



COMMISSIONER
Chris Traylor

August 17, 2011

To: Home and Community Support Services Agencies (HCSSAs) Providing Licensed and Certified (L&C) Home Health Services and L&C Applicants

Subject: **Provider Letter 11-29** – Revised Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Home Health Survey Protocols

CMS revised the existing Home Health Agency (HHA) survey process. The revised survey process is patient-outcome oriented and focuses on specific standards within nine of the 15 Conditions of Participation that are most directly related to the delivery of high-quality patient care. Greater emphasis is placed on data collected from HHA staff interviews, clinical records, and home visits, minimizing non-clinical records review and paper compliance.

CMS updated Appendix B of the State Operations Manual (SOM) to include the revised survey process. Part I of Appendix B was expanded to include:

- information on the survey process, types and tasks;
- the revised definition of the standard survey;
- added guidance for expanding the survey to partial or extended status; and
- added guidance for issuing standard- and condition-level deficiencies.

The revised version of Appendix B is available for review as an "advance copy." The final version of Appendix B may include additional revisions once published in the online SOM. The publication date of the final version of Appendix B has not been determined.

For additional information about the revised CMS HHA survey process, including CMS Survey and Certification memorandum S&C 11-11 HHA Revised Home Health Survey Protocols and the advance copy of Appendix B of the SOM, click on the following link:

http://www.cms.gov/surveycertificationgeninfo/downloads/SCLetter11_11.pdf.

The revised HHA survey process became effective May 1, 2011. To ensure the greatest success in implementation, the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) is conducting a pilot program in Region 8 (San Antonio). Region 8 surveyors are currently piloting the revised HHA survey protocols for surveys of licensed and certified (L&C) agencies. DADS will implement the revised HHA survey protocols statewide effective October 1, 2011. Prior to the statewide implementation date, all other regions will continue to use the previous HHA survey protocols.

If you have questions regarding the content of this letter, please contact a HCSSA policy specialist in the Policy, Rules and Curriculum Development unit at (512) 438-3161.

Sincerely,

[signature on file]

Veronda L. Durden
Assistant Commissioner
Regulatory Services

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