

CHAPTER 2: ASSESSMENTS FOR THE RESIDENT ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT (RAI)

This chapter presents the assessment types and instructions for the completion (including timing and scheduling) of the mandated OBRA and Medicare assessments in nursing homes and the mandated Medicare assessments in non-critical access hospitals with a swing bed agreement.

2.1 Introduction to the Requirements for the RAI

The statutory authority for the RAI is found in Section 1819(f)(6)(A-B) for Medicare, and 1919(f)(6)(A-B) for Medicaid, of the Social Security Act (SSA), as amended by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 (OBRA 1987). These sections of the SSA require the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) to specify a Minimum Data Set (MDS) of core elements for use in conducting assessments of nursing home residents. It furthermore requires the Secretary to designate one or more resident assessment instruments based on the MDS.

The OBRA regulations require nursing homes that are Medicare certified, Medicaid certified or both, to conduct initial and periodic assessments for all their residents. The Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) process is the basis for the accurate assessment of each nursing home resident. The MDS 3.0 is part of that assessment process and is required by CMS. The OBRA required assessments will be described in detail in Section 2.6.

MDS assessments are also required for Medicare payment (Prospective Payment System [PPS]) purposes under Medicare Part A (described in detail in Section 2.9).

It is important to note that when the OBRA and Medicare PPS assessment time frames coincide, one assessment may be used to satisfy both requirements. In such cases, the most stringent requirement for MDS completion must be met. Therefore, it is imperative that nursing home staff fully understand the requirements for both types of assessments in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to remain in compliance with both OBRA and Medicare PPS requirements. (Refer to Sections 2.11 and 2.12 for combining OBRA and Medicare assessments).

2.2 State Designation of the RAI for Nursing Homes

Federal regulatory requirements at 42 CFR 483.20(b)(1) and 483.20(c) require facilities to use an RAI that has been specified by the State and approved by CMS. The Federal requirement also mandates facilities to encode and electronically transmit the MDS data. (Detailed submission requirements are located in Chapter 5.)

While states must use all Federally-required MDS 3.0 items, they have some flexibility in adding optional Section S items. As such, each State must have CMS approval of the State's Comprehensive and Quarterly assessments.

- CMS's approval of a State's RAI covers the core items included on the instrument, the wording and sequencing of those items, and all definitions and instructions for the RAI.
- CMS's approval of a State's RAI does not include characteristics related to formatting (e.g., print type, color coding, or changes such as printing triggers on the assessment form).
- All comprehensive RAIs authorized by States must include at least the CMS MDS Version 3.0 (with or without optional Section S) and use of the Care Area Assessment (CAA) process (including CATs and the CAA Summary (Section V)).
- If allowed by the State, facilities may have some flexibility in form design (e.g., print type, color, shading, integrating triggers) or use a computer generated printout of the RAI as long as the State can ensure that the facility's RAI in the resident's record accurately and completely represents the CMS-approved State's RAI in accordance with 42 CFR 483.20(b). This applies to either pre-printed forms or computer generated printouts.
- Facility assessment systems must always be based on the MDS (i.e., both item terminology and definitions). However, facilities may insert additional items within automated assessment programs, but must be able to "extract" and print the MDS in a manner that replicates the State's RAI (i.e., using the exact wording and sequencing of items as is found on the State RAI).

Additional information about State specification of the RAI, variations in format and CMS approval of a State's RAI can be found in Sections 4145.1 - 4145.7 of the CMS State Operations Manual (SOM). For more information about your State's assessment requirements, contact your State RAI coordinator (see Appendix B).

2.3 Responsibilities of Nursing Homes for Completing Assessments

The requirements for the RAI are found at 42 CFR 483.20 and are applicable to all residents in Medicare and/or Medicaid certified long-term care facilities. The requirements are applicable regardless of age, diagnosis, length of stay, payment source or payer source. Federal RAI requirements are not applicable to individuals residing in non-certified units of long-term care facilities or licensed-only facilities. This does not preclude a State from mandating the RAI for residents who live in these units. Please contact your State RAI Coordinator for State requirements. A list of RAI Coordinators can be found in Appendix B.

An RAI (MDS, CAA process, and Utilization Guidelines) must be completed for any resident residing in the facility, including:

- **All residents** of Medicare (Title 18) skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) or Medicaid (Title 19) nursing facilities (NFs). This includes certified SNFs or NFs in hospitals, regardless of payment source.
- **Hospice Residents:** When a SNF or NF is the hospice patient's residence for purposes of the hospice benefit, the facility must comply with the Medicare or Medicaid participation requirements, meaning the resident must be assessed using the RAI, have a care plan and be provided with the services required under the plan of care. This can be achieved

through cooperation of both the hospice and long-term care facility staff (including participation in completing the RAI and care planning) with the consent of the resident.

- **Short-term or respite residents:** An RAI must be completed for any individual residing more than 14 days on a unit of a facility that is certified as a long-term care facility for participation in the Medicare or Medicaid programs. If the respite resident is in a certified bed, the OBRA assessment schedule and tracking document requirements must be followed. If the respite resident is in the facility for fewer than 14 days, an OBRA Admission assessment is not required; however, a Discharge assessment is required:
 - Given the nature of a short-term or respite resident, staff members may not have access to all information required to complete some MDS items prior to the resident's discharge. In that case, the "not assessed/no information" coding convention should be used ("-") (See Chapter 3 for more information).
 - Regardless of the resident's length of stay, the facility must still have a process in place to identify the resident's needs, and must initiate a plan of care to meet those needs upon admission.
 - If the resident is eligible for Medicare Part A benefits, a Medicare assessment will still be required to support payment under the SNF PPS.
- **Special population residents (e.g. pediatric or residents with a psychiatric diagnosis):** Certified facilities are required to complete an RAI for all residents who reside in the facility, regardless of age or diagnosis.
- **Swing bed facility residents:** Swing beds of non-critical access hospitals that provide Part A skilled nursing facility-level services were phased into the SNF PPS on July 1, 2002 (referred to as swing beds in this manual). Swing bed providers must assess the clinical condition of beneficiaries by completing the MDS assessment for each Medicare resident receiving Part A SNF level of care in order to be reimbursed under the SNF PPS. CMS collects MDS data for quality monitoring purposes of swing bed facilities effective October 1, 2010. Therefore, swing bed providers must also complete the Entry record, Discharge assessments, and Death in Facility record. Requirements for the Medicare-required PPS assessments, Entry record, Discharge assessments and Death in Facility record outlined in this manual also apply to swing bed facilities, including but not limited to, completion date, encoding requirements, submission time frame, and RN signature. There is no longer a separate swing bed MDS assessment manual.

The RAI process must be used with residents in facilities with different certification situations, including:

- **Newly Certified Nursing Homes:**
 - Nursing homes must admit residents and operate in compliance with certification requirements before a certification survey can be conducted.
 - Nursing homes must meet specific requirements, 42 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 483 (Requirements for States and Long Term Care Facilities, Subpart B), in order to participate in the Medicare and/or Medicaid programs.

- The OBRA assessments are a requirement for long-term care facilities; therefore resident assessments are conducted prior to certification as if the beds were already certified.
- Then, assuming a survey is completed where the nursing home has been determined to be in substantial compliance, the facility will be certified effective the last day of the survey.
- NOTE: Even in situations where the facility's certification date is delayed due to the need for a resurvey, the facility must continue performing OBRA assessments according to the original schedule.
- For OBRA assessments, the assessment schedule is determined from the resident's actual date of admission. If a facility completes an Admission assessment prior to the certification date, there is no need to do another Admission assessment. The facility simply continues the OBRA schedule using the actual admission date as Day 1.
- Medicare cannot be billed for any care provided prior to the certification date. Therefore, the facility must use the certification date as Day 1 of the covered Part A stay when establishing the Assessment Reference Date (ARD) for the Medicare PPS assessments.
- **Adding Certified Beds:**
 - If the nursing home is already certified and is just adding additional certified beds, the procedure for changing the number of certified beds is different from that of the initial certification.
 - Medicare and Medicaid residents should not be placed in a bed until the facility has been notified that the bed has been certified.
- **Change In Ownership:** There are two types of change in ownership transactions:
 - The more common situation requires the new owner to assume the assets and liabilities of the prior owner. In this case:
 - The assessment schedule for existing residents continues, and the facility continues to use the existing provider number.
 - **Example:** if the Admission assessment was done 10 days prior to the change in ownership, the next OBRA assessment would be due no later than 92 days after the ARD (A2300) of the Admission assessment, and would be submitted using the existing provider number. If the resident is in a Part A stay, and the 14-Day Medicare PPS assessment was combined with the OBRA Admission assessment, the next regularly scheduled Medicare assessment would be the 30-Day MDS, and would also be submitted under the existing provider number.
 - There are also situations where the new owner does not assume the assets and liabilities of the previous owner. In these cases:
 - The beds are no longer certified.
 - There are no links to the prior provider, including sanctions, deficiencies, resident assessments, Quality Measures, debts, provider number, etc.

