

Overview of the Data Validation Process for the SNF Assessment-Based Measures

Angela Belitskus:

Introduction

Welcome to today's training on the data validation process. During this training, we will review the data validation process, outline the requirements for skilled nursing facilities and provide guidance on compliance.

My name is Angela Belitskus, Lead Instructional Designer at Rainmakers and I will be providing the introduction to this course.

CMS Disclaimer

A quick note before we begin, this training reflects CMS guidance as of its publication. Policies may change, so refer to the official CMS sources and links for the most current information. This session offers a general overview and does not replace official rules or regulations.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to describe the purpose and structure of the data validation process for skilled nursing facilities, the notification and submission process, required activities for selected skilled nursing facilities, and where to find key resources.

Acronyms

We have created this slide to help you follow along with acronyms in this presentation. Lists of other acronyms for both the SNF Value-Based Purchasing Program and the SNF Quality Reporting Program are available as links in the PDF.

Presenters

This session is presented by CMS and Healthcare Management Solutions. Our speakers include Robin Price, Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing and MDS Validation Lead and Christina Compher, Epidemiologist and Principal Researcher at Healthcare Management Solutions.

Robin Price:

Hello and welcome. I am Robin Price, the lead for the validation data process under the Skilled Nursing Facility Value-Based Purchasing program. I am thrilled to have you join us for this training which will cover the data validation process content for both the Skilled Nursing Facility and Quality Reporting Programs.

We have organized an informative session that should be insightful and valuable. Additionally, we have included links for further information on this SNF and QRP programs to reference after the training.

We appreciate your interest in learning and utilizing our data validation resources. Thank you for your participation, and we look forward to a productive and enjoyable session together. And now Christina Compher will present our training content.

Christina Compher:

Data Validation Process Overview

Thanks Robin. So, let's jump right in. Let's begin by reviewing the purpose of the data validation process and why it is important.

Purpose of the Data Validation Process

The purpose of the data validation process is to assess the accuracy of minimum data set-based quality measures used in both the SNF Value-Based Purchasing and Quality Reporting Programs. To evaluate quality measure accuracy, MDS data elements used in measure calculations are validated against resident medical records.

Overview of the Data Validation Process

This graphic provides an overview of the data validation process, distinguishing between the steps performed by CMS and those carried out by providers. Each year, CMS will randomly select up to 1500 SNFs to participate in the data validation process. CMS will select up to 10 MDS assessments from each of the selected SNFs. CMS will request corresponding medical records from selected SNFs.

Selected SNFs will submit requested medical records through a provided link they receive with their selection notification. CMS will then validate the MDS data elements, and, finally, CMS will prepare and release individual SNF data validation reports.

SNF Data Validation Process Selection

It's important to note that SNFs selected for the data validation process this year are chosen at random and may only be selected once within this fiscal year. However, being selected for the data validation process in one fiscal year does not prevent a SNF from being randomly selected again in a future year. For example, a SNF could be randomly selected in both fiscal year 2025 and fiscal year 2026.

Notification Process

We will now turn our attention to the notification process and how it works.

Selection Notification

SNFs that are selected for participation will receive a Skilled Nursing Facility Data Validation Process-Initial Selection Notification in their iQIES MDS 3.0 Provider Preview Reports folder.

This notification will include facility selection, the date of the initial notification, the validation process details, the deadline for submitting points of contact, and the deadline for submitting requested medical record documentation.

SNF Action Items

Now we will discuss SNF action items. When a SNF receives an initial Selection Notification shown on this slide, they must complete the following steps.

Step 1. Immediately identify a primary and secondary point of contact for the data validation process.

Step 2. Complete the POC form included in the selection notification. This form must be completed within 5 business days. Throughout the data validation process Points of Contact will receive data validation related emails and be contacted if there are any issues with medical records submissions. Therefore, it is critically important that SNFs submit Points of Contact when they receive the Data Validation Process Selection Notification.

Step 3. Submit the requested medical documentation within 45 days of the initial selection notification date. The initial selection notification will provide instructions for submitting medical record documentation, including the list of selected residents. If a SNF needs help, they can e-mail questions to iqies@cms.hhs.gov. SNFs should include their 6-digit CMS certification number in the subject line of the e-mail.

Medical Records Submission

Let's now turn our attention to the medical records submission process.

Submission Timeline

SNFs have 45 calendar days from the initial data validation notification date to submit requested records. The initial selection notification date reflects the date the notification is uploaded to the iQIES MDS 3.0 Provider Preview Reports folder.

In the event the 45th day falls on a weekend or a federal holiday, the deadline will move to the next business day. To avoid confusion, the notification also clearly states the submission deadline. It is important that SNFs pay close attention to the submission deadline as late submissions will not be accepted.

SNFs that have not submitted all requested medical record documentation within 30 calendar days of the initial selection notification will receive a reminder notice on the 30th calendar day.

Reminder notices will be emailed directly to the Points of Contact SNFs designated upon receipt of their initial selection notification.

What to Submit

SNFs are required to submit specific resident medical records to support data validation of the selected MDS assessment records. No more than 10 records will be requested per facility selected. The initial selection notifications will include the list of resident medical records requested. The notification will also provide detailed instructions on which sections of the medical record to submit.

SNFs should only submit the specific sections requested. Resident Social Security numbers and resident face sheets should not be included in any submission. If medical records include Social Security numbers or face sheets, the SNF will be required to resubmit the records without this information.

SNFs that are required to resubmit records will not receive additional time beyond the 45th day submission deadline to resubmit their documentation, with one exception. In the event a request for resubmitting records is emailed to the SNF after the 45th calendar day submission deadline, SNFs will have 24 business hours to resubmit the requested medical records.

How to Submit

Requested medical records should be submitted electronically through the secured portal link included in the data validation process initial selection notification.

In the event a SNF is unable to submit medical records electronically, they may reach out to the Help Desk to request an alternative submission method.

Confirmation of Documentation Submission

Once SNFs submit their medical records, the Points of Contact will receive an automated e-mail confirming the submission, including the number of files submitted. A second e-mail will be sent to Points of Contact once all required documentation has been initially reviewed. It may take up to 10 business days before the second confirmation is received.

This screenshot shows the automated e-mail that POCs will receive following medical record submission.

Resources

There are a number of resources available for those seeking additional information or assistance.

Course Resources

These web page resources provide information on the SNF data validation process specifically and provide links to the two programs the validation process supports: the Quality Reporting Program and the Value-Based Purchasing Program.

For those that have additional questions, please contact the SNF Validation Help Desk at snfvalidation@hcmsllc.com which is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. In addition, the iQIES Help Desk is also available for those experiencing iQIES access issues.

Angela Belitskus:

Key Takeaways

I'd like to take a few moments to review the key takeaways from this presentation. CMS now uses an annual data validation process to verify the accuracy of MDS data used to calculate assessment-based quality measures that are used within the SNF Value-Based Purchasing and Quality Reporting Programs.

Annually, CMS will randomly select up to 1500 SNFs for the data validation process. From each SNF selected, up to 10 MDS assessment records are selected for validation. Selected SNFs receive their initial selection notification via their iQIES MDS 3.0 Provider Preview Reports folder.

SNFs are then required to submit requested resident medical records within 45 calendar days of the initial selection notification date. It is therefore critically important that SNFs have a designated point of contact monitoring the iQIES Provider Preview Reports folders for the Skilled Nursing Facility Data Validation Process-Initial Selection Notification. SNFs should make use of CMS resources, specifically the SNF Data Validation Process web page, to stay informed and up to date on the data validation process.

This concludes our presentation.

We hope you found the content useful and informative.