

Quality Counts

Arizona Home Health Quality Initiative

In This Issue

Upcoming Events	2
HH PPS Final Report Posted	3
OASIS Competency Training Game Available	3
Arizona Statement of Citizenship and Alien Status Needed for State Licensing and Certification	3
Immunization Tip	4
Two-Day OASIS Training Materials Now Posted on ADHS Web Site	4
HSAG Home Health Team Contact Information.	4

What's New

CMS Open Door Forum

The next CMS Home Health, Hospice, and DME Open Door Forum is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25.

Visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/OpenDoorForums/17_ODF_HHHDME.asp#TopOfPage for more information.

HSAG Recognizes HHQI Efforts

“Go for the Gold!” Recognition Program recipients announced

As part of an initiative to acknowledge statewide quality improvement efforts in home health, HSAG—the Arizona Medicare Quality Improvement Organization—developed the **2005–2008 Home Health Quality Initiative (HHQI) “Go for the Gold!” Recognition Program**.

Through this program, participants received recognition for their quality improvement efforts. HSAG HHQI team members are proud to announce the Arizona home health agencies that achieved success by meeting specific program criteria.

HHQI Bronze Participant winners!

The following Arizona home health agencies received the **HHQI “Go for the Gold!” Bronze Certificate of Participation**:

- Dependable Home Health—Tucson
- Life Care at Home of Arizona
- Mt. Graham Home Health
- Nursefinders of Tucson
- Yuma Regional Medical Center

(Continued on page 2)

Home Health Compare Has Been Updated

Home Health Compare has been updated to include the 12-month period from October 2006–September 2007. The database download file, which is available from <http://www.medicare.gov/Download/DownloadDB.asp>, has also been updated.

The next update will presumably occur in late June 2008 for the 12-month period ending December 2007.

Bronze Certificate-of-Participation recipients met the following criteria:

- Participated in three or more HSAG-sponsored HHQI learning sessions/teleconferences from November 2005–August 2007.
- Submitted a Plan of Action (POA) for reducing acute care hospitalization (ACH).
- Submitted a POA for one agency-identified publicly reported OASIS measure.
- Set annual targets (2006, 2007) on the Setting Targets Achieving Results (STAR) Web site for each POA topic submitted.

Upcoming Events

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 CMS has planned for OASIS, common errors, and clarifications.

The next Brown Bag training will be in Kingman on May 20, from noon to 2 p.m., at the Kingman Regional Medical Center.

Agendas will be created based on input from you! What issues do you want to discuss and know more about? Bring your lunch and come find out what's new!

Another Brown Bag training will also be held on July 22, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., in Flagstaff (exact location TBD).

Please contact Kathy Bailey at 602.745.6372 or at kbailey@azqio.sdps.org for more information.

AAHC Annual Conference

The Arizona Association for Home Care's (AAHC's) annual conference, titled "Making the Connection: Recharging Your Passion for Quality Home Care," will be held on June 5–6 in Tucson.

For more information and to register, please visit <http://www.azhomecare.org/cde.cfm?event=203882>.

HHQI Gold Leader winners!

The following Arizona home health agencies received the **HHQI "Go for the Gold!" Gold Certificate of Leadership**:

- Amedisys Home Health of Phoenix
- Banner Home Care
- Interim Healthcare of Phoenix
- Professional Home Care Services

Gold Certificate-of-Leadership recipients met the criteria listed above, as well as:

- Participated in a minimum of one sharing activity—including a presentation during an HSAG-sponsored teleconference, conference, or event.
- Maintained an ACH rate of 23.9 percent or below. Improved target outcomes if baseline rate was above 23.9 percent.
- Improved the agency-identified publicly reported measure.
- Maintained a license in good standing
- Met the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) targeted outcomes for ACH and the agency-identified publicly reported measure.
- Had no termination actions in the last two years.
- Had no enforcement actions in the last two years.

Please join HSAG in congratulating these home health agencies on their commitment to improve home health quality care in Arizona!

We know that with the continued support and leadership—and dedication of agency staff—the momentum to continue quality improvement will result in better health care for Arizona's Medicare beneficiaries for years to come.

More information about the HHQI "Go for the Gold!" Recognition Program will soon be available on HSAG's Web site, <http://hhqi.hsag.com>.

HH PPS Final Report Posted

On April 30, CMS posted the Abt Associates technical report, titled *Refinement of Medicare's Home Health Prospective Payment System: Final Report*, describing results of research and analysis conducted to address Medicare's information and program administration needs pertaining to the home health prospective payment system (HH PPS) implemented in October 2000. The report provides details on the data analysis and simulations used by CMS in the development of the May 4, 2007, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (CMS-1451-P) and the August 29, 2007, Final Rule with comment (CMS-1451-FC) for the HH PPS Refinement and Rate Update for Calendar Year 2008.

This report comes in two parts: the Technical Report, which can be accessed by visiting http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Reports/downloads/Coleman_Final_April_2008.pdf, and the Appendix containing associated tables, which can be accessed by visiting http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Reports/downloads/Coleman_Appendix_April_2008.pdf.

For more information, visit the CMS Home Health Center page at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/center/hha.asp>.

OASIS Competency Training Game Available

Want a fun way to help train your staff members on OASIS Competency?

Download the OASIS Camel Game from the OASIS training Web site. This fun run through the desert will provide challenging questions and scenarios for your staff that will reinforce proper coding and completion of the OASIS tool. This CMS-created game adheres to all CMS guidelines and coding conventions.

To access the game, visit <http://oasistraining.org> and click on References on the bottom left-hand side of the page, then click on Important Resources. From there you can select the OASIS Camel Game.

Arizona Statement of Citizenship and Alien Status Needed for State Licensing or Certification

In August 1996, Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which limits eligibility for certain public benefits—including licensure and certification—based on a person's citizenship or immigration status. In addition, in 2007, Arizona passed House Bill 2467, which created eligibility requirements for any person applying for a state license or certification.

These laws require the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to verify that all applicants for initial, change of ownership, or renewal licensure or certification be a U.S. citizen, a noncitizen national, or a "qualified alien" before issuing either a license of certification.

All application verification documents and questions should be directed to the licensing program—Board of Nursing Web site—at <http://www.azbn.gov/News.aspx?ID=71>.

Effective January 1, 2008, all applicants must provide evidence of citizenship or nationality based on federal and state laws.

Note: Federal law 8 U.S.C. § 1641 and state law A.R.S. § 1-501 require documentation of citizenship and nationality for licensure. If the documentation does not demonstrate that the applicant is a U.S. citizen, national, or a person described in specific categories, the applicant will not be eligible for licensure in Arizona.

If the Board has received your application after January, 1, 2008, and the application you completed did not contain a proof-of-citizenship form, you will be required to complete a form and submit documentation evidencing citizenship or nationality prior to receiving your license/certification.

For more information, visit the ADHS Division of Licensing Services Web site at <http://www.azdhs.gov>.

Immunization Tip

We have just come out of an unusual flu season this year that will impact work plans for next season. This year's vaccine did not match the most common flu virus, which may affect efforts to have patients and families immunized next year. The statistics are still being calculated, but for many parts of the country this year's flu was at epidemic proportions for many weeks.

Some steps your agency may want to take to ensure your patients are immunized include:

- Revising your comprehensive assessment (OASIS or other documentation) to include an assessment of patients' current immunization status.
- Integrating an immunization assessment and follow-up into a point-of-care system as a required field.
- Offering the pneumonia vaccine continuously throughout the year to all patients with undocumented or unknown pneumococcal vaccination status (if patients are unable to provide you with a status, assist them with scheduling at a clinic).

Two-Day OASIS Training Materials Now Posted on ADHS Web Site

Materials from the Two-Day OASIS Training are now available on the ADHS Web site!

During the training, event participants learned how to:

- Code the OASIS tool per CMS guidelines.
- Understand common points of confusion in OASIS coding.
- Train other agency staff on the OASIS tool.
- Increase OASIS coding compliance and consistency.

Presenters for the training included the following:

- Kathy Bailey, LMSW—HSAG
- Joe Bestic, NHA, BA—HSAG
- Sandy Enkey—ADHS
- Barbara Friend, RN—SafeNet Home Health
- Kim Hall, RN, Cos-C—Bayada Nurses
- Carol Leonard, RN—Assisted Healthcare Services
- Lonnette Millican, RN, MBA/HCM—Banner Home Care
- Lynn Turner, RN—ADHS

To view and download the materials, please visit www.azdhs.gov/als/medical/OASIS%20Training/index.htm.

HSAG Home Health Team Contact Information

Mary Fermazin, MD, MPA Vice President, Health Policy & Quality Measurement mfermazin@hsag.com 602.745.6207	Joe Bestic, NHA, BA Director, Home Health & Nursing Home jbestic@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6205	Caralyn E. Williams, MAOM Quality Improvement Specialist cwilliams@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6284
Pam Sensky, RN Clinical Quality Specialist psensky@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6330	Dawn Williams, BS Communications Project Manager dwilliams@azqio.sdps.org 602.745.6316	Zel Abrams Administrative Assistant III zabrams@azqio.sdps.org 602.665.6105

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.