions or open wounds for OASIS purposes. Ignore conflicting guidance from industry listservs and from a CMS source, the agency says in January 2008 OASIS question and answer 19.

B) Yes. The stoma itself is not a lesion or open wound for M0440, CMS says in OASIS Q&A 20, but an area of breakdown around the stoma, such as cellulitis or ulceration, would be considered a lesion.

Note: OASIS Q&As for Jan. 2008 are at <http://www.oasiscertificate.org>, under "Resources."