- o The previous owner would complete a Discharge assessment - return not anticipated, thus code A0310F=10, A2000=date of ownership change, and A2100=02 for those residents who will remain in the facility.
 - o The new owner would complete an Admission assessment and Entry tracking record for all residents, thus code A0310F=01, A1600=date of ownership change, A1700=1 (admission), and A1800=02.
 - o Compliance with OBRA regulations, including the MDS requirements, is expected at the time of survey for certification of the facility with a new owner. See information above regarding newly certified nursing homes.
- **Resident Transfers:**
 - When transferring a resident, the transferring facility must provide the new facility with necessary medical records, including appropriate MDS assessments, to support the continuity of resident care.
 - When admitting a resident from another nursing home, regardless of whether or not it is a transfer within the same chain, a new Admission assessment must be done within 14 days. The MDS schedule then starts with the new Admission assessment and, if applicable, a 5-day Medicare-required PPS assessment.
 - The admitting facility should look at the previous facility's assessment in the same way they would review other incoming documentation about the resident for the purpose of understanding the resident's history and promoting continuity of care. However, the admitting facility must perform a new Admission assessment for the purpose of planning care within that facility to which the resident has been transferred.
 - When there has been a transfer of residents as a result of a natural disaster(s) (e.g., flood, earthquake, fire) with an **anticipated return** to the facility, the evacuating facility should contact their Regional Office, State agency, and Medicare contractor for guidance.
 - When there has been a transfer as a result of a natural disaster(s) (e.g., flood, earthquake, fire) and it has been determined that the resident will not return to the evacuating facility, the evacuating provider will discharge the resident **return not anticipated** and the receiving facility will admit the resident, with the MDS cycle beginning as of the admission date to the receiving facility. For questions related to this type of situation, providers should contact their Regional Office, State agency, and Medicare contractor for guidance.

2.4 Responsibilities of Nursing Homes for Reproducing and Maintaining Assessments

The Federal regulatory requirement at 42 CFR 483.20(d) requires nursing homes to maintain all resident assessments completed within the previous 15 months in the resident's active clinical record. This requirement applies to all MDS assessment types regardless of the form of storage (i.e., electronic or hard copy).

- The 15-month period for maintaining assessment data may not restart with each readmission to the facility:
 - When a resident is **discharged return anticipated** and the resident **returns to the facility within 30 days**, the facility must copy the previous RAI and transfer that copy to the new record. The 15-month requirement for maintenance of the RAI data must be adhered to.
 - When a resident is **discharged return anticipated and does not return within 30 days** or **discharged return not anticipated**, facilities may develop their own specific policies regarding how to handle return situations, whether or not to copy the previous RAI to the new record.
 - In cases where the resident returns to the facility after a long break in care (i.e., 15 months or longer), staff may want to review the older record and familiarize themselves with the resident history and care needs. However, the decision on retaining the prior stay record in the active clinical record is a matter of facility policy and is not a CMS requirement.
- After the 15-month period, RAI information may be thinned from the clinical record and stored in the medical records department, provided that it is easily retrievable if requested by clinical staff, State agency surveyors, CMS, or others as authorized by law. The **exception** is that demographic information (Items A0500-A1600) from the most recent Admission assessment must be maintained in the active clinical record until the resident is discharged return not anticipated.
- Nursing homes may use electronic signatures for clinical record documentation, including the MDS, when permitted to do so by State and local law and when authorized by the long-term care facility's policy. Use of electronic signatures for the MDS does not require that the entire clinical record be maintained electronically. Facilities must have written policies in place to ensure proper security measures to protect the use of an electronic signature by anyone other than the person to whom the electronic signature belongs.
- Nursing homes also have the option for a resident's clinical record to be maintained electronically rather than in hard copy. This also applies to portions of the clinical record such as the MDS. Maintenance of the MDS electronically does not require that the entire clinical record also be maintained electronically, nor does it require the use of electronic signatures.
- In cases where the MDS is maintained electronically without the use of electronic signatures, nursing homes must maintain, at a minimum, hard copies of signed and dated CAA(s) completion (Items V0200B-C), correction completion (Items X1100A-E), and assessment completion (Items Z0400-Z0500) data that is resident-identifiable in the resident's active clinical record.
- Nursing homes must ensure that proper security measures are implemented via facility policy to ensure the privacy and integrity of the record.
- Nursing homes must also ensure that clinical records, regardless of form, are maintained in a centralized location as deemed by facility policy and procedure (e.g., a facility with five units may maintain all records in one location or by unit or a facility may maintain the MDS assessments and care plans in a separate binder). Nursing homes must also

ensure that clinical records, regardless of form, are easily and readily accessible to staff (including consultants), State agencies (including surveyors), CMS, and others who are authorized by law and need to review the information in order to provide care to the resident.

- Nursing homes that are not capable of maintenance of the MDS electronically must adhere to the current requirement that either a hand written **or** a computer-generated copy be maintained in the clinical record. Either is equally acceptable. This includes all MDS (including Quarterly) assessments and CAA(s) summary data completed during the previous 15-month period.
- All State licensure and State practice regulations continue to apply to Medicare and/or Medicaid certified long-term care facilities. Where State law is more restrictive than Federal requirements, the provider needs to apply the State law standard.
- In the future, long-term care facilities may be required to conform to a CMS electronic signature standard should CMS adopt one.

2.5 Assessment Types and Definitions

In order to understand the requirements for conducting assessments of nursing home residents, it is first important to understand some of the concepts and definitions associated with MDS assessments. Concepts and definitions for assessments are only introduced in this section. Detailed instructions are provided throughout the rest of this chapter.

Admission refers to the date a person enters the facility and is admitted as a resident. A day begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m. Regardless of whether admission occurs at 12:00 a.m. or 11:59 p.m., this date is considered the 1st day of admission. Completion of an OBRA Admission assessment must occur in any of the following admission situations:

- when the resident has never been admitted to this facility before; OR
- when the resident has been in this facility previously and was discharged prior to completion of the OBRA Admission assessment; OR
- when the resident has been in this facility previously and was discharged return not anticipated; OR
- when the resident has been in this facility previously and was discharged return anticipated and did not return within 30 days of discharge (see Discharge assessment below).

Assessment Combination refers to the use of one assessment to satisfy both OBRA and Medicare PPS assessment requirements when the time frames coincide for both required assessments. In such cases, the most stringent requirement of the two assessments for MDS completion must be met. Therefore, it is imperative that nursing home staff fully understand the requirements for both types of assessments in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and to remain in compliance with both OBRA and Medicare PPS requirements. Sections 2.11 and 2.12 provide more detailed information on combining Medicare and OBRA assessments. In addition, when all requirements for both are met, one assessment may satisfy two OBRA

assessment requirements, such as Admission and Discharge assessment, or two PPS assessments, such as a 30-day assessment and an End of Therapy OMRA.

Assessment Completion refers to the date that all information needed has been collected and recorded for a particular assessment type and staff have signed and dated that the assessment is complete.

- For OBRA-required Comprehensive assessments, assessment completion is defined as completion of the CAA process in addition to the MDS items, meaning that the RN assessment coordinator has signed and dated both the MDS (Item Z0500) and CAA(s) (Item V0200B) completion attestations. Since a Comprehensive assessment includes completion of both the MDS and the CAA process, the assessment timing requirements for a comprehensive assessment apply to both the completion of the MDS and the CAA process.
- For non-comprehensive and Discharge assessments, assessment completion is defined as completion of the MDS only, meaning that the RN assessment coordinator has signed and dated the MDS (Item Z0500) completion attestation.

Completion requirements are dependent on the assessment type and timing requirements. Completion specifics by assessment type are discussed in Section 2.6 for OBRA assessments and Section 2.9 for Medicare assessments.

Assessment Reference Date (ARD) refers to the last day of the observation (or “look back”) period that the assessment covers for the resident. Since a day begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m., the ARD must also cover this time period. The facility is required to set the ARD on the MDS Item Set or in the facility software within the required timeframe of the assessment type being completed. This concept of setting the ARD is used for all assessment types (OBRA and Medicare-required PPS) and varies by assessment type and facility determination.

Most of the MDS 3.0 items have a 7 day look back period. If a resident has an ARD of July 1, 2011 then all pertinent information starting at 12 AM on June 25th and ending on July 1st at 11:59PM should be included for MDS 3.0 coding.

Assessment Scheduling refers to the period of time during which assessments take place, setting the ARD, timing, completion, submission, and the observation periods required to complete the MDS items.

Assessment Submission refers to electronic MDS data being in record and file formats that conform to standard record layouts and data dictionaries, and passes standardized edits defined by CMS and the State. Chapter 5, CFR 483.20(f)(2), and the MDS 3.0 Data Submission Specifications on the CMS MDS 3.0 web site provide more detailed information.

Assessment Timing refers to when and how often assessments must be conducted, based upon the resident’s length of stay and the length of time between ARDs. The table in Section 2.6 describes the assessment timing schedule for OBRA-required assessments, while information on the Medicare-required PPS assessment timing schedule is provided in Section 2.8.

