



Center for Medicaid and State Operations

Ref: S&C-03-08

DATE: December 12, 2002

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Information Exchange by Surveyors During the Nursing Home Survey Process

TO: Associate Regional Administrators, DMSO
State Survey Agency Directors

Purpose

The purpose of this policy letter is to reiterate the role and function of surveyors during the survey process on the issue of consultation, technical assistance, and sharing best practice information.

Policy

In accordance with State Operations Manual (SOM), Section 9, Appendix P, page 77, Information Transfer, "the State should provide information to the facility about care and regulatory topics that would be useful to the facility for understanding and applying best practices in the care and treatment of the long term care residents. This information exchange is not a consultation with the facility, but is a means of disseminating information that may be of assistance to the facility in meeting long term care requirements." The intent is to allow surveyors to provide reference information regarding best practices to assist facilities in developing additional sources and networking tools for program enhancement. State Health Facility Surveyors, however, should not act as consultants to nursing homes.

The nursing home is responsible for correcting its deficiencies. State Operations Manual, §2727, provides direction regarding Limitations on Technical Assistance Afforded by Surveyors. It is not the surveyors responsible to delve into the facility's policies and procedures to determine the root cause of the deficiency or to sift through various alternatives to suggest an acceptable remedy. When the State Agency conducts a revisit, it is to confirm that the facility is in compliance with the cited deficiencies, not whether it implemented the suggested best practices, and has the ability to remain in compliance.

Effective Date: N/A

Training: The information contained in this announcement should be shared with all survey and certification staff, their managers and the state/RO training coordinator.

/s/
Steven A. Pelovitz