

OASIS Alert

Home Health Compare: PREPARE TO COMPARE 3 NEW OUTCOMES

Compare Asilos de Ancianos.

For months--or years--you've worked to improve the outcomes the public uses to judge you. And now the feds are shaking things up a bit.

If you've been working to improve your patients' upper body dressing, toileting or confusion frequency or to stabilize their bathing ability, you'll have to publicize your good results on your own. As of Sept. 1, these four items are no longer part of the Home Health Compare public reporting.

On the other hand, if you've seen improvement in your patients' dyspnea, urinary incontinence, or ability to remain at home when the episode ends, you'll be able to strut your stuff in the updated Home Health Compare.

First Changes, But Not The Last

As promised, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service** included three new measures in the Sept. 1 update to the Home Health Compare Web site and deleted four items from the original set (see OASIS Alert, Vol. 6, No. 1). This marks the first change in the included outcomes since the site debuted two years ago.

Expect changes in the quality measures from time to time "as improvements in quality of care are realized and as other quality measures are developed," CMS says.

Although the three items are new to Home Health Compare, agencies have been collecting data on these all along (see the Assessment story, later in this issue).

The data reported in the September update is from the period June 2004 through May 2005. The next data update will be on Dec. 1, 2005, CMS says.

CMS also posted a Spanish version of the publicly reported agency comparisons through a link at the top of its HHC Web site.

Note: The Home Health Compare site is at www.medicare.gov/hhcompare/home.asp.