- For OBRA-required assessments, regulatory requirements for each assessment type dictate assessment timing, the schedule for which is established with the Admission (comprehensive) assessment when the ARD is set by the RN assessment coordinator and the Interdisciplinary team (IDT).
- Assuming the resident did not experience a significant change in status, was not discharged, and did not have a Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive assessment (SCPA) completed, assessment scheduling would then move through a cycle of three Quarterly assessments followed by an Annual (comprehensive) assessment.
- This cycle (Comprehensive assessment – Quarterly assessment – Quarterly assessment – Quarterly assessment – Comprehensive assessment) would repeat itself annually for the resident who: 1) the IDT determines the criteria for a Significant Change in Status Assessment (SCSA) has not occurred, 2) an uncorrected significant error in prior comprehensive or Quarterly assessment was not determined, and 3) was not discharged with return not anticipated.
- OBRA assessments may be scheduled early if a nursing home wants to stagger due dates for assessments. As a result, more than three OBRA Quarterly assessments may be completed on a particular resident in a given year, or the Annual may be completed early to ensure that regulatory time frames between assessments are met. However, States may have more stringent restrictions.
- When a resident does have a SCSA or SCPA completed, the assessment resets the assessment timing/scheduling. The next Quarterly assessment would be scheduled within 92 days after the ARD of the SCSA or SCPA, and the next comprehensive assessment would be scheduled within 366 days after the ARD of the SCSA or SCPA.
- Early Medicare-required assessments completed with an ARD prior to the beginning of the prescribed ARD window will have a payment penalty applied (see Section 2.13).

Assessment Transmission refers to the electronic transmission of submission files to the QIES Assessment Submission and Processing (ASAP) system using the Medicare Data Communication Network (MDCN). Chapter 5 and the CMS MDS 3.0 web site provide more detailed information.

Comprehensive MDS assessments include both the completion of the MDS as well as completion of the Care Area Assessment (CAA) process and care planning. Comprehensive MDSs include Admission, Annual, Significant Change in Status Assessment (SCSA), and Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment (SCPA).

Death In Facility refers to when the resident dies in the facility or dies while on a leave of absence (LOA) (see LOA definition). The facility must complete a Death in Facility tracking record. A Discharge assessment is not required.

Discharge refers to the date a resident leaves the facility. A day begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m. Regardless of whether discharge occurs at 12:00 a.m. or 11:59 p.m., this date is considered the actual date of discharge. There are two types of discharges – return anticipated and return not anticipated. A Discharge assessment is required with both types of discharges. Section 2.6 provides detailed instructions regarding both discharge types. Any of the following

situations warrant a Discharge assessment, regardless of facility policies regarding opening and closing clinical records and bed holds:

- resident is discharged from the facility to a private residence (as opposed to going on an LOA);
- resident is admitted to a hospital or other care setting (regardless of whether the nursing home discharges or formally closes the record);
- resident has a hospital observation stay greater than 24 hours, regardless of whether the hospital admits the resident.

Discharge Assessment refers to an assessment required on resident discharge. This assessment includes clinical items for quality monitoring as well as discharge tracking information.

Entry is a term used for both an admission and a reentry, and requires completion of an Entry tracking record.

Entry and Discharge Reporting MDS assessments and tracking records that include a select number of items from the MDS used to track residents and gather important quality data at transition points, such as when they enter or leave a nursing home. Entry/Discharge reporting includes Entry tracking record, Discharge assessments, and Death in Facility tracking record.

Interdisciplinary Team (IDT¹) is a group of clinicians from several medical fields that combines knowledge, skills, and resources to provide care to the resident.

Item Set refers to the MDS items that are active on a particular assessment type or tracking form. There are 10 different item subsets for nursing homes and 8 for swing bed providers as follows:

- **Nursing Home**
 - **Comprehensive (NC²) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on an OBRA Comprehensive assessment (Admission, Annual, Significant Change in Status, and Significant Correction of Prior Comprehensive Assessments). This item set is used whether the OBRA Comprehensive assessment is stand-alone or combined with any other assessment (PPS assessment and/or Discharge assessment).
 - **Quarterly (NQ) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on an OBRA Quarterly assessment (including Significant Correction of Prior Quarter Assessment). This item set is used for a stand-alone Quarterly assessment or a Quarterly assessment combined with any type of PPS assessment and/or Discharge assessment
 - **PPS (NP) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a scheduled PPS assessment (5-day, 14-day, 30-day, 60-day, or 90-day). This item set is used for a standalone.

¹ 42 CFR 483.20(k)(2) A comprehensive care plan must be (ii) Prepared by an interdisciplinary team, that includes the attending physician, a registered nurse with responsibility for the resident, and other appropriate staff in disciplines as determined by the resident's needs, and, to the extent practicable, the participation of the resident, the resident's family or the resident's legal representative;"

² The codes in parentheses are the item set codes (ISCs) used in the data submission specifications.

- scheduled PPS assessment or a scheduled PPS assessment combined with a PPS OMRA assessment and/or a Discharge assessment.
- **OMRA - Start of Therapy (NS) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a standalone start of therapy OMRA assessment.
 - **OMRA - Start of Therapy and Discharge (NSD) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a PPS start of therapy OMRA assessment combined with a Discharge assessment (either return anticipated or not anticipated).
 - **OMRA (NO) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a standalone end of therapy OMRA and a change of therapy OMRA assessment. The code used is “NO” since this was the only type of OMRA when the code was initially assigned.
 - **OMRA - Discharge (NOD) Item Subset.** This is the set of items active on a PPS end of therapy OMRA assessment combined with a Discharge assessment (either return anticipated or not anticipated).
 - **Discharge (ND) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a standalone Discharge assessment (either return anticipated or not anticipated).
 - **Tracking (NT) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on an Entry Tracking Record or a Death in Facility Tracking Record.
 - **Inactivation Request (XX) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a request to inactivate a record in the national MDS QIES ASAP system.
- **Swing Beds**
 - **PPS (SP) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a scheduled PPS assessment (5-day, 14-day, 30-day, 60-day, or 90-day) or a Swing Bed Clinical Change assessment. This item set is used for a scheduled PPS assessment that is standalone or in any combination with other swing bed assessments (Swing Bed Clinical Change assessment, OMRA assessment, and/or Discharge assessment). This item set is also used for a Swing Bed Clinical Change assessment that is standalone or in any combination with other swing bed assessments (scheduled PPS assessment, OMRA assessment, and/or Discharge assessment).
 - **OMRA – Start of Therapy (SS) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a standalone start of therapy OMRA assessment.
 - **OMRA – Start of Therapy and Discharge Assessment (SSD) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a PPS start of therapy OMRA assessment combined with a Discharge assessment (either return anticipated or not anticipated).
 - **OMRA (SO) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a standalone end of therapy OMRA and change of therapy OMRA assessment.
 - **OMRA - Discharge Assessment (SOD) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a PPS end of therapy OMRA assessment combined with a Discharge assessment (either return anticipated or not anticipated).
 - **Discharge (SD) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a standalone Discharge assessment (either return anticipated or not anticipated).

- **Tracking (ST) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on an Entry Tracking Record or a Death in Facility Tracking Record.
- **Inactivation (XX) Item Set.** This is the set of items active on a request to inactivate a record in the national MDS QIES ASAP system.

Printed layouts for the item sets are available on the CMS website at:

http://www.cms.gov/NursingHomeQualityInits/45_NHQIMDS30TrainingMaterials.asp#TopOfPage

The item set for a particular MDS record is completely determined by the reason for assessment Items (A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, A0310D, and A0310F). Item set determination is complicated and standard MDS software from CMS and private vendors will automatically make this determination. Section 2-15 of this chapter provides manual lookup tables for determining the item set, when automated software is unavailable.

Leave of Absence (LOA), which does not require completion of either a Discharge assessment or an Entry tracking record, occurs when a resident has a:

- Temporary home visit of at least one night; or
- Therapeutic leave of at least one night; or
- Hospital observation stay less than 24 hours and the hospital does not admit the patient.

Providers should refer to Chapter 6 and their State LOA policy for further information, if applicable.

Upon return, providers should make appropriate documentation in the medical record regarding any changes in the resident. If there are changes noted, they should be documented in the medical record.

MDS Assessment Codes are those values that correspond to the OBRA-required and Medicare- required PPS assessments represented in Items A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, and A0310F of the MDS 3.0. They will be used to reference assessment types throughout the rest of this chapter.

Medicare-Required PPS Assessments provide information about the clinical condition of beneficiaries receiving Part A SNF-level care in order to be reimbursed under the SNF PPS for both SNFs and Swing Bed providers. Medicare-required PPS MDSs can be scheduled or unscheduled. These assessments are coded on the MDS 3.0 in Items A0310B (PPS Assessment) and A0310C (PPS Other Medicare Required Assessment – OMRA). They include:

- 5-day
- 14-day
- 30-day
- 60-day
- 90-day
- Readmission/Return
- SCSA
- SCPA
- Swing Bed Clinical Change (CCA)

- Start of Therapy (SOT) Other Medicare Required (OMRA)
- End of Therapy (EOT) OMRA
- Both Start and End of Therapy OMRA
- Change of Therapy (COT) OMRA

Non-Comprehensive MDS assessments include a select number of items from the MDS used to track the resident's status between comprehensive assessments and to ensure monitoring of critical indicators of the gradual onset of significant changes in resident status. They do not include completion of the CAA process and care planning. Non-comprehensive assessments include Quarterly and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly (SCQA) assessments.

Observation (Look Back) Period is the time period over which the resident's condition or status is captured by the MDS assessment. When the resident is first admitted to the nursing home, the RN assessment coordinator and the IDT will set the ARD. For subsequent assessments, the observation period for a particular assessment for a particular resident will be chosen based upon the regulatory requirements concerning timing and the ARDs of previous assessments. Most MDS items themselves require an observation period, such as 7 or 14 days, depending on the item. Since a day begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m., the observation period must also cover this time period. When completing the MDS, only those occurrences during the look back period will be captured. In other words, if it did not occur during the look back period, it is not coded on the MDS.

