

Quality Counts

Arizona Home Health Quality Initiative

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What's New

Updated Medicare Provider Forms Available

Updated discharge forms for Medicare Health Plans (formerly known as Medicare Advantage Plans) are now available.

Visit http://www.hsag.com/providers/medicare_advantage.asp for more information.

New Home Health Compare Quality Measures

Did you know that two new home health quality measures were added to *Home Health Compare* in January? The added measures are:

- Improvement in Status of Surgical Wounds (on *Home Health Compare*, it reads: Percentage of patients whose wounds improved or healed after an operation).
- Emergent Care for Wound Infection/Deteriorating Wound Status (on *Home Health Compare*, it reads: Percentage of patients who needed unplanned medical care related to a wound that is new, worse, or has become infected).

Improvement in status of surgical wounds

This measure publicly reports the percentage of patients whose wounds improved or healed after an operation. In this case, higher percentages are better. Home health agencies can assist with wound healing in several ways, including:

- Changing the wound dressing.
- Teaching the patient and caregiver to change the dressing.
- Teaching the patient and caregiver about the signs of wound healing.
- Teaching the patient and caregiver about the types of foods that promote healing and restore normal functioning.

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Arizona Geriatrics Society Spring Mental Health Conference

Join the Arizona Geriatrics Society for its first Spring Geriatrics Mental Health Conference, titled "If I Was Your Age, I Would Be Depressed Too . . . And Other Myths of Aging and Mental Health."

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Carl T. Hayden Veterans Administration Medical Center
(Ambulatory Care Building Conference Center)
650 E. Indian School Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85012

For more information, please visit

<http://www.arizonageriatrics.org/mc/page.do?sitePagelD=61943>.

- Teaching the patient and caregiver about any drugs the doctor has ordered, such as drugs used to relieve pain.
- Teaching the patient or caregiver about the signs or symptoms of infection or other problems and directing the patient to call the home health agency or his/her doctor.

Normal wound healing after an operation is an important marker of good care. Patients whose wounds heal normally generally feel better and can get back to their daily activities sooner than those whose wounds don't heal normally.

If any signs of infection or other problems are present, the nurse should alert the doctor/physician to determine if there are additional orders. If the patient

sees signs of infection or has concerns about the wound on a day that the nurse is not scheduled to visit, the patient or caregiver should be instructed to call the home health agency to schedule a visit as soon as possible to look at the wound or to call the doctor.

Emergent care for wound infection/deteriorating wound status

This measure reports the percentage of patients who need urgent medical care related to a new wound, a wound that is worse, or a wound that has become infected. In this case, lower percentages are better.

As part of home care, the nurse should assess the wound and instruct the patient or caregiver on:

- Signs of normal wound healing.
- Signs and symptoms of wound infection.
- Signs that a wound is getting worse.
- Signs of a new wound.
- The importance of calling the home health agency first with concerns about the wound.

The home health agency also has a responsibility to visit the patient frequently enough to assess the wound, assist in care for the wound according to the doctor's orders, and look for ways to prevent problems, such as through pressure relief and proper nutrition.

Some visits to the emergency room/hospital for wound problems can be prevented with proper care and attention by the home health agency. Consumers, hospital discharge planners, and doctors believe this measure is a good marker of the quality of care given by a home health agency. In many cases, a visit by the home health nurse can prevent a visit to the emergency room. The nurse can assess the patient's wound and general health, discuss these findings with the doctor, carry out the changes in orders, and schedule follow-up visits to evaluate progress.

If any signs of infection or other problems are present, the nurse should call the doctor to alert him/her about the wound and ask if there are additional orders prior to sending the patient to the hospital.

Source: February 2008 Quality Improvement Organization Community of Practice WebEx. OASIS Answers, Inc.

Don't Forget About OASIS Brown Bag Trainings!

HSAG has partnered with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to present a series of 2008 OASIS Brown Bag trainings throughout Arizona. These trainings will focus on what the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has planned for OASIS, common errors, clarifications, and reports from HSAG on current topics.

The next Brown Bag training will be in Tucson.

March 25, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

State Office Complex, Room 222

400 W. Congress, Tucson, AZ 85701

Agendas will be created based on input from you! What issues do you want to discuss and know more about? These trainings are informal, so bring your lunch and come find out what's new regarding OASIS.

Dates for future Brown Bag trainings are as follows:

- **May 20 from noon to 2 p.m. in Kingman** at the Kingman Regional Medical Center
- **July 22 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Flagstaff** (exact location TBD)

To submit questions/topics and to register for the Brown Bag trainings, please contact Kathy Bailey at 602.745.6372 or at kbailey@azqio.sdps.org.

