



MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

4160 PATTERSON AVENUE – BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21215

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June 23, 2009

Dear Nursing Home Administrator:

Maryland statute requires the Commission to report annually the results of a Nursing Home Family Satisfaction Survey and 2009 marks the third year the survey is being conducted.

In the next several weeks, you will receive a letter and an instruction packet from our contract administrator, Market Decisions. In the past, nursing homes were limited to the identification of designated responsible parties for long stay residents. This year however, the Commission is piloting a Short Stay Experience of Care Survey. Your nursing home is being asked to provide short stay resident contact information as well. Required information for short stay residents is discussed in detail later in this letter and should be relatively transparent to the existing process.

Designated Responsible Parties

You will again be required to produce a list of “designated responsible parties” for all current residents in your facility and to designate a contact person at your nursing home to work with MHCC and Market Decisions on the production of this list and secure transmission of the information. The list is time sensitive, so you may want to begin preparation prior to receipt of the official instruction packet in July. If you coordinate release of such information with your corporate office, please plan for the additional time required.

Undeliverable Surveys

Undeliverable survey rates exceeding 5% can adversely affect facility scores because lower response rates are more likely to result in instances of no report for specific items or domains. Undeliverable survey rates will be tracked for each nursing facility to ensure a maximum response rate for each facility. Consistent with the procedures in 2008, if the rate approaches a threshold that indicates results could be adversely affected (between 5-10%); Market Decisions staff will contact you to update addresses.

The rate for undeliverable surveys for each facility may be published as part of the public report.

Short Stay Survey

The Commission is collaborating with the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) to test a new federal survey for recently discharged short stay residents (90 days or less). There are approximately 40,000 short stay discharges annually with 78 Maryland facilities having a significant number of short stay admissions. Because of the increasing volume of short stay admissions, it is now necessary to include them as part of the public reporting process. Because this is a pilot, no nursing home specific information on the short stay survey will be published, only aggregate statewide survey information. The short stay survey will be administered by Market Decisions using the same process and time frames as the family survey. However, for short stay residents, instead of providing responsible party information, you will be asked to provide a separate list with contact information for residents discharged in the prior two months whose length of stay was between 5-90 days.

We thank you for supporting this important effort to provide Marylanders with an additional tool for informed decision making, and to provide nursing homes with benchmarks to assess and address individual and competitive performance. Should you have any questions prior to receiving the instructions from Market Decisions, please contact Carol Christmyer at 410-764-3575 or by email at cchristmyer@mhcc.state.md.us.

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Center for Health Care Financing and Health Policy
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cc: HFAM
LifeSpan Network