OBRA-Required Tracking Records and Assessments are federally mandated, and therefore, must be performed for all residents of Medicare and/or Medicaid certified nursing homes. These assessments are coded on the MDS 3.0 in Items A0310A (Federal OBRA Reason for Assessment) and A0310F (Entry/discharge reporting). They include:

Tracking records

- Entry
- Death in facility

Assessments

- Admission (comprehensive)
- Quarterly
- Annual (comprehensive)
- SCSA (comprehensive)
- SCPA (comprehensive)
- SCQA
- Discharge (return not anticipated or return anticipated)

Reentry refers to the situation when a resident was previously in this nursing home **and** had an OBRA Admission assessment completed **and** was discharged return anticipated **and** returned within 30 days of discharge. Upon the resident's return to the facility, the facility is required to complete an Entry tracking record. In determining if the resident returned to facility within 30 days, the day of discharge from the facility is not counted in the 30 days. For example, a resident

who is discharged return anticipated on December 1 would need to return to the facility by December 31 to meet the “within 30 day” requirement.

Respite refers to short-term, temporary care provided to a resident to allow family members to take a break from the daily routine of care giving. The nursing home is required to complete an Entry tracking record and a Discharge assessment for all respite residents. If the respite stay is 14 days or longer, the facility must have completed an OBRA Admission.

2.6 Required OBRA Assessments for the MDS

If the assessment is being used for OBRA requirements, the OBRA reason for assessment must be coded in Items A0310A and A0310F (Discharge Assessment). Medicare reasons for assessment are described later in this chapter (Section 2.9) while the OBRA reasons for assessment are described below.

The table provides a summary of the assessment types and requirements for the OBRA-required assessments, the details of which will be discussed throughout the remainder of this chapter.

RAI OBRA-required Assessment Summary

Assessment Type	MDS Assessment Code (A0310A or A0310F)	Assessment Reference Date (ARD) (Item A2300) No Later Than	7-day Observation Period (Look Back) Consists Of	14-day Observation Period (Look Back) Consists Of	MDS Completion Date (Item Z0500B) No Later Than	CAA(s) Completion Date (Item V0200B2) No Later Than	Care Plan Completion Date (Item V0200C2) No Later Than	Transmission Date No Later Than	Regulatory Requirement	Assessment Combination
Admission (Comprehensive)	A0310A= 01	14 th calendar day of the resident's admission (admission date + 13 calendar days)	ARD + 6 previous calendar days	ARD + 13 previous calendar days	14th calendar day of the resident's admission (admission date + 13 calendar days)	Same as MDS Completion Date	CAA(s) Completion Date + 7 calendar days	Care Plan Completion Date + 14 calendar days	42 CFR 483.20 (Initial) 42 CFR 483.20 (b)(2)(i) (by the 14th day)	May be combined with another assessment
Annual (Comprehensive)	A0310A= 03	ARD of previous OBRA comprehensive assessment + 366 calendar days AND ARD of previous OBRA Quarterly assessment + 92 calendar days	ARD + 6 previous calendar days	ARD + 13 previous calendar days	ARD + 14 calendar days	Same as MDS Completion Date	CAA(s) Completion Date + 7 calendar days	Care Plan Completion Date + 14 calendar days	42 CFR 483.20 (b)(2)(iii) (every 12 months)	May be combined with another assessment
Significant Change in Status (SCSA) (Comprehensive)	A0310A= 04	14 th calendar day after determination that significant change in resident's status occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days)	ARD + 6 previous calendar days	ARD + 13 previous calendar days	14th calendar day after determination that significant change in resident's status occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days)	Same as MDS Completion Date	CAA(s) Completion Date + 7 calendar days	Care Plan Completion Date + 14 calendar days	42 CFR 483.20 (b)(2)(ii) (within 14 days)	May be combined with another assessment
Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive (SCPA) (Comprehensive)	A0310A= 05	14 th calendar day after determination that significant error in prior comprehensive assessment occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days)	ARD + 6 previous calendar days	ARD + 13 previous calendar days	14th calendar day after determination that significant error in prior comprehensive assessment occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days)	Same as MDS Completion Date	CAA(s) Completion Date + 7 calendar days	Care Plan Completion Date + 14 calendar days	42 CFR 483.20(f) (3)(iv)	May be combined with another assessment

(continued)

RAI OBRA-required Assessment Summary (con't)

Assessment Type	MDS Assessment Code (A0310A or A0310F)	Assessment Reference Date (ARD) (Item A2300) No Later Than	7-day Observation Period (Look Back) Consists Of	14-day Observation Period (Look Back) Consists Of	MDS Completion Date (Item Z0500B) No Later Than	CAA(s) Completion Date (Item V0200B2) No Later Than	Care Plan Completion Date (Item V0200C2) No Later Than	Transmission Date No Later Than	Regulatory Requirement	Assessment Combination
Quarterly (Non-Comprehensive)	A0310A= 02	ARD of previous OBRA assessment of any type + 92 calendar days	ARD + 6 previous calendar days	ARD + 13 previous calendar days	ARD + 14 calendar days	N/A	N/A	MDS Completion Date + 14 calendar days	42 CFR 483.20(c) (every 3 months)	May be combined with another assessment
Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly (SCQA) (Non-Comprehensive)	A0310A=06	14th day after determination that significant error in prior quarterly assessment occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days)	ARD + 6 previous calendar days	ARD + 13 previous calendar days	14th day after determination that significant error in prior quarterly assessment occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days)	N/A	N/A	MDS Completion Date + 14 calendar days	42 CFR 483.20(f) (3)(v)	May be combined with another assessment
Discharge Assessment – return not anticipated (Non-Comprehensive)	A0310F= 10	N/A	N/A	N/A	Discharge Date + 14 calendar days	N/A	N/A	MDS Completion Date + 14 calendar days		May be combined with another assessment
Discharge Assessment – return anticipated (Non-Comprehensive)	A0310F= 11	N/A	N/A	N/A	Discharge Date + 14 calendar days	N/A	N/A	MDS Completion Date + 14 calendar days		May be combined with another assessment
Entry tracking record	A0310F= 01	N/A	N/A	N/A	Entry Date + 7 calendar days			Entry Date + 14 calendar days		May not be combined with another assessment
Death in facility tracking record	A0310F= 12	N/A	N/A	N/A	Discharge (death) Date + 7 calendar days	N/A	N/A	Discharge (death) Date +14 calendar days		May not be combined with another assessment

Comprehensive Assessments

OBRA-required comprehensive assessments include the completion of both the MDS and the CAA process, as well as care planning. Comprehensive assessments are completed upon admission, annually, and when a significant change in a resident's status has occurred or a significant correction to a prior comprehensive assessment is required. They consist of:

- Admission Assessment
- Annual Assessment
- Significant Change in Status Assessment
- Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

Each of these assessment types will be discussed in detail in this section. They are **not** required for residents in swing bed facilities.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Comprehensive Assessments:

- The ARD (Item A2300) is the last day of the observation/look back period, and day 1 for purposes of counting back to determine the beginning of observation/look back periods. For example, if the ARD is set for day 14 of a resident's admission, then the beginning of the observation period for MDS items requiring a 7-day observation period would be day 8 of admission (ARD + 6 previous calendar days), while the beginning of the observation period for MDS items requiring a 14-day observation period would be day 1 of admission (ARD + 13 previous calendar days).
- If a resident goes to the hospital **prior** to completion of the OBRA Admission assessment, when the resident returns, the nursing home must consider the resident as a new admission. The nursing home may not complete a Significant Change in Status Assessment until after an OBRA Admission assessment has been completed.
- If a resident had an OBRA Admission assessment completed and then goes to the hospital (discharge return anticipated and returns within 30 days) and returns during an assessment period and most of the assessment was completed prior to the hospitalization, then the nursing home may wish to continue with the original assessment, provided the resident does not meet the criteria for a SCSA. In this case, the ARD remains the same and the assessment must be completed by the completion dates required of the assessment type based on the timeframe in which the assessment was started. Otherwise, the assessment should be reinitiated with a new ARD and completed within 14 days after re-entry from the hospital. The portion of the resident's assessment that was previously completed should be stored on the resident's record with a notation that the assessment was reinitiated because the resident was hospitalized.
- If a resident is discharged prior to the completion deadline for the assessment, completion of the assessment is not required. Whatever portions of the RAI that have been completed

must be maintained in the resident's medical record.³ In closing the record, the nursing home should note why the RAI was not completed.

