



Missouri Health Care Association

# Weekly Update

January 5, 2024

## **Updates to Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Healthcare Personnel Summary Reporting for January 2024: NHSN Long-Term Care Component**

Beginning the week of January 1-7, 2024, the Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Healthcare Personnel (HCP) form will no longer collect information on primary series vaccination. These changes include:

- Questions related to COVID-19 primary series vaccination being removed.
- Questions on reasons why an individual has not received vaccine (medical contraindication, declined, or other/unknown vaccination status) will relate to an individual's up-to-date vaccination status.
- The question asking "number of HCP who are up to date" being moved up on the form to Question #2.
- HCP **not** being considered up to date for COVID-19 vaccination unless they received the updated 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine.

NHSN will be hosting webinars to review these important changes:

- Updates to Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Healthcare Personnel Summary Form for January 2024: Long Term Care Component
  - Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 1:30-2:30 PM CST
  - [Register](#)
- Updates to Weekly COVID-19 Vaccination Healthcare Personnel Summary Form: Long Term Care Component
  - Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 12:30-1:30 PM CST
  - [Register](#)

Members should register in advance for all trainings. If you have any questions, please contact the NHSN at [nhsn@cdc.gov](mailto:nhsn@cdc.gov).

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**Notice of Upcoming SNF QRP Measure Removals**

CMS is alerting Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) providers of upcoming measure removals from the SNF Quality Reporting Program (QRP). The following quality measures are planned for removal from the iQIES Review and Correct Reports, Facility-Level Quality Measure (QM) Reports, and Resident-Level QM Reports in January 2024:

- Application of Percent of Long-Term Care Hospital (LTCH) Patients with an Admission and Discharge Functional Assessment and a Care Plan that Addresses Function
- Application of IRF Functional Outcome Measure: Change in Self-Care Score for Medical Rehabilitation Patients
- Application of IRF Functional Outcome Measure: Change in Mobility Score for Medical Rehabilitation Patients

Once removed from reports, users will no longer have access to any data or measure results for these measures.

These measures will last appear in the April 2024 Provider Preview Reports for the July 2024 Refresh of SNF QRP data. Starting with the October 2024 Release, these measures will be removed from Care Compare and Provider Data Catalog. Once removed, the historic publicly reported measure data will continue to be available in the Nursing Homes Including Rehab Services Data Archive files on the Provider Data Catalog.

Please direct any questions on these measure removals or questions related to quality measures on the SNF QRP Reports to the [SNF QRP Help Desk](#).

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## **CMS Issues Proposed Rule on Beneficiary Appeal Process for Reclassified Hospital Stay**

CMS issued a [proposed rule](#) on December 27, 2023, *Medicare Program: Appeal Rights for Certain Changes in Patient Status*, which establishes appeals processes for Medicare beneficiaries whose inpatient hospital stays were later reclassified to outpatient receiving observation services. Comments on the proposed rule are due **February 26, 2024**.

The proposed rule offers additional beneficiary protections to assure the 3-day qualifying hospital stay requirement to access the Medicare Part A skilled nursing facility (SNF) benefit has been met. This appeal process will help Medicare beneficiaries access the SNF benefit prospectively and retrospectively.

**[\(READ MORE\)](#)**

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## **Reimbursement Update**

As previously reported, CMS has approved the State Plan Amendment (SPA) for the \$10 PPD rate increase and the \$.87 increase to the VBP incentive effective July 1, 2023. Mo Health Net Division (MHD) is working to get its emergency regulation filed and will begin going through its internal processes in order to timely institute the increases.

Please note, upon CMS approval of a SPA, it typically takes the state between 4-6 weeks to process the increase. An emergency regulation must be filed and approved. Once the emergency regulation takes effect, which is approximately 10 days after it is filed, MHD can begin working on rate letters and other processes it must follow before paying the new rates. We anticipate facilities will receive their rate letters and begin being paid their new rate around the first half of February.

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## **Personal Protective Equipment, Hazard Assessments Standard, and the Hierarchy of Controls**

OSHA's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Standard closely relates to the general duty clause in that it is up to the employer to recognize (or assess) the hazards specific to their facility and then control those hazards. However, it is important to note that before you begin to select and distribute PPE to employees, you are required to first conduct a Hazard Assessment.

### Hazard Assessment

OSHA states that *"The employer shall assess the workplace to determine if hazards are present, or are likely to be present, which necessitate the use of personal protective equipment (PPE)."* The result of the hazard assessment is a selection of PPE for the affected employees. There is no specific format or procedures to follow when conducting a Hazard Assessment. OSHA does, however, reference [nonmandatory guidelines](#) for conducting a hazard assessment and selecting appropriate PPE.

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## **AHCA/NCAL 2023 Annual Report**

The AHCA/NCAL [2023 Annual Report](#) outlines the Association's overarching goals and strategies over the past 12 months, as well as their success and achievements in the areas of pandemic recovery, workforce, quality of care, and more.

## **Keep Working On Your Quality Award Applications**

Completing a successful Quality Award application takes time to prepare. We encourage you over the next few weeks to keep working on your applications and submit them before the deadline on Thursday, January 25, 2024. If you have not already done so, take advantage of the free resources!

### Bronze Quality Award Workshop

The National Quality Award team is hosting a virtual workshop for members interested in submitting a 2024 Bronze Quality Award on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 1 pm CST. Join hosts Pamela Truscott, Director of Quality Improvement at NCAL, and Tim Case, Administrator of the Quality Award Program, as they guide you through the nuances of the Bronze application process.

Please click [here](#) to register to secure your spot for this FREE event, which is open to everyone interested in elevating their commitment to quality. Whether you've submitted an intent to apply or not, you can attend the workshop and apply before the deadline on Thursday, January 25.

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## **The Center of Excellence for Behavior Health in Nursing Facilities**

Beginning September 2023, the Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health in Nursing Facilities (COE-NF) will host six (6) one-hour monthly cohort sessions. **These sessions are FREE to attend!** Join them for the opportunity to learn industry best practices from other nursing facilities and behavioral health subject matter experts. With the support of COE-NF behavioral health specialists, you will be able to implement the learnings in your facility. The last two cohort sessions are:

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## **CNA Testing Events**

All regional dates are viewable on the online calendar at <https://mo.tmutest.com/calendar>. **IMPORTANT** – these are not the only test sites available. If you need a different testing location, please call Headmaster D&S (1-800-393-8664) and ask for the Missouri Team.

**PLEASE NOTE:** There have been changes to scheduling tests through TMU and to the paperwork for RN Observers. Please reach out to Headmaster with questions. [missouri@hdmaster.com](mailto:missouri@hdmaster.com).

Knowledge and Skill testing is available on January 22<sup>nd</sup> and February 12<sup>th</sup> at MHCA. Please contact [shellie@mohealthcare.com](mailto:shellie@mohealthcare.com) to reserve a time slot.

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