



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
*Aging and Long-Term Support Administration*  
*PO Box 45600, Olympia, Washington 98504-5600*

July 25, 2024

**AL TSA: NH #2024-034**  
**UPDATES TO NURSING HOME DATA AND CARE COMPARE**

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

We are writing to inform providers of changes to the Five Star Rating System Quality Measures for nursing homes related to precise staffing data.

In 2008, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) added the Five-Star Quality Rating System to the CMS Nursing Home (NH) Compare website (now known as [Care Compare](#)). A set of staffing quality rating measures were developed from Payroll-Based Journal (PBJ) data to describe the staffing provided in NHs and quality measures were developed to describe the quality of care provided in NHs. CMS has continued to update and make improvements to this system.

On July 1, 2024, CMS released [QSO-24-14-NH](#), detailing the following changes to take effect on **July 31, 2024**:

- **Update NH Guides Posted on the Medicare.gov Care Compare website:** In an effort to improve transparency, CMS has developed new NH guides for consumers.
  - CMS will begin posting these guides on [Nursing Home Care Compare](#). The new NH guides will help residents and consumers make informed decisions about NH health care, making it easier to understand the information on Care Compare when selecting a NH and raise awareness about residents' rights once admitted to a NH.
- **Implement the New Staffing Level Case-Mix Methodology:** CMS will also implement the new staffing level case-mix adjustment methodology, announced in September 2023 ([QSO-23-21-NH](#)), for staffing measures reported on Care Compare.
  - CMS will begin posting NH staffing measures based on the revised staffing level case-mix adjustment methodology. Additional information about the new methodology is provided in the [Nursing Home Care Compare Five Star Technical Users' Guide](#).
  - CMS will maintain the same general point distribution for staffing measures, however, a facility's staffing star rating after **July 31, 2024**, may change due to:
    - The updated staffing level case-mix adjustment methodology;
    - Changes in the number of staffing hours reported by facilities from one quarter to the next; and/or
    - Updates to the staffing turnover methodology, as described below.
  - Additionally, CMS will revise the risk adjustment methodology for the claims-based quality measures to incorporate the most recent data available. Technical specifications for all of the quality measures are available in the downloads section at <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality/nursing-home> improvement/quality-measures.

- **Revise the Staffing Turnover Methodology:** CMS posts staffing turnover measures on NH Care Compare.
  - These turnover measures include both the percentage of nursing staff and the number of administrators who have stopped working at or left the facility in a given year.
  - Currently, NH staff on leave for 60 days or more are included in the staffing turnover measure calculation. In order to account for maternity and paternity leave and make necessary adjustments, CMS is revising the turnover gap to 90 days so that 60 days of leave will no longer be considered staff turnover.
- **Posting Facility Data:** All Medicare- and/or Medicaid-certified NHs are required to assess each resident's health status through the Minimum Data Set (MDS) resident assessment instrument.
  - MDS data is currently reported at the state and national level for each MDS question. To increase transparency, CMS will start publishing characteristics of NHs and their residents at the facility level (for all residents within a facility) on [data.cms.gov](https://data.cms.gov).
  - CMS will also post facility characteristics collected on the [CMS-671 form](#) on each NHs annual standard inspection. This includes information such as the type of services a facility provides, type of ownership details, and resident census.

More information about the updated changes can be found in the [Nursing Home Care Compare Five Star Technical Users' Guide](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Tiffany Meyers, Nursing Home Policy Program Manager, at (360) 464-0373 or [Tiffany.Meyers@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:Tiffany.Meyers@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

 for

Amy Abbott, Director  
Residential Care Services

DSHS: "Transforming Lives"