



**Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Survey & Certification Group**

**Ref: S&C: 16-04-NH**

**DATE:** November 27, 2015  
**TO:** State Survey Agency Directors  
**FROM:** Director  
Survey and Certification Group  
**SUBJECT:** Focused Dementia Care Survey Tools

**Memorandum Summary**

**Focused Dementia Care Survey Pilot:** The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) completed a pilot project in 2014 to examine the process for prescribing antipsychotic medications and assess compliance with other federal requirements related to dementia care practices in nursing homes. Additionally, it was initiated to gain new insights about surveyor knowledge and skills and ways that the current survey process may be streamlined to more efficiently and accurately identify and cite deficient practice.

**Expansion of Focused Dementia Care Survey Efforts:** In 2015, the expansion project involved a more intensive, targeted effort to cite poor dementia care and the overutilization of antipsychotic medications, and broaden the opportunities for quality improvement among providers.

**Focused Dementia Care Survey Tools:** In response to feedback from stakeholders and partners of the *National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care in Nursing Homes*, CMS is sharing the revised survey materials that were developed for the 2014 Focused Dementia Care Survey Pilot and 2015 expansion effort. The intent is that facilities would use these tools to assess their own practices in providing resident care.

**Background**

In 2014, CMS invited States to participate in the pilot of a Focused Dementia Care Survey to test new surveyor worksheets and processes, focused on dementia care in nursing homes. The focused survey examined the process for prescribing antipsychotic medication and assessed compliance with other federal requirements related to dementia care practices in nursing homes. The pilot was initiated to gain new insights about surveyor knowledge and skills and ways that the current survey process may be streamlined to more efficiently and accurately identify and cite deficient practice, as well as to recognize successful dementia care programs. Of those that volunteered, five States (California, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota and New York) participated in the pilot. Between the months of July and September of 2014, each State completed four focused surveys and an observation visit. A subject matter expert accompanied each survey team on their first survey/visit.

In 2015, CMS expanded the use of the Focused Dementia Care Survey in a few States and invited States to conduct such surveys on a voluntary basis, using the revised survey tools. This expansion project involved a more intensive, targeted effort to improve surveyor effectiveness in citing poor dementia care and the overutilization of antipsychotic medications than was previously done in Fiscal Year 2014. Six States participated in this effort (California, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska and Texas). CMS provided criteria for determining specific facilities to be surveyed and worked with these States to identify dementia care experts to accompany surveyors for the first survey, whenever possible.

**Focused Survey Tools**

Upon completion of the pilot and 2015 expansion effort, CMS revised the survey materials and tools based on surveyor feedback and data analysis. In response to feedback from stakeholders and partners of the *National Partnership to Improve Dementia Care*, CMS is sharing these revised materials. The intent is that facilities can use these tools to assess their own practices in providing resident care.

**Contact:**

For questions on this memorandum related to the dementia care survey and attached tools, please contact Michele Laughman via email at [dnh\\_behavioralhealth@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:dnh_behavioralhealth@cms.hhs.gov).

**Effective Date:** Immediately. The information contained in this memorandum should be communicated with all survey and certification staff (including the State RAI Coordinator), their managers and the State/Regional Office training coordinators within 30 days of this memorandum.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

Attachments:

1. Facility Questions Parts 1-3
2. Resident Questions Part 4

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management