

OASIS Alert

OASIS News: MORE OASIS CHANGES IN THE WORKS

The **Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC)** is currently working to identify "all necessary core items for a discharge assessment tool for all Medicare beneficiaries across all post-acute care (PenPAC) settings," the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** told the **Office of Management and Budget** in a May 4 submission (CMS-R-245).

As part of its request for an extension on the Aug. 31 expiration date of the OASIS data set, and for approval of plans to modify, delete and add items to OASIS, CMS addressed still pending recommendations from the OBQI Change and Evolution Program (OCEP) regarding OASIS.

Items assessing activities of daily living identified by OASIS OCEP "will most likely be included in the new PanPAC tool," CMS said. "Since the PAC assessment tool is supported by Congress and the CMS Administrator, the agency has begun working with MedPAC to produce the PanPAC instrument, which will most likely include the recommendations set forth by OBQI OCEP," CMS says.

- **CMS has process-based quality measures** in the works, the agency says in the prospective payment system refinements proposed rule issued April 27. The agency would like to propose next year some "patient-level process measures" as part of the home health quality improvement program, according to the proposed rule. CMS hopes to implement such measures by 2010.

The agency also continues to develop a patient satisfaction survey as part of the HHQI initiative. CMS will work with the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality** to field test the Home Health Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) survey later this year, the rule says.

- **A new study indicates** that a shortage of vitamin D may lead to medical conditions that cause weakness and disability in the elderly, the New York Times reports. The study, published in the April issue of the Journal of Gerontology, suggests the vitamin D shortage may result from limited exposure to the sun and deterioration in the skin's ability to produce vitamin D as a person ages. But vitamin D supplements can improve strength, according to the paper.

- **Randomized clinical trial showed** that vitamin D supplementation of at least 800 IUD daily reduced falls 23 percent to 53 percent in residents of a nursing home or residential care, writes **Kerry Broe** of the **Hebrew SeniorLife** in Boston, MA in the February issue of the Journal of the American Geriatric Society.