



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Home and Community Living Administration
PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504

December 16, 2022

AMENDED February 12, 2026

HCLA: NH #2024-024

Revised QSO-23-01-NH – Revisions to the Special Focus Facility (SFF) Program

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

Sections 1819(f)(8) and 1919(f)(10) of the Social Security Act require the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to conduct a Special Focus Facility (SFF) program which focuses on nursing homes that have a persistent record of non-compliance leading to poor quality of care. The SFF program is intended to help facilities improve their compliance and quality of care.

On January 28, 2026, CMS issued revised [QSO-23-01-NH](#) (*original release date of October 21, 2022*) to inform State Agencies (SAs) about a new requirement to consider a facility's prevalence of falls when selecting SFFs from the SFF candidate list. This action is being taken following the [Office of Inspector General's Report](#), which highlighted the seriousness of nursing home resident falls and the importance of improving fall safety.

While a nursing home is in the SFF Program, the SA will conduct a standard health survey at least twice annually, or a complaint survey at least once every six months. Life Safety Code (LSC) and Emergency Preparation (EP) surveys will be conducted at least annually, or more as determined by the State or CMS. SAs will recommend progressively stronger enforcement actions in the event of continued failure to meet the requirements for participation with the Medicare and/or Medicaid programs.

A nursing home's prevalence of falls data is accessible to providers in iQIES through the MDS 3.0 Facility-Level Quality Measure (QM) Report, located under the Quality Measure report category.

The location for monthly SFF postings has been updated to:
<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/health-safety-standards/certification-compliance/nursing-homes>.

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. Please submit questions to rcspolicy@dshs.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Abbott".

Amy Abbott, Director
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Partnering with People"