

Resumption of Annual Recertification Surveys

Jan. 22, 2021

Prior to Jan. 4, 2021, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) utilized a “look back” period of two weeks to assess whether a long-term care (LTC) facility would be assigned a new focused infection-control survey (FIC).

Pursuant to the revised CMS guidance [QSO 20-31](#), the “look back” period has increased to three weeks. Additionally, CMS has identified other factors (in addition to outbreak status) that will determine the facilities where state survey agencies should conduct FIC surveys. Those factors are:

- Multiple weeks with new COVID-19 cases;
- Low staffing;
- Selection as a Special Focus Facility;
- Concerns related to conducting outbreak testing; and
- Allegations or complaints related to abuse or quality-of-care issues.

CMS has noted that quality-of-care concerns continue to be identified during the course of focused infection-control and complaint surveys. The resumption of recertification survey work will enable state agencies to identify quality-of-care concerns and implement mitigation strategies in a timelier manner.

DIA will prioritize facilities that are **not** in an outbreak status (as defined by the Iowa Department of Public Health) **and** where the most recent recertification survey was completed at least 12 months prior to the current date.

The reprioritization of surveys will be implemented on Feb. 1, 2021.

The Healthcare-Associated Infection (HAI) Team at the Department of Public Health continues to offer infection-control assessment and response (ICAR) surveys as a preventative function for any LTC facility in Iowa interested in completing the ICAR process. Any LTC facility that would like to complete the ICAR process should email IDPH at hai-ar@idph.iowa.gov with the subject “ICAR request.”