

## OASIS Alert

### OASIS News: 8TH STATEMENT OF WORK FOR QIOs SUGGEST HHA TELEHEALTH OPPORTUNITIES

Expect more pressure to improve quality measures, especially the stubbornly stuck acute care hospitalization.

The next three-year contract cycle for **Quality Improvement Organizations** - the 8th Statement of Work - has entered its first round, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** announced April 7. And CMS highlighted telehealth as an area for improvement for home health agencies.

The recent emphasis on telehealth results from the major QIO goal for this cycle: improving results in acute care hospitalization. This quality outcome measure reported on Home Health Compare has stayed steady - with a national average of 28 percent - since the reporting began. A subgroup of providers will work with QIOs to implement telehealth technology as part of an effort to reduce acute care hospitalizations, reports the **National Association for Homecare & Hospice**.

1. **In its annual National Health Care Quality Report** for 2004 to Congress, the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality** found "performance virtually unchanged" in home health quality measures, with a median improvement of 3 percent. AHRQ did highlight statistically significant improvement between 2001 and 2003 in the four mobility measures examined for home health, with the most improvement in pain interfering with activity (2.3 percent). The full report is at [www.qualitytools.ahrq.gov/qualityreport/documents/nhqr2004.pdf](http://www.qualitytools.ahrq.gov/qualityreport/documents/nhqr2004.pdf).
2. **For instructions in how to use** the Fiscal Intermediary Standard System (FISS) to determine whether the Health Insurance Prospective Payment System (HIPPS) code submitted on a final claim was downcoded due to the M0175 OASIS item not reflecting a prior hospitalization, go to April 1 Medicare A Newline on **Cahaba GBA's** Website at [www.iamedicare.com/Provider/newsroom/newslines/0405.pdf](http://www.iamedicare.com/Provider/newsroom/newslines/0405.pdf).
3. **CMS continues work on a study examining** collection of OASIS data on private pay patients, an agency official reported in the March 24 Open Door Forum for home health. The Medicare Modernization Act specifies that CMS can't require agencies to resume collecting or transmitting OASIS data for non-Medicare, non-Medicaid patients until two months after CMS completes a study on the data's usefulness compared to its administrative burden.
4. **CMS has kicked off** a disease management demo project to evaluate how new services could enhance chronically ill patients' health, according to a recent Medlearn Matters article.

The three-year project in Florida is available to fee-for-service Medicare beneficiaries with advanced-stage illnesses including congestive heart failure, diabetes or coronary heart disease. San Francisco-based disease management organization **LifeMasters** will enroll up to 30,000 Florida beneficiaries for the demo.