

July 1, 2016

RE: State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2017 Quality Improvement Incentives

Dear Administrator:

The following is an introduction to the SFY 2017 Quality Improvement Incentives. These programs have CMS approval. The submission deadline is May 31, 2017.

This letter is to provide general guidance for these programs. The Utah State Plan, Attachment 4.19-D is the definitive source of information for these programs.

Quality Improvement Incentive (A.K.A. QII 1)

In setting the nursing home rates for the SFY, an amount of \$1,000,000 was held in reserve for a Quality Improvement Incentive (QII 1). The qualifications for this incentive are similar to last year. A careful reading of the application is advised.

Please also note, the requirement to have an “action plan to address survey items rated below average for the year.” In order to qualify under this requirement, a facility must identify **every** survey item that was scored below average (e.g., industry average) and include an action plan of how the facility is addressing the below average scoring.

In order to be considered for the quality incentive payment, a facility must ensure its submission is postmarked, e-mailed or faxed to the correct address, as detailed on the agency’s website (see below) no later than the submission deadline. Failure to include all required documents and supporting documentation will preclude a facility from qualification. Redundant review of the submission package is encouraged to ensure all required elements are included with the submission.

Facilities should not delay in arranging for the required third-party customer satisfaction surveys **in each quarter of the incentive period**, etc. As a point of clarification on the surveys, a survey covering the entire quarter is not required; rather surveys need to be completed at some point in the quarter. Please be sure that the surveys are done in a timely manner to qualify.

Facilities should not wait for the deadline to submit the **completed** applications. Rather, as soon as all required information is available (e.g., once the SFY 4th quarter survey is completed) the facility should submit its application.

Quality Improvement Incentive 2 (A.K.A. QII 2)

In addition to the above mentioned incentive program, in setting the nursing home rates for the SFY, an additional amount of \$4,275,900 was held in reserve for the Quality Improvement Incentive (QII-2). This program is for the SFY only and is in addition to the QII 1 Incentive program. This program has several initiatives, which are:

- i. Improve Nurse Call System. (A.K.A. QII 2(i)) – Must be compliant with “Guidelines for Design and Construction of Nursing Facilities,” must not use overhead paging, calls must be distinct from regular staff call system and only turn off at the resident’s location, must activate an annunciator panel at the staff work or other area, must activate a visual signal in the corridor or activate a staff pager indicating the recipient’s name or room location, and must track response times.

- ii. New Patient Lift System. (A.K.A. QII 2(ii)) – Must purchase at least one new patient lift capable of lifting 400 pounds.
- iii. Patient Bathing Improvements. (A.K.A. QII 2(iii)) – May be one or more of the following: Purchase at least one new side-entry bathing system allowing the resident to enter the bathing system without having to step over or be lifted into the bathing area, purchase heat lamps or warmers, purchase bariatric equipment for the bathing system, or make general improvements to the patient bathing/shower areas.
- iv. Patient Life Enhancing Devices. (A.K.A. QII 2(iv)) – Must purchase telecommunications enhancements, wander management systems, patient security enhancements, computers and game consoles, garden enhancements, furniture enhancements for patients, wheelchair washers, automatic doors, flooring enhancements, automatic electronic defibrillators (AED devices), energy efficient windows, bed spreads/comforters (not blankets or sheets) or exercise equipment for group fitness classes.
- v. Educating Staff. (A.K.A. QII 2(v)) – The education or training has a patient centered perspective focused on improving quality of life or care for patients, or is for a staff worker(s) to become a Certified Medication Aide. Training must be performed by an industry recognized organization.
- vi. Vans and Van Equipment. (A.K.A. QII 2(vi)) – Must purchase or make improvements to vans or van equipment for patient use.
- vii. Clinical Software, Hardware and Backup Power. (A.K.A. QII 2(vii)) – Must purchase or lease new or enhance existing clinical information systems software, which incorporates advanced technology into improved patient care including better integration, capturing more information at the point of care, more automated reminders, etc.

The software must include the following minimum tracking requirements: care plans, current conditions, medical orders, activities of daily living, medication administration records, timing of medications, medical notes and point of care data tracking. Facilities may also purchase or enhance clinical information system hardware which must facilitate the tracking of patient care and integrate data collection into clinical information system software that meets all the criteria listed.

An additional option is to purchase an electrical backup power system.

- viii. HVAC. (A.K.A. QII 2(viii)) – Must purchase new or enhance existing heating, ventilating and air conditioning.
- ix. Improved Dining Experience. (A.K.A. QII 2(ix)) – May include meal ordering, changes to dining times or hours, atmosphere, or more food choices.
- x. Outcome-Proven Awards. (A.K.A. QII 2(x)) – Facilities may be reimbursed for costs related to preparing, reviewing, and submitting the application for the AHCA Quality First Award, or the Malcolm Baldrige Award.
- xi. Worker Immunization. (A.K.A. QII 2(xi)) – Facilities may be reimbursed for flu or pneumonia immunizations provided to its workers free of charge.
- xii. Patient Dignity Devices. (A.K.A. QII 2(xii)) – Facilities must purchase a bladder scanner and/or bariatric scale capable of weighing patients up to at least 600 pounds.

Quality Improvement Incentive 3 (A.K.A. QII 3)

Any remaining amount not paid in QII 2 is available for payout to qualifying facilities. In order to qualify, the facility must fully qualify for QII 1 and, at least, one of the initiatives of QII 2. Also, the facility must document how the following three resident choice areas have been implemented:

- i. Awake **time**,
- ii. Meal **time**, and
- iii. Bath **time**

Detailed requirements for qualification under these QI Incentive programs, along with potential payout amounts, may be had by downloading the application forms from our website. That website address is <http://health.utah.gov/medicaid/stplan/longtermcare.htm>.

Only currently Medicaid-certified and Medicaid enrolled nursing home providers are eligible for these incentives.

Additional information may be found in the associated Rule R414-504-4. (<http://www.rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r414/r414-504.htm>)

The following are a few key items to ponder when submitting your applications for consideration:

1. Has the facility met all of the requirements of the specific incentive program?
2. Does the facility have all appropriate supporting documentation for the application?
 - a. Proof of purchase/lease as well as proof of payment?
3. Is the supporting documentation presented in an **organized, clear and concise manner**?
4. Is the **spreadsheet** detailing the documented expenditures complete and understandable?
5. Is the application going to be **postmarked, e-mailed or faxed** to the appropriate address/fax in time?
6. Does the check amount equal the invoice amount for each invoice in the application package? If not, is there an itemized list of invoices (invoice number, date paid, and amount) totaling the amount paid by the check in question?

If the application is incorrect or lacks sufficient supporting documentation, then the application will be denied. The facility should consider sending a revised full packet that includes all needed supporting documentation for consideration. If the submission deadline is past, then the facility's application that was submitted by the submission deadline will be considered for qualification for a reduced amount based on the submitted documentation. No additional applications, documentation or explanation will be accepted if submitted after the submission deadline.

Facilities should not wait for the deadline to submit their **completed** application packets. Rather, as soon as all required information is available the facility should submit its applications and supporting documentation. Further, each incentive program is separate, so a facility must submit individual applications and supporting documentation as they are completed.

We hope that these programs will be of great value to your facility and the residents you serve.

Should you have questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Steven Jones

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