

Center for Medicaid and State Operations/Survey and Certification Group

Ref: S&C-04-27

DATE: May 13, 2004

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Opening of New Centers for Medicare & Medicaid (CMS) Web Site Resource for Long Term Care (LTC) Surveyors and Providers

Letter Summary

- CMS announces the development of a new Web site resource for State Survey Agencies, CMS Regional Offices, and long term care providers.
- Its purpose is to provide summaries of nationally accepted clinical/professional standards and guidelines for surveyors and providers.

I am pleased to announce the development of a new resource for State Survey Agencies, CMS Regional Offices, and long term care providers. Through a contract with the American Institutes for Research (AIR), we have developed a Web site repository containing summaries of nationally accepted clinical/professional standards and guidelines that should be useful to surveyors who are evaluating facility practices to determine compliance with the long term care requirements, as well as to providers.

In 1998, CMS, in collaboration with a committee of industry, clinical, advocate, and survey agency national groups developed a CMS Web site repository titled Sharing Innovations in Quality (SIQ) for sharing both innovative practices submitted by facilities and current clinical standards/guidelines. Because of a lack of activity, the Web site was archived in 2000. Due to our need to ensure surveyors have up-to-date knowledge of good practice, we have decided to revamp the portion of the SIQ site containing clinical/professional standards and guideline summary materials.

AIR, with the help of a clinical consultant has been tasked with searching among thousands of guidelines for those that would be most useful to long term care surveyors and providers. To facilitate the identification of relevant information for the Web site, AIR has established communication links with national organizations, federal agencies, and universities to locate nationally accepted content for the repository. The relevant content provided by these organizations is being summarized in the form of abstracts and ordering information.

We plan to add new materials to the site periodically, after evaluation by CMS staff and the contractor and permission is obtained from the sponsoring organizations. In order to assure that the site contains the most current information, the contractor will continue to access the organization sites to keep our summaries updated as newer versions of standards are released.

The new Web site is now available and includes user-friendly search and sort features to meet the needs of its anticipated users. The site address is: www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/survey-cert/siqhome.asp.

We hope that this information is of use to your staff. If you have suggestions or concerns, please contact Karen Schoeneman at 410-786-6855, or via email at kschoeneman@cms.hhs.gov.

Effective Date: Immediately.

Training: The information contained in this announcement should be shared with all surveyors, survey and certification staff, their managers, and the state/RO training coordinators.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management (G-5)