



Center for Medicaid and State Operations
Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group (DEHPG)

TO: State Medicaid Directors
State Directors of Agencies Administering the HCBS Waivers
CMS Regional Administrators
CMS Associate Regional Administrators
CMS Regional Office HCBS Waiver Contacts
HCBS Quality Inventory Work Group

CC: Charlene Brown, CMSO Deputy Directors

FROM: Glenn Stanton
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SUBJ: The Quality Inventory Report

DATE: February 17, 2004

For the past eighteen (18) months, CMS has been engaged in a dialogue with stakeholders on improving quality in HCBS programs. This dialogue has yielded valuable insights and products that we want to share with you as part of our continuous quality improvement initiative.

This is the fourth in a series of communications related to improving quality in home and community-based services. This communication transmits the summary report from the National Quality Inventory Project (NQIP). Previous communications have included the transmission of the *HCBS Quality Tools* and the *Quality Framework*.

In 2001, the National Association of State Units on Aging (NASUA) and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) partnered with the Center for Medicaid and State Operations (CMSO) Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group (DEHPG), to design and conduct the National Quality Inventory Project (NQIP). The National Association of State Medicaid Directors (NASMD) also participated in NQIP.

The principal purpose of the NQIP was to compile systematic baseline information concerning state QA/I systems for Medicaid HCBS waiver programs. A clear understanding of the design, operation and capabilities of state systems is vital in order for CMS and its state partners to identify effective near and longer-term strategies to strengthen HCBS waiver programs. Another important project objective was to identify potential opportunities for technical assistance to states.

The Inventory concentrated on the design features and structure of state QA/I systems, using the *HCBS Quality Framework* to guide the development of items in the Inventory. It also asked states to provide information about their discovery processes, remediation tools, and quality improvement activities. The Inventory requested that states provide information concerning their initiatives to strengthen QA/I, and provide feedback to CMS concerning the usefulness of the *HCBS Waiver Protocol* and the *HCBS Quality Framework*. States also were asked to identify areas where CMS should enhance its technical assistance capabilities in support of state QA/I efforts.

The enclosed *Quality Inventory Report* summarizes and discusses the results of this first-time, nationwide systematic survey of state waiver program QA/I systems. The report also includes recommendations for CMS follow-up, many of which we have already begun to implement.

I want to thank NASUA, NASDDDS and NASMD and especially state agency staff who participated in the inventory project. The impressive response rate as well as the comprehensiveness of the responses has provided us all with an important baseline of information and recommendations.

CMS, in collaboration with our partners, will continue our efforts to improve quality in Home and Community Based Services through the development of common expectations, quality tools and technical assistance.

The *HCBS Quality Inventory Report*, along with the *HCBS Quality Framework* and *Quality Tools* are available on the quality page of the CMSO web site, www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/waivers/quality.asp, in accessible formats for persons with visual impairments.

We invite comments on the enclosed report, which can be directed by e-mail to hcbsquality@cms.hhs.gov.

We appreciate the valuable input provided by the state agencies and the national associations and look forward to continuing the collaborative relationship.

Attachment