

FORM APPROVED  
OMB NO 0938-0400

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
HEALTH CARE FINANCING ADMINISTRATION

**2. SERVING OF MEALS \* (continued)**

- k. Served promptly.
- l. Residents ready for meal when served.
- m. Attractive.
- n. Utensils available.
- o. Functional trays for bedfast residents.
- p. Salt, pepper, sugar, other condiments on resident's trays unless contraindicated.
- q. Medically able residents eating in dining area.
- r. Bedtime nourishment offered.

**3. SUPERVISION OF RESIDENT NUTRITION**

- a. Prompt assistance.
- b. Proper assistance (spoon-feeding; supervision or instruction to develop eating skills).
- c. Courteous and unhurried assistance.
- d. Self-help devices present (straws, easy grip utensils, special cup, etc.).
- e. Intake recorded/deviations from normal are reported.

FORM HCFA-523 (2-99)  
\* U.S. GPO 1999 O 181 204 578 3 4

**§ 488.110 Procedural guidelines.**

*SNF/ICF Survey Process.* The purpose for implementing a new SNF/ICF survey process is to assess whether the quality of care, as intended by the law and regulations, and as needed by the

resident, is actually being provided in nursing homes. Although the onsite review procedures have been changed, facilities must continue to meet all applicable Conditions/Standards, in order to participate in Medicare/Medicaid programs. That is, the methods used to

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compile information about compliance with law and regulations are changed; the law and regulations themselves are not changed. The new process differs from the traditional process, principally in terms of its emphasis on resident outcomes. In ascertaining whether residents grooming and personal hygiene needs are met, for example, surveyors will no longer routinely evaluate a facility's written policies and procedures. Instead, surveyors will observe residents in order to make that determination. In addition, surveyors will confirm, through interviews with residents and staff, that such needs are indeed met on a regular basis. In most reviews, then, surveyors will ascertain whether the facility is actually providing the required and needed care and services, rather than whether the facility is capable of providing the care and services.

THE OUTCOME-ORIENTED SURVEY PROCESS—SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES (SNFs) AND INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITIES (ICFs)

- (a) General.
- (b) The Survey Tasks.
- (c) Task 1—Entrance Conference.
- (d) Task 2—Resident Sample—Selection Methodology.
- (e) Task 3—Tour of the Facility.
- (f) Task 4—Observation/Interview/Medical Record Review (including drug regimen review).
- (g) Task 5—Drug Pass Observation.
- (h) Task 6—Dining Area and Eating Assistance Observation.
- (i) Task 7—Forming the Deficiency Statement.
- (j) Task 8—Exit Conference.
- (k) Plan of Correction.
- (l) Followup Surveys.
- (m) Role of Surveyor.
- (n) Confidentiality and Respect for Resident Privacy.
- (o) Team Composition.
- (p) Type of Facility—Application of SNF or ICF Regulations.
- (q) Use of Part A and Part B of the Survey Report.

(a) *General.* A complete SNF/ICF facility survey consists of three components:

- Life Safety Code requirements;
- Administrative and structural requirements (Part A of the Survey Report, Form CMS–525); and
- Direct resident care requirements (Part B of the Survey Report, Form

CMS–519), along with the related worksheets (CMS–520 through 524).

Use this survey process for all surveys of SNFs and ICFs—whether free-standing, distinct parts, or dually certified. Do not use this process for surveys of Intermediate Care Facilities for Mentally Retarded (ICFs/MR), swing-bed hospitals or skilled nursing sections of hospitals that are not separately certified as SNF distinct parts. Do not announce SNF/ICF surveys ahead of time.

(b) *The Survey Tasks.* Listed below are the survey tasks for easy reference:

- Task 1. Entrance Conference.
- Task 2. Resident Sample—Selection Methodology.
- Task 3. Tour of the Facility. Resident Needs. Physical Environment. Meeting with Resident Council Representatives. Tour Summation and Focus of Remaining Survey Activity.
- Task 4. Observation/Interview/Medical Record. Review of Each Individual in the Resident Sample (including drug regimen review).
- Task 5. Drug Pass Observation.
- Task 6. Dining Area and Eating Assistance Observation.
- Task 7. Forming the Deficiency Statement (if necessary).
- Task 8. Exit Conference.

(c) *Task 1—Entrance Conference.* Perform these activities during the entrance conference in every certification and recertification survey:

- Introduce all members of the team to the facility staff, if possible, even though the whole team may not be present for the entire entrance conference. (All surveyors wear identification tags.)
- Explain the SNF/ICF survey process as resident centered in focus, and outline the basic steps.
- Ask the facility for a list showing names of residents by room number with each of the following care needs/treatments identified for each resident to whom they apply:
  - Decubitus care
  - Restraints
  - Catheters
  - Injections
  - Parenteral fluids
  - Rehabilitation service
  - Colostomy/ileostomy care
  - Respiratory care

- Tracheostomy care
- Suctioning
- Tube feeding

Use this list for selecting the resident sample.

- Ask the facility to complete page 2 of Form CMS-519 (Resident Census) as soon as possible, so that the information can further orient you to the facility's population. In a survey of a SNF with a distinct part ICF, you may collect two sets of census data. However, consolidate the information when submitting it to the regional office. You may modify the Resident Census Form to include the numbers of licensed and certified beds, if necessary.

- Ask the facility to post signs on readily viewed areas (at least one on each floor) announcing that State surveyors are in the facility performing an "inspection," and are available to meet with residents in private. Also indicate the name and telephone number of the State agency. Hand-printed signs with legible, large letters are acceptable.

- If the facility has a Resident Council, make mutually agreeable arrangements to meet privately with the president and officers and other individuals they might invite.

- Inform the facility that interviews with residents and Resident Councils are conducted privately, unless they independently request otherwise, in order to enhance the development of rapport as well as to allay any resident anxiety. Tell the facility that information is gathered from interviews, the tour, observations, discussions, record review, and facility officials. Point out that the facility will be given an opportunity to respond to all findings.

(d) *Task 2—Resident Sample—Selection Methodology.* This methodology is aimed at formulating a sample that reflects the actual distribution of care needs/treatments in the facility population.

Primarily performed on a random basis, it also ensures representation in the sample of certain care needs and treatments that are assessed during the survey.

(1) *Sample Size.* Calculate the size of the sample according to the following guide:

Number of residents in facility	Number of residents in sample <sup>1</sup>
0–60 residents.	25% of residents (minimum—10).
61–120 residents.	20% of residents (minimum—15).
121–200 residents.	15% of residents (minimum—24).
201+ residents.	10% of residents (minimum—30).

<sup>1</sup> Maximum—50.

Note that the calculation is based on the resident census, not beds. After determining the appropriate sample size, select residents for the sample in a random manner. You may, for example, select every fifth resident from the resident census, beginning at a random position on the list. For surveys of dually certified facilities or distinct part SNFs/ICFs, first use the combined SNF/ICF population to calculate the size of the sample, and then select a sample that reflects the proportions of SNF and ICF residents in the facility's overall population.

(2) *Special Care Needs/Treatments.* The survey form specifies several care needs/treatments that must always be reviewed when they apply to any facility residents. These include:

- Decubitus Care
- Restraints
- Catheters
- Injections, Parenteral Fluids, Colostomy/Ileostomy, Respiratory Care, Tracheostomy Care, Suctioning, Tube Feeding
- Rehabilitative Services (physical therapy, speech pathology and audiology services, occupational therapy)

Due to the relatively low prevalence of these care needs/treatments, appropriate residents may be either under-represented or entirely omitted from the sample. Therefore, determine during the tour how many residents in the random selection fall into each of these care categories. Then, compare the number of such residents in the random selection with the total number of residents in the facility with each specified care need/treatment (based on either the resident census or other information provided by the facility).

Review no less than 25 percent of the residents in each of these special care needs/treatments categories. For example, if the facility has 10 residents with

decubitus ulcers, but only one of these residents is selected randomly, review two more residents with decubitus ulcers (25% of 10 equals 2.5, so review a total of 3). Or, if the facility has two residents who require tube feeding, neither of whom is in the random selection, review the care of at least one of these residents. This can be accomplished in the following manner:

Conduct in-depth reviews of the randomly selected residents and then perform limited reviews of additional residents as needed to cover the specified care categories. Such reviews are limited to the care and services related to the pertinent care areas only, e.g., catheters, restraints, or colostomy. Utilize those worksheets or portions of worksheets which are appropriate to the limited review. Refer to the Care Guidelines, as a resource document, when appropriate.

Always keep in mind that neither the random selection approach nor the review of residents within the specified care categories precludes investigation of other resident care situations that you believe might pose a serious threat to a resident's health or safety. Add to the sample, as appropriate.

(e) *Task 3—Tour of the Facility—(1) Purpose.* Conduct the tour in order to:

- Develop an overall picture of the types and patterns of care delivery present within the facility;
- View the physical environment; and
- Ascertain whether randomly selected residents are communicative and willing to be interviewed.

(2) *Protocol.* You may tour the entire facility as a team or separately, as long as all areas of the facility are examined by at least one team member. Success of the latter approach, however, is largely dependent on open intra-team communication and the ability of each team member to identify situations for further review by the team member of the appropriate discipline. You may conduct the tour with or without facility staff accompanying you, as you prefer. Facilities, however, vary in staff member availability. Record your notes on the Tour Notes Worksheet, Form CMS–521.

Allow approximately three hours for the tour. Converse with residents, fam-

ily members/significant others (if present), and staff, asking open-ended questions in order to confirm observations, obtain additional information, or corroborate information, (e.g., accidents, odors, apparent inappropriate dress, adequacy and appropriateness of activities). Converse sufficiently with residents selected for in-depth review to ascertain whether they are willing to be interviewed and are communicative. Observe staff interactions with other staff members as well as with residents for insight into matters such as resident rights and assignments of staff responsibilities.

Always knock and/or get permission before entering a room or interrupting privacy. If you wish to inspect a resident's skin, observe a treatment procedure, or observe a resident who is exposed, courteously ask permission from the resident if she/he comprehends, or ask permission from the staff nurse if the resident cannot communicate. Do not do "hands-on" monitoring such as removal of dressings; ask staff to remove a dressing or handle a resident.

(3) *Resident Needs.* While touring, focus on the residents' needs—physical, emotional, psychosocial, or spiritual—and whether those needs are being met. Refer to the following list as needed:

- Personal hygiene, grooming, and appropriate dress
- Position
- Assistive and other restorative devices
- Rehabilitation issues
- Functional limitations in ADL
- Functional limitations in gait, balance and coordination
- Hydration and nutritional status
- Resident rights
- Activity for time of day (appropriate or inappropriate)
- Emotional status
- Level of orientation
- Awareness of surroundings
- Behaviors
- Cleanliness of immediate environment (wheelchair, bed, bedside table, etc.)
- Odors
- Adequate clothing and care supplies as well as maintenance and cleanliness of same

(4) *Review of the Physical Environment.* As you tour each resident's room and

auxiliary rooms, also examine them in connection with the physical environment requirements. You need not document physical environment on the Tour Notes Worksheet. Instead, you may note any negative findings directly on the Survey Report Form in the remarks section.

(5) *Meeting With Resident Council Representatives.* If a facility has a Resident Council, one or more surveyors meet with the representatives in a private area. Facility staff members do not attend unless specifically requested by the Council. Explain the purpose of the survey and briefly outline the steps in the survey process, i.e., entrance conference \* \* \* exit conference. Indicate your interest in learning about the strengths of the facility in addition to any complaints or shortcomings. State that this meeting is one part of the information gathering; the findings have not yet been completed nor the conclusions formulated. Explain further, however, that the official survey findings are usually available within three months after the completion of the survey, and give the telephone number of the State agency office.

Use this meeting to ascertain strengths and/or problems, if any, from the consumer's perspective, as well as to develop additional information about aspects of care and services gleaned during the tour that were possibly substandard.

Conduct the meeting in a manner that allows for comments about any aspect of the facility. (See the section on Interview Procedures.) Use open-ended questions such as:

- "What is best about this home?"
- "What is worst?"
- "What would you like to change?"

In order to get more detail, use questions such as:

- "Can you be more specific?"
- "Can you give me an example?"
- "What can anyone else tell me about this?"

If you wish to obtain information about a topic not raised by the residents, use an approach like the following:

- "Tell me what you think about the food/staff/cleanliness here."
- "What would make it better?"

- "What don't you like? What do you like?"

(6) *Tour Summation and Focus of Remaining Survey Activity.* When the tour is completed, review the resident census data provided by the facility. Determine if the care categories specified in the section on Resident Sample are sufficiently represented in the random selection, make adjustments as needed, and complete the listing of residents on the worksheet labeled "Residents Selected for In-depth Review", Form CMS-520.

Transcribe notes of a negative nature onto the SRF in the "Remarks" column under the appropriate rule. Findings from a later segment in the survey or gathered by another surveyor may combine to substantiate a deficiency. You need not check "met" or "not met" at this point in the survey. Discuss significant impressions/conclusions at the completion of each subsequent survey task, and transfer any negative findings onto the Survey Report Form in the Remarks section.

(f) *Task 4—Observation/Interview/Medical Record Review (including drug regimen review).* Perform the in-depth review of each individual in the resident sample in order to ascertain whether the facility is meeting resident needs. Evaluate specific indicators for each resident, utilizing the front and back of the "Observation/Interview/Record Review (OIRR)" worksheet, Form CMS-524. You may prefer to perform the record review first, complete resident/staff/family observations and interviews, and finally, return to the record for any final unresolved issues. On the other hand, you may prefer to do the interviews first. Either method is acceptable. Whenever possible, however, complete one resident's observation/interview/medical record review and document the OIRR before moving onto another resident. If because of the facility layout, it is more efficient to do more than one record review at a time, limit such record review to two or three residents so your familiarity with the particular resident and continuity of the OIRR are not compromised.

(1) *Observation.* Conduct observations concurrently with interviews of residents, family/significant others, and

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discussions with direct care staff [of the various disciplines involved. In multi-facility operations, whenever possible, observe staff that is regularly assigned to the facility in order to gain an understanding of the care and services usually provided.] Maintain respect for resident privacy. Minimize disruption of the operations of the facility or impositions upon any resident as much as possible. Based upon your observations of the residents' needs, gather information about any of the following areas, as appropriate:

- Bowel and bladder training
- Catheter care
- Restraints
- Injections
- Parenteral fluids
- Tube feeding/gastrostomy
- Colostomy/ileostomy
- Respiratory therapy
- Tracheostomy care
- Suctioning

(2) *Interviews.* Interview each resident in private unless he/she independently requests that a facility staff member or other individual be present. Conduct the in-depth interview in a nonthreatening and noninvasive fashion so as to decrease anxiety and defensiveness. The open-ended approach described in the section on the Resident Council is also appropriate for the in-depth interview. While prolonged time expenditure is not usually a worthwhile use of resources or the resident's time, do allow time initially to establish rapport.

At each interview:

- Introduce yourself.
- Address the resident by name.
- Explain in simple terms the reason for your visit (e.g., to assure that the care and services are adequate and appropriate for each resident).
- Briefly outline the process—entrance conference, tour, interviews, observations, review of medical records, resident interviews, and exit conference.
- Mention that the selection of a particular resident for an interview is not meant to imply that his/her care is substandard or that the facility provides substandard care. Also mention that most of those interviewed are selected randomly.

• Assure that you will strive for anonymity for the resident and that the interview is used in addition to medical records, observations, discussions, etc., to capture an accurate picture of the treatment and care provided by the facility. Explain that the official findings of the survey are usually available to the public about three months after completion of the survey, but resident names are not given to the public.

• When residents experience difficulty expressing themselves:

- Avoid pressuring residents to verbalize
- Accept and respond to all communication
- Ignore mistakes in word choice
- Allow time for recollection of words
- Encourage self-expression through any means available

• When interviewing residents with decreased receptive capacity:

- Speak slowly and distinctly
- Speak at conversational voice level
- Sit within the resident's line of vision

• Listen to all resident information/allegations without judgment. Information gathered subsequently may substantiate or repudiate an allegation.

The length of the interview varies, depending on the condition and wishes of the resident and the amount of information supplied. Expect the average interview, however, to last approximately 15 minutes. Courteously terminate an interview whenever the resident is unable or unwilling to continue, or is too confused or disoriented to continue. Do, however, perform the other activities of this task (observation and record review). If, in spite of your conversing during the tour, you find that less than 40 percent of the residents in your sample are sufficiently alert and willing to be interviewed, try to select replacements so that a complete OIRR is performed for a group this size, if possible. There may be situations, however, where the resident population has a high percentage of confused individuals and this percentage is not achievable. Expect that the information from confused individuals can be, but is not necessarily, less

reliable than that from more alert individuals.

Include the following areas in the interview of each resident in the sample:

Activities of daily living  
Grooming/hygiene  
Nutrition/dietary  
Restorative/rehabilitation care and services  
Activities  
Social services  
Resident rights

Refer to the Care Guidelines “evaluation factors” as a resource for possible elements to consider when focusing on particular aspects of care and resident needs.

Document information obtained from the interviews/observations on the OIRR Worksheet. Record in the “Notes” section any additional information you may need in connection with substandard care or services. Unless the resident specifically requests that he/she be identified, do not reveal the source of the information gleaned from the interview.

(3) *Medical Record Review.* The medical record review is a three-part process, which involves first reconciling the observation/interview findings with the record, then reconciling the record against itself, and lastly performing the drug regimen review.

Document your findings on the OIRR Worksheet, as appropriate, and summarize on the Survey Report Form the findings that are indicative of problematic or substandard care. Be alert for repeated similar instances of substandard care developing as the number of completed OIRR Worksheets increases.

NOTE: The problems related to a particular standard or condition could range from identical (e.g., meals not in accordance with dietary plan) to different but related (e.g., nursing services—lapse in care provided to residents with catheters, to residents with contractures, to residents needing assistance for personal hygiene and residents with improperly applied restraints).

(i) *Reconciling the observation/interview findings with the record.* Determine if:

- An assessment has been performed.
- A plan with goals has been developed.

- The interventions have been carried out.

- The resident has been evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the interventions.

For example, if a resident has developed a decubitus ulcer while in the facility, record review can validate staff and resident interviews regarding the facility’s attempts at prevention. Use your own judgment; review as much of the record(s) as necessary to evaluate the care planning. Note that facilities need not establish specific areas in the record stating “Assessment,” “Plan,” “Intervention,” or “Evaluation” in order for the documentation to be considered adequate.

(ii) *Reconciling the record with itself.* Determine:

- If the resident has been properly assessed for all his/her needs.
- That normal and routine nursing practices such as periodic weights, temperatures, blood pressures, etc., are performed as required by the resident’s conditions.

(iii) *Performing the drug regimen review.* The purpose of the drug regimen review is to determine if the pharmacist has reviewed the drug regimen on a monthly basis. Follow the procedures in Part One of Appendix N, Surveyor Procedures for Pharmaceutical Service Requirements in Long-Term Care Facilities. Fill in the appropriate boxes on the top left hand corner of the reverse side of the OIRR Worksheet, Form CMS-524. Appendix N lists many irregularities that can occur. Review at least six different indicators on each survey. However, the same six indicators need not be reviewed on every survey.

NOTE: If you detect irregularities and the documentation demonstrates that the pharmacist has notified the attending physician, do not cite a deficiency. Do, however, bring the irregularity to the attention of the medical director or other facility official, and note the official’s name and date of notification on the Survey Report Form.

(g) *Task 5—Drug Pass Observation.* The purpose of the drug pass observation is to observe the actual preparation and administration of medications to residents. With this approach, there is no doubt that the errors detected, if any, are errors in drug administration, not

documentation. Follow the procedure in Part Two of Appendix N, Surveyor Procedures for Pharmaceutical Service Requirements in Long-Term Care Facilities, and complete the Drug Pass Worksheet, Form CMS–522. Be as neutral and unobtrusive as possible during the drug pass observation. Whenever possible, select one surveyor, who is a Registered Nurse or a pharmacist, to observe the drug pass of approximately 20 residents. In facilities where fewer than 20 residents are receiving medications, review as many residents receiving medications as possible. Residents selected for the in-depth review need not be included in the group chosen for the drug pass; however, their whole or partial inclusion is acceptable. In order to get a balanced view of a facility's practices, observe more than one person administering a drug pass, if feasible. This might involve observing the morning pass one day in Wing A, for example, and the morning pass the next day in Wing B.

Transfer findings noted on the “Drug Pass” worksheet to the SRF under the appropriate rule. If your team concludes that the facility's medication error rate is 5 percent or more, cite the deficiency under Nursing Services/Administration of Drugs. Report the error rate under F209. If the deficiency is at the standard level, cite it in Nursing Services, rather than Pharmacy.

(h) *Task 6—Dining Area and Eating Assistance Observation.* The purpose of this task is to ascertain the extent to which the facility meets dietary needs, particularly for those who require eating assistance. This task also yields information about staff interaction with residents, promptness and appropriateness of assistance, adaptive equipment usage and availability, as well as appropriateness of dress and hygiene for meals.

For this task, use the worksheet entitled “Dining Area and Eating Assistance Observation” (Form CMS–523). Observe two meals; for a balanced view, try to observe meals at different times of the day. For example, try to observe a breakfast and a dinner rather than two breakfasts. Give particular care to performing observations as unobtrusively as possible. Chatting with residents and sitting down nearby may

help alleviate resident anxiety over the observation process.

Select a minimum of five residents for each meal observation and include residents who have their meals in their rooms. Residents selected for the in-depth review need not be included in the dining and eating assistance observation; however, their whole or partial inclusion is acceptable. Ascertain the extent to which the facility assesses, plans, and evaluates the nutritional care of residents and eating assistance needs by reviewing the sample of 10 or more residents. If you are unable to determine whether the facility meets the standards from the sample reviewed, expand the sample and focus on the specific area(s) in question, until you can formulate a conclusion about the extent of compliance. As with the other survey tasks, transfer the findings noted on the “Dining & Eating Assistance Observation” worksheet to the Survey Report Form.

(i) *Task 7—Forming the Deficiency Statement—(1) General.* The Survey Report Form contains information about all of the negative findings of the survey. Be sure to transfer to the Survey Report Form data from the tour, drug pass observation, dining area and eating assistance observation, as well as in-depth review of the sample of residents. Transfer only those findings which could possibly contribute to a determination that the facility is deficient in a certain area.

Meet as a group in a pre-exit conference to discuss the findings and make conclusions about the deficiencies, subject to information provided by facility officials that may further explain the situation. Review the summaries/conclusions from each task and decide whether any further information and/or documentation is necessary to substantiate a deficiency. As the facility for additional information for clarification about particular findings, if necessary. Always consider information provided by the facility. If the facility considers as acceptable, practices which you believe are not acceptable, ask the facility to backup its contention with suitable reference material or sources and submit them for your consideration.

(2) *Analysis.* Analyze the findings on the Survey Report Form for the degree of severity, frequency of occurrence and impact on delivery of care or quality of life. The threshold at which the frequency of occurrences amounts to a deficiency varies from situation to situation. One occurrence directly related to a life-threatening or fatal outcome can be cited as a deficiency. On the other hand, a few sporadic occurrences may have so slight an impact on delivery of care or quality of life that they do not warrant a deficiency citation. Review carefully all the information gathered. What may appear during observation as a pattern, may or may not be corroborated by records, staff, and residents. For example, six of the 32 residents in the sample are dressed in mismatched, poorly buttoned clothes. A few of the six are wearing slippers without socks. A few others are wearing worn clothes. Six occurrences might well be indicative of a pattern of substandard care. Close scrutiny of records, discussions with staff, and interviews reveal, however, that the six residents are participating in dressing retraining programs. Those residents who are without socks, chose to do so. The worn clothing items were also chosen—they are favorites.

Combinations of substandard care such as poor grooming of a number of residents, lack of ambulation of a number of residents, lack of attention to positioning, poor skin care, etc., can yield a deficiency in nursing services just as 10 out of 10 residents receiving substandard care for decubiti yields a deficiency.

(3) *Deficiencies Alleged by Staff or Residents.* If staff or residents allege deficiencies, but records, interviews, and observation fail to confirm the situation, it is unlikely that a deficiency exists. Care and services that are indeed confirmed by the survey to be in compliance with the regulatory requirements, but considered deficient by residents or staff, cannot be cited as deficient for certification purposes. On the other hand, if an allegation is of a very serious nature (e.g., resident abuse) and the tools of record review and observation are not effective because the problem is concealed, obtain as much information as possible or necessary to

ascertain compliance, and cite accordingly. Residents, family, or former employees may be helpful for information gathering.

(4) *Composing the Deficiency Statement.* Write the deficiency statement in terms specific enough to allow a reasonably knowledgeable person to understand the aspect(s) of the requirement(s) that is (are) not met. Do not delve into the facility's policies and procedures to determine or speculate on the root cause of a deficiency, or sift through various alternatives in an effort to prescribe an acceptable remedy. Indicate the data prefix tag and regulatory citation, followed by a summary of the deficiency and supporting findings using resident identifiers, not resident names, as in the following example.

*F102 SNF 405.1123(b).*—Each resident has not had a physician's visit at least once every 30 days for the first 90 days after admission. Resident #1602 has not been seen by a physician since she was admitted 50 days ago. Her condition has deteriorated since that time (formulation of decubiti, infections).

When the data prefix tag does not repeat the regulations, also include a short phrase that describes the prefix tag (e.g., F117 decubitus ulcer care). List the data tags in numerical order, whenever possible.

(j) *Task 8—Exit Conference.* The purpose of the exit conference is to inform the facility of survey findings and to arrange for a plan of correction, if needed. Keep the tone of the exit conference consistent with the character of the survey process—inspection and enforcement. Tactful, business-like, professional presentation of the findings is of paramount importance. Recognize that the facility may wish to respond to various findings. Although deficiency statements continue to depend, in part, on surveyor professional judgment, support your conclusions with resident-specific examples (identifiers other than names) whenever you can do so without compromising confidentiality. Before formally citing deficiencies, discuss any allegations or findings that could not be substantiated during earlier tasks in the process. For example, if information is gathered that suggests a newly hired

R.N. is not currently licensed, ask the facility officials to present current licensure information for the nurse in question. Identify residents when the substandard care is readily observed or discerned through record review. Ensure that the facility improves the care provided to all affected residents, not only the identified residents. Make clear to the facility that during a follow-up visit the surveyors may review residents other than those with significant problems from the original sample, in order to see that the facility has corrected the problems overall. Do not disclose the source of information provided during interviews, unless the resident has specifically requested you to inform the facility of his/her comments or complaints. In accordance with your Agency's policy, present the Statement of Deficiencies, form CMS-2567, on site or after supervisory review, no later than 10 calendar days following the survey.

(k) *Plan of Correction.* Explain to the facility that your role is to identify care and services which are not consistent with the regulatory requirements, rather than to ascertain the root causes of deficiencies. Each facility is expected to review its own care delivery. Subsequent to the exit conference, each facility is required to submit a plan of correction that identifies necessary changes in operation that will assure correction of the cited deficiencies. In reviewing and accepting a proposed plan of correction, apply these criteria:

- Does the facility have a reasonable approach for correcting the deficiencies?
- Is there a high probability that the planned action will result in compliance?
- Is compliance expected timely?

Plans of correction specific to residents identified on the deficiency statement are acceptable only where the deficiency is determined to be unique to that resident and not indicative of a possible systemic problem. For example, as a result of an aide being absent, two residents are not ambulated three times that day as called for in their care plans. A plan of correction that says "Ambulate John Jones and Mary Smith three times per

day," is not acceptable. An acceptable plan of correction would explain changes made to the facility's staffing and scheduling in order to guarantee that staff is available to provide all necessary services for all residents.

Acceptance of the plan of correction does not absolve the facility of the responsibility for compliance should the implementation not result in correction and compliance. Acceptance indicates the State agency's acknowledgment that the facility indicated a willingness and ability to make corrections adequately and timely.

Allow the facility up to 10 days to prepare and submit the plan of correction to the State agency, however, follow your SA policy if the timeframe is shorter. Retain the various survey worksheets as well as the Survey Report Form at the State agency. Forward the deficiency statement to the CMS regional office.

(1) *Follow-up Surveys.* The purpose of the follow-up survey is to re-evaluate the specific types of care or care delivery patterns that were cited as deficient during the original survey. Ascertain the corrective status of all deficiencies cited on the CMS-2567. Because this survey process focuses on the actual provision of care and services, revisits are almost always necessary to ascertain whether the deficiencies have indeed been corrected. The nature of the deficiencies dictates the scope of the follow-up visit. Use as many tasks or portions of the Survey Report Form(s) as needed to ascertain compliance status. For example, you need not perform another drug pass if no drug related deficiencies were cited on the initial survey. Similarly, you need not repeat the dining area and eating assistance observations if no related problems were identified. All or some of the aspects of the observation/interview/medical record review, however, are likely to be appropriate for the follow-up survey.

When selecting the resident sample for the follow-up, determine the sample size using the same formula as used earlier in the survey, with the following exceptions:

- The maximum sample size is 30 residents, rather than 50.

- The minimum sample size of 10 residents does not apply if only one care category was cited as deficient and the total number of residents in the facility in that category was less than 10 (e.g., deficiency cited under catheter care and only five residents have catheters).

Include in the sample those residents who, in your judgment, are appropriate for reviewing vis-a-vis the cited substandard care. If possible, include some residents identified as receiving substandard care during the initial survey. If after completing the follow-up activities you determine that the cited deficiencies were not corrected, initiate adverse action procedures, as appropriate.

(m) *Role of Surveyor.* The survey and certification process is intended to determine whether providers and suppliers meet program participation requirements. The primary role of the surveyor, then, is to assess the quality of care and services and to relate those findings to statutory and regulatory requirements for program participation.

When you find substandard care or services in the course of a survey, carefully document your findings. Explain the deficiency in sufficient detail so that the facility officials understand your rationale. If the cause of the deficiency is obvious, share the information with the provider. For example, if you cite a deficiency for restraints (F118), indicate that restraints were applied backwards on residents 1621, 1634, 1646, etc.

In those instances where the cause is not obvious, do not delve into the facility's policies and procedures to determine the root cause of any deficiency. Do not recommend or prescribe an acceptable remedy. The provider is responsible for deciding on and implementing the action(s) necessary for achieving compliance. For the restraint situation in the example above, you would not ascertain whether the improper application was due to improper training or lack of training, nor would you attempt to identify the staff member who applied the restraints. It is the provider's responsibility to make the necessary changes or corrections to

ensure that the restraints are applied properly.

A secondary role for the surveyor is to provide general consultation to the provider/consumer community. This includes meeting with provider/consumer associations and other groups as well as participating in seminars. It also includes informational activities, whereby you respond to oral or written inquiries about required outcomes in care and services.

(n) *Confidentiality and Respect for Resident Privacy.* Conduct the survey in a manner that allows for the greatest degree of confidentiality for residents, particularly regarding the information gathered during the in-depth interviews. When recording observations about care and resident conditions, protect the privacy of all residents. Use a code such as resident identifier number rather than names on worksheets whenever possible. Never use a resident's name on the Deficiency Statement, Form CMS-2567. Block out resident names, if any, from any document that is disclosed to the facility, individual or organization.

When communicating to the facility about substandard care, fully identify the resident(s) by name if the situation was identified through observation or record review. Improperly applied restraints, expired medication, cold food, gloves not worn for a sterile procedure, and diet inconsistent with order, are examples of problems which can be identified to the facility by resident name. Information about injuries due to broken equipment, prolonged use of restraints, and opened mail is less likely to be obtained through observation or record review. Do not reveal the source of information unless actually observed, discovered in the record review, or requested by the resident or family.

(o) *Team Composition.* Whenever possible, use the following survey team model:

#### SNF/ICF SURVEY TEAM MODEL

In facilities with 200 beds or less, the team size may range from 2 to 4 members. If the team size is:

- *2 members:* The team has at least one RN plus another RN or a dietitian or a pharmacist.

