

Center for Clinical Standards and Quality/QUALITY & SAFETY SPECIAL ALERT MEMO

Ref: QSSAM-26-01-NH

DATE: January 9, 2026

TO: Nursing Home Providers

FROM: Directors, Quality, Safety & Oversight Group (QSOG) and Survey & Operations Group (SOG)

SUBJECT: Impact of iQIES (Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System)
Transition on Nursing Home Care Compare

Memorandum Summary

- CMS recently transitioned to a cloud-based Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES) for nursing home survey and certification data. This transition has introduced some data discrepancies that may be reflected on Nursing Home Care Compare. Our technical team is actively working to address transition-related differences. Providers should submit specific concerns to BetterCare@cms.hhs.gov.
- CMS is also evaluating how complaint information is presented on Nursing Home Care Compare. During this evaluation, CMS will be removing the number of complaint allegations and the number of facility reported incidents from Nursing Home Care Compare, beginning February 25, 2026. Information related to official complaint surveys and complaint citations issued as a result of those investigations will continue to be available on Nursing Home Care Compare.

Discussion:

Effective July 14, 2025, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) successfully transitioned its nursing home survey and certification data infrastructure from the Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (QIES) to a cloud-based Internet Quality Improvement and Evaluation System (iQIES). This modernization represents a significant advancement in CMS' commitment to enhancing data quality, system reliability, and operational efficiency.

While this modernization represents a significant advancement in our data management capabilities, we recognize that the transition has introduced some data discrepancies that may be reflected on Nursing Home Care Compare. Our technical team is actively working to identify and resolve transition-related discrepancies. While most survey data remain accurate, we are committed to addressing individual provider concerns as they arise.

If you notice specific discrepancies or have concerns about your facility's data representation, please contact our team directly at BetterCare@cms.hhs.gov. We encourage providers to report any issues so we can ensure the most accurate information is available to consumers and stakeholders.

Also, previously, Nursing Home Care Compare displayed only substantiated complaints. However, based upon a policy change, the term "substantiated" is no longer applicable¹ therefore, CMS removed this filter as part of the system transition. As a result of this change, the total number of complaints and facility reported incidents displayed on Nursing Home Care Compare has increased and includes all allegations and facility reported incidents over the past three years. This includes duplicate allegations, unverified claims, and self-reported incidents that do not necessarily reflect validated quality concerns or regulatory violations. CMS is evaluating how to better present complaint information to ensure it is clear, accurate, and useful for consumers making healthcare decisions. During this evaluation CMS will remove the number of complaint allegations and the number of facility reported incidents from Nursing Home Care Compare, beginning February 25, 2026. Please note, CMS is only removing the number of allegations and facility reported incidents. Information related to official complaint surveys and complaint citations issued as a result of those investigations will continue to be available on Nursing Home Care Compare. As the evaluation progresses, CMS will roll out additional updates to enhance how complaint data is displayed and interpreted on Nursing Home Care Compare.

For questions or concerns relating to this memorandum, please contact BetterCare@cms.hhs.gov.

Effective Date:

Immediately. Please communicate to all appropriate staff within 30 days.

/s/

Karen L. Tritz
Director, Survey & Operations Group

David R. Wright
Director, Quality, Safety & Oversight Group

Resources to Improve Quality of Care:

Check out CMS's new *Quality in Focus* interactive video series. The series of 10–15 minute videos are tailored to provider types and aim to reduce the deficiencies most commonly cited during the CMS survey process, like infection control and accident prevention. Reducing these common deficiencies increases the quality of care for people with Medicare and Medicaid.

Learn to:

- Understand surveyor evaluation criteria
- Recognize deficiencies
- Incorporate solutions into your facility's standards of care

See the [Quality, Safety, & Education Portal Training Catalog](#), and select *Quality in Focus*

Get guidance memos issued by the Quality, Safety and Oversight Group by going to [CMS.gov page](#) and entering your email to sign up. Check the box next to "CCSQ Policy, Administrative, and Safety Special Alert Memorandums" to be notified when we release a memo.

¹ <https://www.cms.gov/medicareprovider-enrollment-and-certificationsurveycertificationgeninfopolicy-and-memos-states-and-revised-long-term-care-surveyor-guidance>