- If a resident dies prior to the completion deadline for the assessment, completion of the assessment is not required. Whatever portions of the RAI that have been completed must be maintained in the resident's medical record.⁴ In closing the record, the nursing home should note why the RAI was not completed.
- If a significant change in status is identified in the process of completing any assessment except Admission and SCSAs, code and complete the assessment as a comprehensive SCSA instead.
- The nursing home may combine a comprehensive assessment with a Discharge assessment.
- In the process of completing any assessment except an Admission and a SCPA, if it is identified that an uncorrected significant error occurred in a previous assessment that has already been submitted and accepted into the MDS system, and has not already been corrected in a subsequent comprehensive assessment, code and complete the assessment as a comprehensive SCPA instead. A correction request for the erroneous assessment should also be completed and submitted. See the section on SCPAs for detailed information on completing a SCPA, and chapter 5 for detailed information on processing corrections.
- In the process of completing any assessment except an Admission, if it is identified that a non-significant (minor) error occurred in a previous assessment, continue with completion of the assessment in progress and also submit a correction request for the erroneous assessment as per the instructions in Chapter 5.
- The MDS must be transmitted (submitted and accepted into the MDS database) electronically no later than 14 calendar days after the care plan completion date (V0200C2 + 14 calendar days).
- The ARD of an assessment drives the due date of the next assessment. The next comprehensive assessment is due within 366 days after the ARD of the most recent comprehensive assessment.
- May be combined with a Medicare-required PPS assessment (see Sections 2.11 and 2.12 for details).

OBRA-required comprehensive assessments include the following types, which are numbered according to their MDS 3.0 assessment code (Item A0310A).

01. Admission Assessment (A0310A=01)

The Admission assessment is a comprehensive assessment for a new resident and, under some circumstances, a returning resident that must be completed by the end of day 14, counting the date of admission to the nursing home as day 1 if:

³ The RAI is considered part of the resident's clinical record and is treated as such by the RAI utilization guidelines, e.g., portions of the RAI that are "started" must be saved.

⁴ The RAI is considered part of the resident's clinical record and is treated as such by the RAI utilization guidelines, e.g., portions of the RAI that are "started" must be saved.

- this is the resident's first time in this facility, OR
- the resident had been in this facility previously and was discharged prior to completion of the OBRA Admission assessment, OR
- the resident has been admitted to this facility and was discharged return not anticipated, OR
- the resident has been admitted to this facility and was discharged return anticipated and did not return within 30 days of discharge.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Admission Assessments:

- Since a day begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m., the actual date of admission, regardless of whether admission occurs at 12:00 am or 11:59 pm, is considered day "1" of admission.
- The ARD (Item A2300) must be set no later than day 14, counting the date of admission as day 1. Since a day begins at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 11:59 p.m., the ARD must also cover this time period. For example, if a resident is admitted at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday (day 1), a completed RAI is required by the end of the day Tuesday (day 14).
- Federal statute and regulations require that residents are assessed promptly upon admission (but no later than day 14) and the results are used in planning and providing appropriate care to attain or maintain the highest practicable well-being. This means it is imperative for nursing homes to assess a resident upon the individual's admission. The IDT may choose to start and complete the Admission comprehensive assessment at any time prior to the end of day 14. Nursing homes may find early completion of the MDS and CAA(s) beneficial to providing appropriate care, particularly for individuals with short lengths of stay when the assessment and care planning process is often accelerated.
- The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be no later than day 14. This date may be earlier than or the same as the CAA(s) completion date, but not later than.
- The CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) must be no later than day 14.
- The care plan completion date (Item V0200C2) must be no later than 7 calendar days after the CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) (CAA(s) completion date + 7 calendar days).
- For a resident who goes in and out of the facility on a relatively frequent basis and return is expected within the next 30 days, the resident may be discharged with return anticipated. This status **requires** an Entry tracking record **each time** the resident returns to the facility and a Discharge assessment **each time** the resident is discharged. The nursing home may combine the Admission assessment with the Discharge assessment when applicable.

02. Annual Assessment (A0310A=03)

The Annual assessment is a comprehensive assessment for a resident that must be completed on an annual basis (at least every 366 days) unless a SCSSA or a SCPA has been completed since the most recent comprehensive assessment was completed. Its completion dates (MDS/CAA(s)/care plan) depend on the most recent comprehensive and past assessments' ARDs and completion dates.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Annual Assessments:

- The ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 366 days after the ARD of the previous OBRA comprehensive assessment (ARD of previous comprehensive assessment + 366 calendar days) AND within 92 days since the ARD of the previous OBRA Quarterly or Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly assessment (ARD of previous OBRA Quarterly assessment + 92 calendar days).
- The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days). This date may be earlier than or the same as the CAA(s) completion date, but not later than.
- The CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days). This date may be the same as the MDS completion date, but not earlier than.
- The care plan completion date (Item V0200C2) must be no later than 7 calendar days after the CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) (CAA(s) completion date + 7 calendar days).

03. Significant Change In Status Assessment (SCSA) (A0310A=04)

The SCSA is a comprehensive assessment for a resident that must be completed when the IDT has determined that a resident meets the significant change guidelines for either improvement or decline. It can be performed at any time after the completion of an Admission assessment, and its completion dates (MDS/CAA(s)/care plan) depend on the date that the IDT's determination was made that the resident had a significant change.

A **“significant change”** is a decline or improvement in a resident's status that:

1. Will not normally resolve itself without intervention by staff or by implementing standard disease-related clinical interventions, is not “self-limiting” (for declines only);
2. Impacts more than one area of the resident's health status; and
3. Requires interdisciplinary review and/or revision of the care plan.

A significant change differs from a significant error because it reflects an actual significant change in the resident's health status and NOT incorrect coding of the MDS.

A significant change may require referral for a Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) evaluation if a mental illness, intellectual disability (ID), or related condition is present or is suspected to be present.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Significant Change in Status Assessments:

- When a resident's status changes and it is not clear whether the resident meets the SCSA guidelines, the nursing home may take up to 14 days to determine whether the criteria are met.

- After the IDT has determined that a resident meets the significant change guidelines, the nursing home should document the initial identification of a significant change in the resident's status in the progress notes.
- A SCSA is appropriate when:
 - There is a determination that a significant change (either improvement or decline) in a resident's condition from his/her baseline has occurred as indicated by comparison of the resident's current status to the most recent comprehensive assessment and any subsequent Quarterly assessments; and
 - The resident's condition is not expected to return to baseline within two weeks.
 - For a resident who goes in and out of the facility on a relatively frequent basis and reentry is expected within the next 30 days, the resident may be discharged with return anticipated. This status requires an Entry tracking record each time the resident returns to the facility and a Discharge assessment each time the resident is discharged. However, if the IDT determines that the resident would benefit from a Significant Change in Status Assessment during the intervening period, the staff must complete a SCSA. This is only allowed when the resident has had an OBRA Admission assessment completed and submitted prior to discharge return anticipated (and resident returns within 30 days) or when the OBRA Admission assessment is combined with the discharge return anticipated assessment (and resident returns within 30 days).
- A SCSA may **not** be completed prior to an OBRA Admission assessment.
- A SCSA is required to be performed when a terminally ill resident enrolls in a hospice program (Medicare Hospice or other structured hospice) and remains a resident at the nursing home. The ARD must be within 14 days from the effective date of the hospice election (which can be the same or later than the date of the hospice election statement, but not earlier than). A SCSA must be performed regardless of whether an assessment was recently conducted on the resident. This is to ensure a coordinated plan of care between the hospice and nursing home is in place. A Medicare-certified hospice must conduct an assessment at the initiation of its services. This is an appropriate time for the nursing home to evaluate the MDS information to determine if it reflects the current condition of the resident, since the nursing home remains responsible for providing necessary care and services to assist the resident in achieving his/her highest practicable well-being at whatever stage of the disease process the resident is experiencing.
- If a resident is admitted on the hospice benefit (i.e. the resident is coming into the facility having already elected hospice), the facility should complete the Admission assessment, checking the Hospice Care item, O0100K. Completing an Admission assessment followed by a SCSA is not required.
- A SCSA is required to be performed when a resident is receiving hospice services and then decides to discontinue those services (known as revoking of hospice care). The ARD must be within 14 days from one of the following: 1) the effective date of the hospice election revocation (which can be the same or later than the date of the hospice election revocation statement, but not earlier than); 2) the expiration date of the certification of terminal illness; or 3) the date of the physician's or medical director's order stating the resident is no longer terminally ill.

- The ARD must be within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a SCSA (determination date + 14 calendar days) but no later than day 14 after the IDT's determination is made that the criteria for a SCSA are met.
- The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be no later than 14 days from the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days) and no later than 14 days after the determination that the criteria for a SCSA were met. This date may be earlier than or the same as the CAA(s) completion date, but not later than.
- When a SCSA is completed, the nursing home must review all triggered care areas compared to the resident's previous status. If the CAA process indicates no change in a care area, then the prior documentation for the particular care area may be carried forward, and the nursing home should specify where the supporting documentation can be located in the medical record.
- The CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days) and no later than 14 days after the determination that the criteria for a SCSA were met. This date may be the same as the MDS completion date, but not earlier than MDS completion.
- The care plan completion date (Item V0200C2) must be no later than 7 calendar days after the CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) (CAA(s) completion date + 7 calendar days).

Guidelines for Determining a Significant Change in a Resident's Status:

Note: this is not an exhaustive list

The final decision regarding what constitutes a significant change in status must be based upon the judgment of the IDT. MDS assessments are not required for minor or temporary variations in resident status - in these cases, the resident's condition is expected to return to baseline within 2 weeks. However, staff must note these transient changes in the resident's status in the resident's record and implement necessary assessment, care planning, and clinical interventions, even though an MDS assessment is not required.

