



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES  
Home and Community Living Administration  
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

July 21, 2025

**Amended September 30, 2025**

**NH #2025-041**

**QSO-25-20-NH, REVISED: UPDATES TO NURSING HOME (NH) CARE COMPARE**

Dear Nursing Facility/Home Administrator:

Residential Care Services (RCS) is writing to inform providers of the most recent changes to the Five Star Rating System Quality Measures for NHs.

In 2008, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) added the Five-Star Quality Rating System to the CMS 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 **September 9, 2025**, CMS issued [QSO-25-20-NH REVISED](#), revising the guidance in **QSO-25-20-NH** (first issued on June 18, 2025), concerning the recent changes to NH Care Compare. The updated guidance is highlighted in red font.

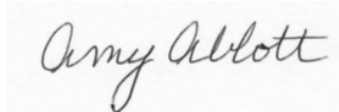
- **Post Performance Data for NH Chains.** “Chains” refers to groups of Medicare-certified nursing homes that are connected through common owners, and operators.
  - **Starting on July 30, 2025**, CMS began releasing performance data that includes the average overall 5-star ratings, health inspection ratings, staffing levels, and quality measure ratings for each NH chain. This combined performance information is available on NH Care Compare in a format that is more accessible to consumers. This data can be found on CMS's [data webpage](#).
- **Drop Third Cycle Standard Surveys from the NH Care Compare Health Inspection Rating**
  - **Beginning in July 2025**, the NH Care Compare health inspection rating will more accurately represents the current performance in NHs, as CMS stopped using the three most recent standard surveys and instead began utilizing the two most recent standard surveys to determine the rating calculation.
- **Incorporate Updated Long Stay Antipsychotic Measure on NH Care Compare**
  - ~~Effective October 29, 2025~~, **Effective January 28, 2026**, CMS will revise the quality measure that assesses the number of long-stay residents receiving antipsychotic medications. This update will include Medicare and Medicaid claims and encounter data, in addition to Minimum Data Set (MDS) data currently used in the existing measure.
- **Removing COVID-19 vaccination measures**
  - Starting July 30, 2025, CMS removed the COVID-19 vaccination section from the main profile page of each NH on Care Compare.

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For more information on the updated changes and how CMS calculates star ratings, please refer to the [Nursing Home Care Compare Five Star Technical Users' Guide](#).

Thank you for your continued commitment to resident health and safety. If you have any questions, please contact the Policy Unit at [rcspolicy@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:rcspolicy@dshs.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Abbott". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Abbott, Director  
Residential Care Services

DSHS: *"Partnering with People"*

**Related References:** [Care Compare](#), [QSO-25-20-NH REVISED](#), [CMS's data webpage](#), [Nursing Home Care Compare Five Star Technical Users' Guide](#)