

Center for Medicaid and State Operations/Survey and Certification Group

Ref: S&C-08-01

DATE: October 24, 2007

TO: State Survey Agency Directors

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Survey & Certification Emergency Preparedness Initiative: Provider Survey & Certification Declared Public Health Emergency FAQs – All Hazards

Memorandum Summary

- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Survey & Certification Group has developed a Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) document which uses an all hazards approach to address allowable deviations from provider survey and certification requirements during a declared public health emergency.
- CMS developed these FAQs with the input and feedback of the Survey and Certification Emergency Preparedness Stakeholder Communication Forum, based on the experience and lessons learned during Hurricane Katrina.

Background

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), Survey and Certification Group has been working in collaboration with Federal and State healthcare stakeholders to provide an effective emergency response that will protect the health and safety of patients and residents in the face of any potential disruptive event.

This memo, one of the survey and certification (S&C) communication and outreach strategies, provides a FAQ document to provide direction on allowable deviations from provider survey and certification requirements during a declared public health emergency. Similar to other aspects of the S&C Emergency preparedness Initiative, the FAQs have been developed utilizing an “all hazards” approach (e.g., hurricane, tornado, earthquake, flood, fire, chemical spill, nuclear or biological attack, pandemic flu, etc.).

The FAQs are general in nature, and were based upon the experience and lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina. Input for these FAQs has been obtained from the CMS S&C Emergency Preparedness Stakeholder Communication Forum and other Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) operating divisions.

Please see the attached *CMS Provider Survey and Certification Frequently Asked Questions – Declared Public Health Emergencies – All Hazards* document. CMS will post these questions and answers on the CMS FAQ Website, which may be accessed at:

http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/cmshhs.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?p_sid= YCkDVOi

Click on the “Section” field, and then select “Disasters and Emergencies.” Several CMS sub-categories may be selected. These FAQs will be accessible in the sub-category entitled “Provider Survey/Certification.” (See attached CMS Frequently Asked Question screen).

CMS will review and update the Provider Survey and Certification Public Health Emergency FAQs as new emergency situations and issues develop.

S&C Emergency Preparedness Web site

CMS has also established the Survey and Certification Emergency Preparedness Web site to provide State Survey Agencies (SAs), health care providers, and other partners with “one-stop-shopping” for emergency preparedness information. The Web site provides links to many resources and other relevant Federal emergency preparedness Web sites. Links to State emergency preparedness Web sites will also be included as a helpful resource on the Web page developed for SAs. A variety of national experts and health care stakeholders have assisted CMS to develop several helpful emergency preparedness tools, such as checklists and reports, to help SAs and healthcare providers achieve an improved level of preparedness. Updates and new documents will be posted to the Web site on a regular basis. The S&C Emergency Preparedness Website can be accessed at: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/SurveyCertEmergPrep/>.

If you have any questions about the S&C Emergency Preparedness Initiative, please contact Susan Larsen at 410-786-2640 or susan.larsen@cms.hhs.gov.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management

Attachments