Broadband Connectivity Reminder

ARE YOU READY?
CMS has determined that transmission of MDS and OASIS records to the state database can occur securely over broadband lines through an IP-Sec connection into CMS’ Medicare Data Communication Network (MDCN). This new process not only ensures that beneficiary information remains safe and secure, but also reduces the connectivity costs. In July 2007, Pennsylvania providers began migrating to this new process with a deadline set for January, 2008. This deadline has been extended, but in the near future this extension will end and submissions via the old process will no longer be allowed.

HAVE YOU DONE THIS?
Each provider is being required to obtain connectivity to the MDCN via an Internet Service Provider (ISP). AT&T’s Global Network Client, version 7.2.1 must be downloaded and installed to make it possible for providers to connect, submit assessments and retrieve reports. This software and much additional information is available at www.qtno.com/mdcn.html.

HOW DO I KNOW?
If you are unsure whether you are using this new process, go to the front screen of the AT&T Global Network Client; this screen contains the Connect button. Below the button, there is a line labeled Connection Sequence. Expand that section by clicking on the down arrow on the right side of the line to identify the Connection Type. If the Connection Type is Broadband, the new connection process has already been completed by someone in your facility. If the Type is something other than Broadband, you must migrate to the new process.

WHEN IS THE BROADBAND CONNECTION DEADLINE?
There have been technical issues that prevented some providers from implementing this new process by the original January 2008 deadline. CMS is working with AT&T to identify solutions. Once this is done, the MDCN direct dial-up (non-ISP) connection termination date will be set and providers will be required to use the broadband connection after that date. It is not known how much warning CMS will give before this termination date. Waivers will only be issued where there is no ISP available to the provider. Make the transition now, and avoid the upset of being unable to submit assessments until you can get the proper software installed and working! Contact the MDCN Help Desk at 1-800-905-2069 if you have problems.

Initial Record Submission
Beginning on October 1, 2006, Title 55 PA Code Chapter 1187.22(18) requires that for facilities participating in the MA program, a newly admitted resident’s initial MDS record must be submitted within 7 calendar days of the date the record is completed. This information is important for the Nursing Home Transition initiatives that are being implemented throughout the state.

Initial MDS records and applicable dates are detailed in the following table. Whichever record is completed first for a newly-admitted resident must be submitted by the Latest Allowable Submission Date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDS Record</th>
<th>AA8a</th>
<th>AA8b</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
<th>Latest Allowable Submission Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discharge</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>R4</td>
<td>R4 + 7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC PPS</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>R2b</td>
<td>R2b + 7 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Blank, 1</td>
<td>VB4</td>
<td>VB4 + 7 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>