Some Guidelines to Assist in Deciding if a Change is Significant or Not:

- A condition is defined as "self-limiting" when the condition will normally resolve itself without further intervention or by staff implementing standard disease-related clinical interventions. If the condition has not resolved within 2 weeks, staff should begin a SCSA. This timeframe may vary depending on clinical judgment and resident needs. For example, a 5% weight loss for a resident with the flu would not normally meet the requirements for a SCSA. In general, a 5% weight loss may be an expected outcome for a resident with the flu who experienced nausea and diarrhea for a week. In this situation, staff should monitor the resident's status and attempt various interventions to rectify the immediate weight loss. If the resident did not become dehydrated and started to regain weight after the symptoms subsided, a comprehensive assessment would not be required.
- A SCSA is appropriate if there are either two or more areas of decline or two or more areas of improvement. In this example, a resident with a 5% weight loss in 30 days would not generally require a SCSA unless a second area of decline accompanies it. Note that this assumes that the care plan has already been modified to actively treat the weight loss

as opposed to continuing with the original problem, “potential for weight loss.” This situation should be documented in the resident’s clinical record along with the plan for subsequent monitoring and, if the problem persists or worsens, a SCSA may be warranted.

- **If there is only one change**, staff may still decide that the resident would benefit from a SCSA. It is important to remember that each resident’s situation is unique and the IDT must make the decision as to whether or not the resident will benefit from a SCSA. Nursing homes must document a rationale, in the resident’s medical record, for completing a SCSA that does not meet the criteria for completion.
- A SCSA is also appropriate if there is a consistent pattern of changes, with either two or more areas of decline or two or more areas of improvement. This may include two changes within a particular domain (e.g., two areas of ADL decline or improvement).
- A SCSA would not be appropriate in situations where the resident has stabilized but is expected to be discharged in the immediate future. The nursing home has engaged in discharge planning with the resident and family, and a comprehensive reassessment is not necessary to facilitate discharge planning;
- **Decline in two or more of the following:**
 - Resident’s decision-making changes;
 - Presence of a resident mood item not previously reported by the resident or staff and/or an increase in the symptom frequency (PHQ-9[®]), e.g., increase in the number of areas where behavioral symptoms are coded as being present and/or the frequency of a symptom increases for items in Section E (Behavior);
 - Any decline in an ADL physical functioning area where a resident is newly coded as Extensive assistance, Total dependence, or Activity did not occur since last assessment;
 - Resident’s incontinence pattern changes or there was placement of an indwelling catheter;
 - Emergence of unplanned weight loss problem (5% change in 30 days or 10% change in 180 days);
 - Emergence of a new pressure ulcer at Stage II or higher or worsening in pressure ulcer status;
 - Resident begins to use trunk restraint or a chair that prevents rising when it was not used before; and/or
 - Overall deterioration of resident’s condition.

Examples (SCSA):

1. Mr. T no longer responds to verbal requests to alter his screaming behavior. It now occurs daily and has neither lessened on its own nor responded to treatment. He is also starting to resist his daily care, pushing staff away from him as they attempt to assist with his ADLs. This is a significant change, and a SCSA is required, since there has been deterioration in the behavioral symptoms to the point where it is occurring daily and new approaches are needed to alter the behavior. Mr. T’s behavioral symptoms could have many causes, and a SCSA

will provide an opportunity for staff to consider illness, medication reactions, environmental stress, and other possible sources of Mr. T's disruptive behavior.

2. Mrs. T required minimal assistance with ADLs. She fractured her hip and upon return to the facility requires extensive assistance with all ADLs. Rehab has started and staff is hopeful she will return to her prior level of function in 4-6 weeks.
 - **Improvement in two or more of the following:**
 - Any improvement in an ADL physical functioning area where a resident is newly coded as Independent, Supervision, or Limited assistance since last assessment;
 - Decrease in the number of areas where Behavioral symptoms are coded as being present and/or the frequency of a symptom decreases;
 - Resident's decision making changes for the better;
 - Resident's incontinence pattern changes for the better;
 - Overall improvement of resident's condition.
3. Mrs. G has been in the nursing home for 5 weeks following an 8-week acute hospitalization. On admission she was very frail, had trouble thinking, was confused, and had many behavioral complications. The course of treatment led to steady improvement and she is now stable. She is no longer confused or exhibiting inappropriate behaviors. The resident, her family, and staff agree that she has made remarkable progress. A SCSA is required at this time. The resident is not the person she was at admission - her initial problems have resolved and she will be remaining in the facility. A SCSA will permit the interdisciplinary team to review her needs and plan a new course of care for the future.

Guidelines for When a Change in Resident Status is not Significant:

Note: this is not an exhaustive list

- Discrete and easily reversible cause(s) documented in the resident's record and for which the IDT can initiate corrective action (e.g., an anticipated side effect of introducing a psychoactive medication while attempting to establish a clinically effective dose level. Tapering and monitoring of dosage would not require a SCSA)
- Short-term acute illness, such as a mild fever secondary to a cold from which the IDT expects the resident to fully recover.
- Well-established, predictable cyclical patterns of clinical signs and symptoms associated with previously diagnosed conditions (e.g., depressive symptoms in a resident previously diagnosed with bipolar disease would not precipitate a Significant Change Assessment).
- Instances in which the resident continues to make steady progress under the current course of care. Reassessment is required only when the condition has stabilized.
- Instances in which the resident has stabilized but is expected to be discharged in the immediate future. The facility has engaged in discharge planning with the resident and family, and a comprehensive reassessment is not necessary to facilitate discharge planning.

*Guidelines for Determining the Need for a SCSA for Residents with Terminal Conditions:
Note: this is not an exhaustive list*

The key in determining if a SCSA is required for individuals with a terminal condition is whether or not the change in condition is an expected, well-defined part of the disease course and is consequently being addressed as part of the overall plan of care for the individual.

- If a terminally ill resident experiences a new onset of symptoms or a condition that is not part of the expected course of deterioration and the criteria are met for a SCSA, a SCSA assessment is required.
- If a resident elects the Medicare Hospice program, it is important that the two separate entities (nursing home and hospice program staff) coordinate their responsibilities and develop a care plan reflecting the interventions required by both entities. The nursing home and hospice plans of care should be reflective of the current status of the resident.

Examples (SCSA):

1. Mr. M has been in this nursing home for two and one-half years. He has been a favorite of staff and other residents, and his daughter has been an active volunteer on the unit. Mr. M is now in the end stage of his course of chronic dementia, diagnosed as probable Alzheimer's. He experiences recurrent pneumonias and swallowing difficulties, his prognosis is guarded, and family members are fully aware of his status. He is on a special dementia unit, staff has detailed palliative care protocols for all such end stage residents, and there has been active involvement of his daughter in the care planning process. As changes have occurred, staff has responded in a timely, appropriate manner. In this case, Mr. M's care is of a high quality, and as his physical state has declined, there is no need for staff to complete a new MDS assessment for this bedfast, highly dependent terminal resident.
2. Mrs. K came into the nursing home with identifiable problems and has steadily responded to treatment. Her condition has improved over time and has recently hit a plateau. She will be discharged within 5 days. The initial RAI helped to set goals and start her care. The course of care provided to Mrs. K was modified as necessary to ensure continued improvement. The IDT's treatment response reversed the causes of the resident's condition. An assessment need not be completed in view of the imminent discharge. Remember, facilities have 14 days to complete an assessment once the resident's condition has stabilized, and if Mrs. K is discharged within this period, a new assessment is not required. If the resident's discharge plans change, or if she is not discharged, an assessment is required by the end of the allotted 14-day period.
3. Mrs. P, too, has responded to care. Unlike Mrs. K, however, she continues to improve. Her discharge date has not been specified. She is benefiting from her care and full restoration of her functional abilities seems possible. In this case, treatment is focused appropriately, progress is being made, staff is on top of the situation, and there is nothing to be gained by requiring a SCSA at this time. However, if her condition was to stabilize and her discharge was not imminent, a SCSA would be in order.

Guidelines for Determining When A Significant Change Should Result in Referral for a Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) Level II Evaluation:

- If a SCSA occurs for an individual *known* or *suspected* to have a mental illness, intellectual disability (“mental retardation” in the regulation), or related condition (as defined by 42 CFR 483.102), a referral to the state mental health or ID/DD authority (SMH/MR/DDA) for a possible Level II PASRR evaluation must promptly occur as required by Section 1919(e)(7)(B)(iii) of the Social Security Act⁵.
- PASRR is not a requirement of the resident assessment process, but is an OBRA provision that is required to be coordinated with the resident assessment process. This guideline is intended to help facilities coordinate PASRR with the SCSA — the guideline does not require any actions to be taken in completing the SCSA itself.
- Facilities should look to their state PASRR program requirements for specific procedures. PASRR contact information for the state MH/MR/DD authorities and the state Medicaid agency is available at <http://www.cms.gov/>.
- The nursing facility must provide the SMH/MR/DDA authority with referrals as described below, independent of the findings of the SCSA. PASRR Level II is to function as an independent assessment process for this population with special needs, in parallel with the facility’s assessment process. Nursing facilities should have a low threshold for referral to the SMH/MR/DDA, so that these authorities may exercise their expert judgment about when a Level II evaluation is needed.
- Referral should be made as soon as the criteria indicating such are evident — the facility should not wait until the SCSA is complete.

