



**Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/Survey & Certification Group**

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**Admin Info: 13-15-ALL**

**DATE:** January 11, 2013

**TO:** State Survey Agency Directors

**FROM:** Director  
Survey and Certification Group

**SUBJECT:** Complaint Intake and Triage Online Surveys – Please complete the appropriate survey and provide attachments by February 15, 2013.

**Memorandum Summary**

- **Actions:** After visiting a sample of State Agencies and Regional Offices during October and November 2012, we are sending online surveys to those locations not visited by Complaint Workgroup members. *The deadline for questionnaire completion and emailing documents is February 15, 2013.*
- **Purpose:** Additional information on the process and desired outcomes is contained here. Information gathered through the online surveys will be used to help us make the complaint intake, triage and investigation processes more efficient and effective.

**Background:**

More than a year ago, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services undertook the Complaints Investigation project. A number of State Agency (SA) and Regional Office (RO) staff members have been actively participating in a national workgroup on this effort, and a brief summary was provided at the 2012 Leadership Summit.

The workgroup recommended that teams visit SAs and ROs to observe how intake and triage are actually performed, in detail, and to determine what tools and checklists are used, what procedures are followed, what interactions occur between SAs and ROs and what approaches are used to capture complainant information and triage processes, etc. Following these visits, the workgroup would compare the data the teams collected to those procedures described in the State Operations Manual (SOM) and current training materials to determine where inconsistencies could be reduced or eliminated and, ultimately, to create a clearer set of guidance and procedures (as well as training to support it).

Beginning in October 2012, field observation teams began visiting SAs and ROs, observing intake and triage processes at each and administering a face-to-face interview-survey with questions on intake, triage, response to complainants, ASPEN Complaints Tracking System

(ACTS), facility (self) reported incidents, general process (for SAs), and intake, triage, referral, policies and procedures, staff and training and Federal oversight (for ROs).

The visits were completed in November. The participating SAs and ROs were:

| <b>State Agencies</b>   | <b>Regional Offices</b>  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connecticut (Nov 15)</li><li>• Florida (Oct 9-11)</li><li>• Maryland (Oct 25-26)</li><li>• Massachusetts (Oct 25)</li><li>• Minnesota (Nov 8-9)</li><li>• S. Carolina (Nov 5-7)</li><li>• Virginia (Oct 26)</li><li>• Washington (Oct 29, 31)</li><li>• Wisconsin (Oct 11-12)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Region 1 (Nov 16)</li><li>• Region 3 (Nov 15)</li><li>• Region 5 (Nov 13)</li><li>• Region 10 (Oct 30)</li></ul> |

**Next Steps:**

If your SA or RO received a visit from one of our teams (see above schedule), you do not need to complete the survey again, unless you wish to make additional inputs.

If your SA or RO has not received a visit from a field observation team, we are asking for your input via an online questionnaire as well as submission of digital copies (or hard copies if that is all that is available) of your existing policies and forms, training documents/aids, and any other policy or procedure documents key to your intake and triage process. All responses are confidential.

- SAs should choose the URL at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HS6NRKN> to complete their survey.
- ROs should choose the URL at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/H8RTP6Y> to complete their survey.

*The deadline for questionnaire completion and emailing documents is February 15, 2013. It is vitally important to project objectives that we receive your thoughtful and complete responses to this online survey, as well as the transmission of the documents that are requested. Lacking that information, we may recommend changes that will not improve the efficiencies or effectiveness of Complaints Investigations. Please help us to help you.*

Please answer the questions thoroughly and candidly, and know that your participation is invaluable in helping the workgroup identify SAs and ROs that exemplify what CMS considers best practices and to incorporate those practices into a future standardized intake and triage process.

Please email copies of your intake and triage documentation to [terri.haynie@icpsystems.com](mailto:terri.haynie@icpsystems.com). If you are mailing copies of your intake and triage documents, please send them to:

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ICP Systems, LLC  
240 Nat Turner Blvd. Suite 200  
Newport News, VA 23606  
ATTN: Terri Haynie

Judging by the reactions of participants at the 2012 Leadership Summit, we can count on you to support this effort, as it seeks to improve and simplify the intake and triage process, resulting in our better serving the people who need us most. I look forward to the exciting and positive changes that will be brought about by this work and appreciate your contribution to it.

**Effective Date:** Immediately

/s/  
Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management