



CMS to Unveil New 5-Star Quality Rating System for Nursing Facilities

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Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) officials announced last week that CMS will unveil the new *Nursing Home Compare* 3.0 quality measurement scale on Friday, February 20, 2015. The new 5-Star Quality Rating System will have higher standards than the current system. Officials also announced that beginning Friday, February 13, providers would be able to privately access individual facility details under the new quality measurement system.

CMS stated that “changes in ratings reflect that CMS raised the bar for performance that should be recognized as high quality and anticipates nursing homes will make quality improvements to achieve these higher standards.” According to the CMS Fact Sheet released on February 12, CMS will complete the following actions:

- **Add 2 Quality Measures (QMs):** for antipsychotic medication use in nursing homes to the 5-Star calculations. One measure is for short-stay residents when a nursing home begins use of antipsychotics for people without diagnoses of schizophrenia, Huntington’s disease, or Tourette syndrome, and a second measure reflects continued use of such medications for long-stay nursing home residents without diagnoses of schizophrenia, Huntington’s disease, or Tourette syndrome.
- **Raise Performance Expectations:** by raising the standards for nursing homes to achieve a high rating on all publicly reported measures in the Quality Measures category on the website.
- **Adjust Staffing Algorithms:** to more accurately reflect staffing levels. Nursing homes must earn 4-stars on either the individual Registered Nurse (RN) only or the staffing categories to receive 4-stars on the Overall staffing rating and can have no less than a 3-star rating on any of those dimensions.
- **Expand Targeted Surveys:** a plan for State Survey Agencies to conduct specialized, onsite surveys of a sample of nursing homes across the U.S. that assess adequacy of resident assessments and the accuracy of information reported to CMS that is used in calculating quality measures used in the rating system. A report on the results of the pilot surveys completed in 2014 in five states will be available after February 23, 2015 at: <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/SurveyCertificationGenInfo/Policy-and-Memos-to-States-and-Regions.html>.

CMS launched *Nursing Home Compare* in 1998 and added the 5-Star Quality Rating System in 2008. According to CMS, the website gets more than 1.4 million visitors per year.

CMS also announced that another major change to the quality rating system is scheduled to take place in 2016.

The complete CMS Fact Sheet is available by clicking [here](#).¹

¹ <http://www.cms.gov/Newsroom/MediaReleaseDatabase/Fact-sheets/2015-Fact-sheets-items/2015-02-12-2.html>.

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