Referral for Level II Resident Review Evaluations are Required for Individuals Previously Identified by PASRR to Have Mental Illness, Intellectual Disability, or a Related Condition in the Following Circumstances:

Note: this is not an exhaustive list

- A resident who demonstrates increased behavioral, psychiatric, or mood-related symptoms.
- A resident with behavioral, psychiatric, or mood related symptoms that have not responded to ongoing treatment.
- A resident who experiences an improved medical condition—such that the resident’s plan of care or placement recommendations may require modifications.
- A resident whose significant change is physical, but with behavioral, psychiatric, or mood-related symptoms, or cognitive abilities, that may influence adjustment to an altered pattern of daily living.
- A resident who indicates a preference (may be communicated verbally or through other forms of communication, including behavior) to leave the facility.

⁵ The statute may also be referenced as 42 U.S.C. 1396r(e)(7)(B)(iii). Note that as of this revision date the statute supersedes Federal regulations at 42 CFR 483.114(c), which still reads as requiring annual resident review. The regulation has not yet been updated to reflect the statutory change to resident review upon significant change in condition.

- A resident whose condition or treatment is or will be significantly different than described in the resident's most recent PASRR Level II evaluation and determination. (Note that a referral for a possible new Level II PASRR evaluation is required whenever such a disparity is discovered, whether or not associated with a SCSA.)

Examples (PASRR & SCSAs):

1. Mr. L has a diagnosis of serious mental illness, but his primary reason for admission was rehabilitation following a hip fracture. Once the hip fracture resolves and he becomes ambulatory, even if other conditions exist for which Mr. L receives medical care, he should be referred for a PASRR evaluation to determine whether a change in his placement or services is needed.
2. Ms. K has intellectual disability. She is normally cooperative, but after she had a fall and sustained a leg injury, she becomes agitated and combative with the physical therapist and with staff who try to assess her status. She does not understand why her normal routine has changed and why staff are touching a painful area of her body.

Referral for Level II Resident Review Evaluations are Also Required for Individuals Who May Not Have Previously Been Identified by PASRR to Have Mental Illness, Intellectual Disability, or a Related Condition in the Following Circumstances: Note: this is not an exhaustive list

- A resident who exhibits behavioral, psychiatric, or mood related symptoms suggesting the presence of a diagnosis of mental illness as defined under 42 CFR 483.100 (where dementia is not the primary diagnosis).
- A resident whose intellectual disability as defined under 42 CFR 483.100, or related condition as defined under 42 CFR 435.1010 was not previously identified and evaluated through PASRR.
- A resident transferred, admitted, or readmitted to a NF following an inpatient psychiatric stay or equally intensive treatment.

04. Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment (SCPA) (A0310A=05)

The SCPA is a comprehensive assessment for an existing resident that must be completed when the IDT determines that a resident's prior comprehensive assessment contains a significant error. It can be performed at any time after the completion of an Admission assessment, and its ARD and completion dates (MDS/CAA(s)/care plan) depend on the date the determination was made that the significant error exists in a comprehensive assessment.

A **“significant error”** is an error in an assessment where:

1. The resident's overall clinical status is not accurately represented (i.e., miscoded) on the erroneous assessment; and
2. The error has not been corrected via submission of a more recent assessment.

A significant error differs from a significant change because it reflects incorrect coding of the MDS and NOT an actual significant change in the resident's health status.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessments:

- Nursing homes should document the initial identification of a significant error in an assessment in the progress notes.
- A SCPA is appropriate when:
 - the erroneous comprehensive assessment has been completed and transmitted/submitted into the MDS system; and
 - there is not a more current assessment in progress or completed that includes a correction to the item(s) in error.
- The ARD must be within 14 days after the determination that a significant error in the prior comprehensive assessment occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days).
- The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days) and no later than 14 days after the determination was made that a significant error occurred. This date may be earlier than or the same as the CAA(s) completion date, but not later than the CAA(s) completion date.
- The CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days) and no more than 14 days after the determination was made that a significant error occurred. This date may be the same as the MDS completion date, but not earlier than the MDS completion date.
- The care plan completion date (Item V0200C2) must be no later than 7 calendar days after the CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) (CAA(s) completion date + 7 calendar days).

Non-Comprehensive Assessments and Entry and Discharge Reporting

OBRA-required non-comprehensive MDS assessments include a select number of MDS items, but **not** completion of the CAA process and care planning. The OBRA non-comprehensive assessments include:

- Quarterly Assessment
- Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment
- Discharge Assessment – Return not Anticipated
- Discharge Assessment – Return Anticipated

The Quarterly and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly assessments are **not** required for Swing Bed residents. However, Swing Bed providers are required to complete the Discharge assessments.

Tracking records include a select number of MDS items and are required for **all** residents in the nursing home and swing bed facility. They include:

- Entry Tracking Record
- Death in Facility Tracking Record

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Non-Comprehensive Assessments:

- The ARD is considered the last day of the observation/look back period, therefore it is day 1 for purposes of counting back to determine the beginning of observation/look back periods. For example, if the ARD is set for March 14, then the beginning of the observation period for MDS items requiring a 7-day observation period would be March 8 (ARD + 6 previous calendar days), while the beginning of the observation period for MDS items requiring a 14-day observation period would be March 1 (ARD + 13 previous calendar days).

If a resident goes to the hospital (discharge return anticipated and returns within 30 days) and returns during the assessment period and most of the assessment was completed prior to the hospitalization, then the nursing home may wish to continue with the original assessment, provided the resident does not meet the criteria for a SCSA.

For example:

- Resident A has a Quarterly assessment with an ARD of March 20th. The facility staff finished most of the assessment. The resident is discharged (return anticipated) to the hospital on March 23rd and returns on March 25th. Review of the information from the discharging hospital reveals that there is not any significant change in status for the resident. Therefore, the facility staff continue with the assessment that was not fully completed before discharge and complete the assessment by April 3rd (which is day 14 after the ARD).
- Resident B also has a Quarterly assessment with an ARD of March 20th. She goes to the hospital on March 20th and returns March 30th. While there is no significant change the facility decides to start a new assessment and sets the ARD for April 2nd and completes the assessment.
- If a resident is discharged during this assessment process, then whatever portions of the RAI that have been completed must be maintained in the resident's discharge record.⁶ In closing the record, the nursing home should note why the RAI was not completed.
- If a resident dies during this assessment process, completion of the assessment is not required. Whatever portions of the RAI that have been completed must be maintained in the resident's medical record.⁵ In closing the record, the nursing home should note why the RAI was not completed.
- If a significant change in status is identified in the process of completing any assessment except Admission and SCSAs, code and complete the assessment as a comprehensive SCSA instead.

⁶ The RAI is considered part of the resident's clinical record and is treated as such by the RAI utilization guidelines, e.g., portions of the RAI that are "started" must be saved.

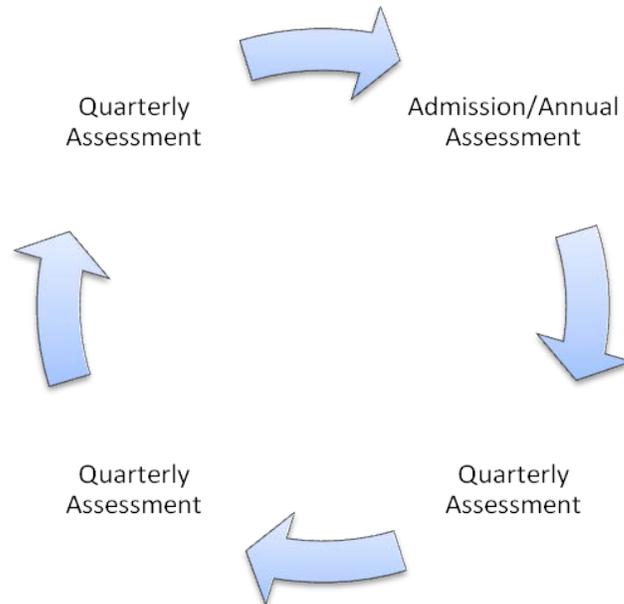
- In the process of completing any assessment except an Admission and a SCPA, if it is identified that a significant error occurred in a previous comprehensive assessment that has already been submitted and accepted into the MDS system and has not already been corrected in a subsequent comprehensive assessment, code and complete the assessment as a comprehensive SCPA instead. A correction request for the erroneous comprehensive assessment should also be completed and submitted. See the section on SCPAs for detailed information on completing a SCPA, and Chapter 5 for detailed information on processing corrections.
- In the process of completing any assessment except an Admission, if it is identified that a non-significant (minor) error occurred in a previous assessment, continue with completion of the assessment in progress and also submit a correction request for the erroneous assessment as per the instructions in Chapter 5.
- The ARD of an assessment drives the due date of the next assessment. The next non-comprehensive assessment is due within 92 days after the ARD of the most recent OBRA assessment (ARD of previous OBRA assessment - Admission, Annual, Significant Change in Status, or Significant Correction assessment - + 92 calendar days).
- While the CAA process is not required with a non-comprehensive assessment, nursing homes are still required to review the information from these assessments, determine if a revision to the resident's care plan is necessary, and make the applicable revision.
- The MDS must be transmitted (submitted and accepted into the MDS database) electronically no later than 14 calendar days after the MDS completion date (Z0500B + 14 calendar days).
- Non-comprehensive assessments may be combined with a Medicare-required PPS assessment (see Sections 2.11 and 2.12 for details).

