



Ref: S&C 02-25

DATE: April 29, 2002

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group
Center for Medicaid and State Operations

SUBJECT: Onsite Versus Paper Revisits—Applicability to May 3, 2001 Revisit Policy

TO: Associate Regional Administrators, DMSO
State Survey Agency Directors

A question was raised at February's "Alliance for Consistency" conference about whether paper reviews, i.e., paper revisits, are included in the revisit count under the May 3, 2001 revisit policy. This question generated some discussion and it was agreed that clarification would be forthcoming.

We understand that both paper reviews and onsite reviews are considered to be revisits. However, *for purposes of the revisit policy, only onsite revisits will be considered in the revisit count.* The reason for issuing the May policy was to balance the cost, resource and scheduling factors involved in repeated visits to a facility needing onsite verification when demonstrated commitment to correction is either lacking or questionable. We needed to find a way to balance limited resources with establishment of a reasonable number of onsite visits to determine facility compliance. The purpose of the policy was not to affect those reviews that can be appropriately done more easily and less costly through a paper review for facilities having less serious noncompliance problems.

A second question was raised regarding our ability to differentiate between paper and onsite reviews when computing how many revisits a facility has been subject to. We've learned that the data system is capable of distinguishing, albeit in an indirect way, between those revisits that were performed onsite and those that were conducted through a paper review. In either an onsite or paper review case, the CMS-2567 is updated in the Online Data Input and Edit system, and a revisit date is entered.

Entering this information causes the system to automatically generate a new CMS-670. For onsite revisits, arrival and departure dates as well as travel information are recorded. For paper reviews, this information is left blank since it doesn't apply. Therefore, when the 670s are extracted from the system and onsite hours and travel hours are printed, those showing 0 hours in these categories would indicate paper reviews.

Conference participants seemed to be in agreement that this approach was reasonable and desirable, but wanted written confirmation that, for purposes of the revisit count, paper reviews are not included.

I hope this information is helpful to you. Please address any questions to Pat Miller of my staff on (410) 786-6780 or e-mail her at Pmiller1@cms.hhs.gov.

/s/

Steven A. Pelovitz