HHQI National Campaign Wrap-Up

The right care every time

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), in conjunction with the Home Health Quality Improvement Support Center—Quality Insights of Pennsylvania, launched the Home Health Quality Improvement (HHQI) national campaign on January

11, 2007. The campaign worked to unite the home care community under the shared vision of reducing avoidable hospitalizations to improve patient quality of care. The HHQI National Campaign used a 12-month interdisciplinary approach to quality improvement that included key home health, hospital, and physician stakeholders. Almost 5,600 Medicare-certified home health agencies participated in the year-long campaign.

Arizona Association for Home Care ICD-9 Coding Workshop

April 10, 2008, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, Phoenix Airport.

This one-day workshop will provide an overview of the PPS changes and their impact on coding, as well as “hands-on” practice on coding challenges—including new 2008 codes.

The morning session will be geared toward beginning coders, while the afternoon session will accommodate intermediate and advanced coders. Beginning coders are invited to stay for the entire workshop to maximize their learning experience. Lunch will be included for all those attending the workshop.

Morning Session A—Beginner

This session is designed for beginning coders with a basic understanding of home health and OASIS. Participants will learn and practice:

- Sequencing of common home care diagnoses.
- Prioritizing the Plan of Care and sequencing accordingly.

Afternoon Session B—Intermediate/Advanced

This session is designed for intermediate to advanced coders, as well as those who have completed the morning session. Participants will apply and practice:

- Coding complex scenarios with comorbidities.
- Learning best practices for coding patients as individuals.
- Gaining a better understanding of the impact of recent PPS changes.

For more information and to register, please visit <http://www.azhomecare.org/cde.cfm?event=206130>.

Free [Best Practice Intervention Packages \(BPIPs\)](#) were provided monthly and included educational tools, resources, guidelines, success stories, and best practice education to assist agencies in reducing avoidable hospitalizations. Care tracks focused on leadership, nurses, therapists, medical social workers, and home health aides, and could be used for multidisciplinary education and awareness. All of these resources are also now available on [MedQIC](#).

Hospitalizations can create unnecessary financial and emotional burdens for patients and their families, and can negatively impact the health care delivery system. Currently, one in four home health patient episodes will result in a hospitalization. Quality improvement interventions can be effective in reducing avoidable hospitalizations across the care continuum. Join the effort to reduce avoidable hospitalizations by downloading the free BPIPs and using any portions of the packages with your agency staff at a pace that works with your schedule.

Lynn Turner Is Retiring!

Key ADHS staff member will be missed

Lynn Turner, who has been instrumental in her 18-year role as the Federal Certification & Medical Facilities Licensing Team Leader at the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), is retiring!

At ADHS, Lynn has been responsible for supervising and accompanying surveyors on difficult health care facility inspections, reviewing inspection and investigation reports submitted by surveyors,

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providing training and technical assistance, participating on performance improvement committees, and serving as the OASIS Educational Coordinator.

Lynn obtained her nursing degree from Brookdale College in Lincroft, New Jersey, and worked at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York as a medical/surgical nurse. Most of her subsequent nursing experience has been working in skilled nursing facilities.

Now that Lynn is retiring, she will have plenty of time to do what she likes most: cooking and traveling.

HSAG would like to take this opportunity to thank Lynn for her wonderful contribution to improving the health care quality for Arizona residents. Her experience and dedication to her work have proved invaluable in the collaborations and committees on which she has served.

Thank you Lynn, for everything you've done to improve health care quality. You will be missed!

ADHS/HSAG Two-Day OASIS Training

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and HSAG are hosting a Two-Day OASIS Training in April!

April 22–23 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 HSAG Conference Center
 1600 E. Northern Avenue, Suite 100
 Phoenix, AZ 85020

This training will include a comprehensive, item-by-item discussion on how to properly complete the home health OASIS tool.

Upon completion of the training, participants will be able to:

- Code the OASIS tool per Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services guidelines.
- Understand the common points of confusion in OASIS coding.
- Train other agency staff on the OASIS tool.
- Increase OASIS coding compliance and consistency within your agency.

For more information and to register, please visit [http://hhqi.hsag.com/ADHS HSAG OASIS April08.doc](http://hhqi.hsag.com/ADHS_HSAG_OASIS_April08.doc).

HSAG Home Health Team Contact Information

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Visit HSAG's Home Health Quality Initiative (HHQI) Web site at <http://hhqi.hsag.com>.

This material was prepared by Health Services Advisory Group, Inc. (HSAG), the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for Arizona, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy.