

Center for Medicaid and State Operations/Survey and Certification Group

Ref: S&C-06-10

DATE: March 10, 2006

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: **Nursing Homes** - Issuance of the New Psychosocial Outcome Severity Guide as Part of Appendix P, State Operations Manual, and Training Materials

Letter Summary

- New guidance for long-term care surveyors regarding the Psychosocial Outcome Severity Guide becomes effective June 1, 2006.
- An advance copy of this guidance and training materials are attached.
- This training packet is to be utilized in assuring that all surveyors who survey nursing homes are trained in the new guidance by the implementation date.

New surveyor guidance for using the Psychosocial Outcome Severity Guide (the Guide) for surveying long-term care facilities will become effective on June 1, 2006. At that time, a final copy of this new guidance will be available at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Transmittals/> and ultimately incorporated into Appendix P of the State Operations Manual.

Here we are providing an advance copy of the Guide, which contains instructions, clarification of terms, and a severity guide. The Guide clarifies when to apply the “reasonable person concept.” The clarification of terms provides specific definitions surveyors will need to apply the guidance. The severity guide provides criteria for the determination of the correct levels of negative psychosocial outcomes that developed, continued, or worsened because of the facility’s noncompliance.

Also attached to this memo are training materials for the Psychosocial Outcome Severity Guide. This training packet is to be utilized in assuring that all surveyors who survey nursing homes are trained in this new guidance by the implementation date. These materials were presented and discussed in a teleconference with the Regional Offices (ROs) on January 18, 2006. We encourage training to be conducted in person with group discussion to optimize learning. However, if this is not feasible to meet the needs of your surveyors, it is acceptable to use other methods. The training materials may also be used to communicate with provider groups and other stakeholders.

Page 2 – State Survey Agency Directors

RO training coordinators will document the completion of training on this new guidance for all RO and State nursing home surveyors within their region.

Enclosed with this memorandum are the following files:

- Advance copy of Psychosocial Outcome Severity Guide – (Word file):
- Training Instructor Guide – (pdf file); and
- PowerPoint presentation file – (PowerPoint file)

For questions on this memorandum, please contact Jeane Nitsch at 410-786-1411 or via email at Jeane.Nitsch@cms.hhs.gov).

Effective Date: June 1, 2006. The State Agency should disseminate this information within 30 days of the date of this memorandum.

Training: The materials should be distributed immediately to all State Agencies and training coordinators.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

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

Enclosures: Advance copy of Psychosocial Outcome Severity Guide
PowerPoint Presentation
Training Instructor Guide