



California
Department of
Health Services

SANDRA SHEWRY
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
Department of Health Services



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

May 16, 2005

AFL 05-16

TO: SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES (SNFs), NURSING FACILITIES (NFs),
and SKILLED NURSING FACILITIES/NURSING FACILITIES (SNF/NFs)

FROM: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

SUBJECT: NURSING HOMES – CHANGES TO STAFFING DATA ON THE
NURSING HOME COMPARE WEB SITE

On April 14, 2005, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released Survey and Certification (S&C) Memorandum 05-24, "Nursing Homes – Changes to Staffing Data on the Nursing Home Compare Web Site." The S&C describes CMS' desire to improve the accuracy of staffing information available on the Nursing Home Compare (NHC) Web site. It also acknowledges the limitations of staffing data that originates from the Online Survey, Certification and Reporting system (OSCAR).

S&C 05-24 (attached) outlines CMS' steps to remedy data inaccuracies and limitations. To summarize the S&C:

1. CMS has implemented a set of exclusion rules for questionable (suspect) staffing data. If staffing ratios for any facility fall outside the acceptable range which CMS has implemented, the data will be temporarily excluded from the NHC Web site.
2. CMS has sent each State Agency (SA) a list of facilities whose staffing data appear to be suspect (would be excluded from the NHC Web site), based on the exclusion rules which CMS has developed.

If L&C finds no input errors, the forms CMS-671 and CMS-672, will be returned to the provider for confirmation or correction to the following data fields:

Form CMS-671, fields F9-F10 Medicare/Medicaid and hospital status

Form CMS-671, fields F38-F45 staffing

Form CMS-672, field F78 resident count

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The provider should correct the forms and return them to their local L&C district office, so that L&C can submit the corrections to the federal ODIE database. In cases where the provider is unable to verify the data because prior survey period records are unavailable, CMS will exclude the provider's staffing data until the provider's next standard survey.

If you have any questions, please contact your local DHS Licensing and Certification District Office, or contact Sarah Swaney, HFE Specialist, Program Policy Section, at (916) 552-8867 or by email at sswaney@dhs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

**Original Signed by
Jean Johnson, Chief**

Jean Johnson, Chief
Policy and Administration Branch
Licensing and Certification Program

Enclosure