OASIS Alert

OBQI: Never Give Up: This Time OASIS Tally Sheets May Work For You

Filters are for more than water and cigarettes.

If you failed in the past when you attempted to use patient tally sheets in your outcome-based quality improvement efforts, remember that old saying: "If at first you don't succeed, try again."

The tally report is a spreadsheet containing patient-specific OASIS data the agency has submitted. It lets you view patients by outcome criteria and by case mix criteria and lets you "focus on patients with specific attributes and outcomes and avoid manual review of lengthy printed forms," according to the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**.

You should select the same period for the tally report as you are using for your risk-adjusted outcome reports, says **Rachel Hammon** with the **Texas Association for Home Care** in Austin. Then include patients with the target outcomes you are working on.

When agencies first began trying to use the tally report tool, many reported difficulty in downloading the massive reports, especially using dial-up Internet connections. The complaints led CMS to request a solution from its contractor, the **Iowa Foundation for Medical Care**. The plan was to use filters to break the report into smaller sections, a CMS spokesperson tells **Eli**.

Now the first of the filters is ready. The re-vised patient tally report workbook with filtering tools is available, CMS announced Dec. 10. Agencies can download it as a zip file.

"This version addresses challenges in filtering by age criteria and using Windows 98," CMS says. The problems have been fixed and the workbook tested, CMS claims. **TIP:** Be sure to download and open the report in Excel format so you can use the Excel macros within the tool, experts say.

CMS currently is reviewing an additional front-end filter which is set to be posted to its OASIS Web site's "What's New" section by mid-December, a CMS spokesperson told **Eli** at press time.

Downloading the report is just one step. Once you master the process of downloading reports, concentrate on learning how to make the correct information choices so you select the patients you want to include in the tally report and exclude the ones you don't, Hammon says. If you need help with using the tally reports, contact your state's Quality Improvement Organization, suggests **Linda McNeill** with the Cary, NC-based QIO **Medical Review of North Carolina**.

Editor's Note: The revised filtering tools are at www.cms.hhs.gov/oasis/tally. For a list of QIOs go to www.cms.hhs.gov/oasis, click on HH Quality Initiative, scroll down and choose QIO Contact Info.