- *3–4 member:* In addition to the composition described above, the team has one or two members of any discipline such as a social worker, sanitarian, etc.

If the facility has over 200 beds and the survey will last more than 2 days, the team size may be greater than 4 members. Select additional disciplines as appropriate to the facility’s compliance history.

Average onsite time per survey: 60 person hours (Number of surveyors multiplied by the number of hours on site)

Preferably, team members have gerontological training and experience. Any member may serve as the team leader, consistent with State agency procedures. In followup surveys, select disciplines based on major areas of correction. Include a social worker, for example, if the survey revealed major psychosocial problems. This model does not consider integrated survey and Inspection of Care review teams, which typically would be larger.

(p) *Type of Facility—Application of SNF or ICF Regulations.* Apply the regulations to the various types of facilities in the following manner:

- Freestanding Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) Apply SNF regulations.
- Freestanding Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) Apply ICF regulations.
- SNF Distinct Part of a Hospital Apply SNF regulations.
- ICF Distinct Part of a Hospital Apply ICF regulations.
- Dually Certified SNF/ICF Apply SNF regulations and 442.346(b).
- Freestanding SNF with ICF Distinct Part (Regardless of the proportion of SNF and ICF beds, the facility type is determined by the higher level of care. Therefore, LTC facilities with distinct parts are defined as SNFs with ICF distinct parts.)
  - Apply SNF regulations for SNF unit.
  - Apply ICF regulations for ICF distinct part.
  - Apply both SNF and ICF regulations for shared services (e.g., dietary).
  - If the same deficiency occurs in both the SNF and ICF components of the facility, cite both SNF and ICF regulations.
  - If the deficiency occurs in the SNF part only, cite only the SNF regulation.
  - If the deficiency occurs in the ICF part only, cite only the ICF regulation.

(q) *Use of Part A and Part B of the Survey Report—(1) Use of Part A (CMS–525).* Use Part A for initial certification surveys only, except under the following circumstances:

- When a terminated facility requests program participation 60 days or more after termination. Treat this situation as a request for initial certification and complete Part A of the survey report in addition to Part B.

- If an ICF with a favorable compliance history requests to covert a number of beds to SNF level, complete both Part A and Part B for compliance with the SNF requirements. If distinct part status is at issue, also examine whether it meets the criteria for certification as a distinct part.

(i) *Addendum for Outpatient Physical Therapy (OPT) or Speech Pathology Services.* Use the Outpatient Physical Therapy—Speech Pathology SRF (CMS–1893) as an addendum to Part A.

(ii) *Resurvey of Participating Facilities.* Do not use Part A for resurveys of participating SNFs and ICFs. A determination of compliance, based on documented examination of the written policies and procedures and other pertinent documents during the initial survey, establishes the facility’s compliance status with Part A requirements. This does not preclude citing deficiencies if they pertain to administrative or structural requirements from Part A that are uncovered incidental to a Part B survey. As an assurance measure, however, each facility at the time of recertification must complete an affidavit (on the CMS–1516) attesting that no substantive changes have occurred that would affect compliance. Each facility must also agree to notify the State agency immediately of any upcoming changes in its organization or management which may affect its compliance status. If a new administrator is unable to complete the affidavit, proceed with the survey using the Part B form and worksheets; do not use the Part A form. The survey cannot be considered complete, however, until the affidavit is signed. If the facility fails to complete the affidavit, it cannot participate in the program.

(iii) *Substantial Changes in a Facility’s Organization and Management.* If you receive such information, review the changes to ensure compliance with the regulations. Request copies of the appropriate documents (e.g., written policies and procedures, personnel qualifications, or agreements) if they were

not submitted. If the changes have made continued compliance seem doubtful, determine through a Part B survey whether deficiencies have resulted. Cite any deficiencies on the CMS-2567 and follow the usual procedures.

(2) *Use of Part B (CMS-519)*. Use Part B and the worksheets for all types of SNF and ICF surveys—initials, recertifications, followup, complaints, etc.

The worksheets are:

- CMS-520—Residents Selected for In-depth Review
- CMS-521—Tour Notes Worksheet
- CMS-522—Drug Pass Worksheet

- CMS-523—Dining Area and Eating Assistance Worksheet
- CMS-5245—Observation/Interview/Record Review Worksheet

For complaint investigations, perform a full or partial Part B survey based on the extent of the allegations. If the complaint alleges substandard care in a general fashion or in a variety of services and care areas, perform several tasks or a full Part B survey, as needed. If the complaint is of a more specific nature, such as an allegation of improper medications, perform an appropriate partial Part B survey, such as a drug pass review and a review of selected medical records.