05. Quarterly Assessment (A0310A=02)

The Quarterly assessment is an OBRA non-comprehensive assessment for a resident that must be completed at least every 92 days following the previous OBRA assessment of any type. It is used to track a resident's status between comprehensive assessments to ensure critical indicators of gradual change in a resident's status are monitored. As such, not all MDS items appear on the Quarterly assessment. The ARD (A2300) must be not more than 92 days after the ARD of the most recent OBRA assessment of any type.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips:

- Federal requirements dictate that, at a minimum, three Quarterly assessments be completed in each 12-month period. Assuming the resident does not have a SCSA or SCPA completed and was not discharged from the nursing home, a typical 12-month OBRA schedule would look like this:



- OBRA assessments may be scheduled early if a nursing home wants to stagger due dates for assessments. As a result, more than three OBRA Quarterly assessments may be completed on a particular resident in a given year, or the Annual assessment may be completed early to ensure that the regulatory time frames are met. However, States may have more stringent restrictions.
- The ARD must be within 92 days after the ARD of the previous OBRA assessment (Quarterly, Admission, SCSA, SCPA, or Annual assessment + 92 calendar days).
- The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days).

06. Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment (SCQA) (A0310A=06)

The SCQA is an OBRA non-comprehensive assessment that must be completed when the IDT determines that a resident's prior Quarterly assessment contains a significant error. It can be performed at any time after the completion of a Quarterly assessment, and the ARD (Item A2300) and completion dates (Item Z0500B) depend on the date the determination was made that there is a significant error in a previous Quarterly assessment.

A **“significant error”** is an error in an assessment where:

1. The resident's overall clinical status is not accurately represented (i.e., miscoded) on the erroneous assessment; and
2. The error has not been corrected via submission of a more recent assessment.

A significant error differs from a significant change because it reflects incorrect coding of the MDS and NOT an actual significant change in the resident's health status.

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips:

- Nursing homes should document the initial identification of a significant error in an assessment in the progress notes.
- A SCQA is appropriate when:
 - the erroneous Quarterly assessment has been completed (MDS completion date, Item Z0500B) and transmitted/submitted into the MDS system; and
 - there is not a more current assessment in progress or completed that includes a correction to the item(s) in error.
- The ARD must be within 14 days after the determination that a significant error in the prior Quarterly assessment has occurred (determination date + 14 calendar days) and no later than 14 days after determining that the significant error occurred.
- The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be no later than 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 calendar days) and no later than 14 days after determining that the significant error occurred.

Tracking Records and Discharge Assessments (A0310F)

OBRA-required tracking records and assessments consist of the Entry tracking record, the Discharge assessments, and the Death in Facility tracking record. These include the completion of a select number of MDS items in order to track residents when they enter or leave a facility. They do not include completion of the CAA process and care planning. The Discharge assessments include items for quality monitoring. Entry and discharge reporting **is** required for Swing Bed residents and respite residents.

If the resident has one or more admissions to the hospital before the Admission assessment is completed, the nursing home should continue to submit Discharge assessments and Entry records every time until the resident is in the nursing home long enough to complete the comprehensive Admission assessment.

OBRA-required Tracking Records and Discharge Assessments include the following types (Item A0310F):

07. Entry Tracking Record (Item A0310F=01)

There are two types of entries – admission and reentry.

Admission (Item A1700=1)

- Entry tracking record is coded an Admission every time a resident:
 - is admitted for the first time to this facility; or
 - is readmitted after a discharge prior to completion of the OBRA Admission assessment; or
 - is readmitted after a discharge return not anticipated; or

— is readmitted after a discharge return anticipated when return was not within 30 days of discharge.

- For swing bed facilities, the Entry tracking record will always be coded 1, Admission, since these providers do not complete an OBRA Admission assessment.

Example (Admission):

1. Mr. S. was admitted to the nursing home on February 5, 2011 following a stroke. He regained most of his function and returned to his home on March 29, 2011. He was discharged return not anticipated. Five months later, Mr. S. underwent surgery for a total knee replacement. He returned to the nursing home for rehabilitation therapy on August 27, 2011. Code the Entry tracking record for the August 27, 2011 return as follows:

A0310F = 01
A1600 = 08-27-2011
A1700 = 1

Reentry (Item A1700=2)

- Entry tracking record is coded Reentry every time a person is readmitted to a nursing home when the resident was previously admitted to this nursing home (i.e., an OBRA Admission was completed), **and** was discharged return anticipated from this nursing home, **and** returned within 30 days of discharge. See Section 2.5, Reentry, for greater detail.

Example (Reentry):

1. Mr. W. was admitted to the nursing home on April 11, 2011. Four weeks later he became very short of breath during lunch. The nurse assessed him and noted his lung sounds were not clear. His breathing became very labored. He was discharged return anticipated and admitted to the hospital. On May 18, 2011, Mr. W. returned to the facility. Code the Entry tracking record for the May 18, 2011 return, as follows:

A0310F = 01
A1600 = 05-18-2011
A1700 = 2

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Entry Tracking Records:

- The Entry tracking record is the first item set completed for all residents.
- Must be completed every time a resident is admitted (admission) or readmitted (reentry) into a nursing home (or swing bed facility).
- Must be completed for a respite resident every time the resident enters the facility.
- Must be completed within 7 days after the admission/reentry.
- Must be submitted no later than the 14th calendar day after the entry (entry date (A1600) + 14 calendar days).

- Required in addition to the initial Admission assessment or other OBRA or PPS assessments that might be required.
- Contains administrative and demographic information.
- Is a stand-alone tracking record.
- May **not** be combined with an assessment.

08. Death in Facility Tracking Record (A0310F=12)

- Must be completed when the resident dies in the facility or when on LOA
- Must be completed within 7 days after the resident's death, which is recorded in item A2000, Discharge Date (A2000 + 7 calendar days).
- Must be submitted within 14 days after the resident's death, which is recorded in item A2000, Discharge Date (A2000 + 14 calendar days).
- Consists of demographic and administrative items.
- May not be combined with any type of assessment.

Example (Death in Facility):

1. Mr. W. was admitted to the nursing home for hospice care due to a terminal illness on September 9, 2011. He passed away on November 13, 2011. Code the November 13, 2011 Death in Facility tracking record as follows:

A0310F = 12
 A2000 = 11-13-2011
 A2100 = 08

Discharge Assessments (A0310F)

Discharge assessments consist of discharge return anticipated and discharge return not anticipated. These are OBRA required assessments.

09. Discharge Assessment–Return Not Anticipated (A0310F=10)

- Must be completed when the resident is discharged from the facility and the resident is not expected to return to the facility within 30 days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the discharge date (A2000 + 14 calendar days).
- Must be submitted within 14 days after the MDS completion date (Z0500B + 14 calendar days).
- Consists of demographic, administrative, and clinical items.
- If the resident returns, the Entry tracking record will be coded A1700=1, Admission. The OBRA schedule for assessments will start with a new Admission assessment. If the resident's stay will be covered by Medicare Part A, the PPS schedule starts with a

Medicare-required 5-day scheduled assessment or combination of the Admission and 5-day PPS assessment.

Example (Discharge-return not anticipated):

1. Mr. S. was admitted to the nursing home on February 5, 2011 following a stroke. He regained most of his function and was discharged return not anticipated to his home on March 29, 2011. Code the March 29, 2011 Discharge assessment as follows:

A0310F = 10
A2000 = 03-29-2011
A2100 = 01

10. Discharge Assessment–Return Anticipated (A0310F=11)

- Must be completed when the resident is discharged from the facility and the resident is expected to return to the facility within 30 days.
- For a resident discharged to a hospital or other setting (such as a respite resident) who comes in and out of the facility on a relatively frequent basis and reentry can be expected, the resident is discharged return anticipated unless it is known on discharge that he or she will not return within 30 days. This status requires an Entry tracking record each time the resident returns to the facility and a Discharge assessment each time the resident is discharged.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the discharge date (Item A2000) (i.e., discharge date (A2000) + 14 calendar days).
- Must be submitted within 14 days after the MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) (i.e., MDS completion date (Z0500B) + 14 calendar days).
- Consists of demographic, administrative, and clinical items.
- When the resident returns to the nursing home, the IDT must determine if criteria are met for a SCSA (only when the OBRA Admission assessment was completed prior to discharge).
 - If criteria are met, complete a Significant Change in Status assessment.
 - If criteria are not met, continue with the OBRA schedule as established prior to the resident's discharge.
- If a SCSA is not indicated and an OBRA assessment was due while the resident was in the hospital, the facility has 13 days after reentry to complete the assessment (this does not apply to Admission assessment).
- When a resident had a prior Discharge assessment completed indicating that the resident was expected to return (A0310E=11) to the facility, but later learned that the resident will not be returning to the facility, there is no Federal requirement to inactivate the resident's record nor to complete another Discharge assessment. Please contact your State RAI Coordinator for specific State requirements.

Example (Discharge-return anticipated):

1. Ms. C. was admitted to the nursing home on May 22, 2011. She tripped while at a restaurant with her daughter. She was discharged return anticipated and admitted to the hospital on May 31, 2011. Code the May 31, 2011 Discharge assessment as follows:

A0310F = 11

A2000 = 05-31-2011

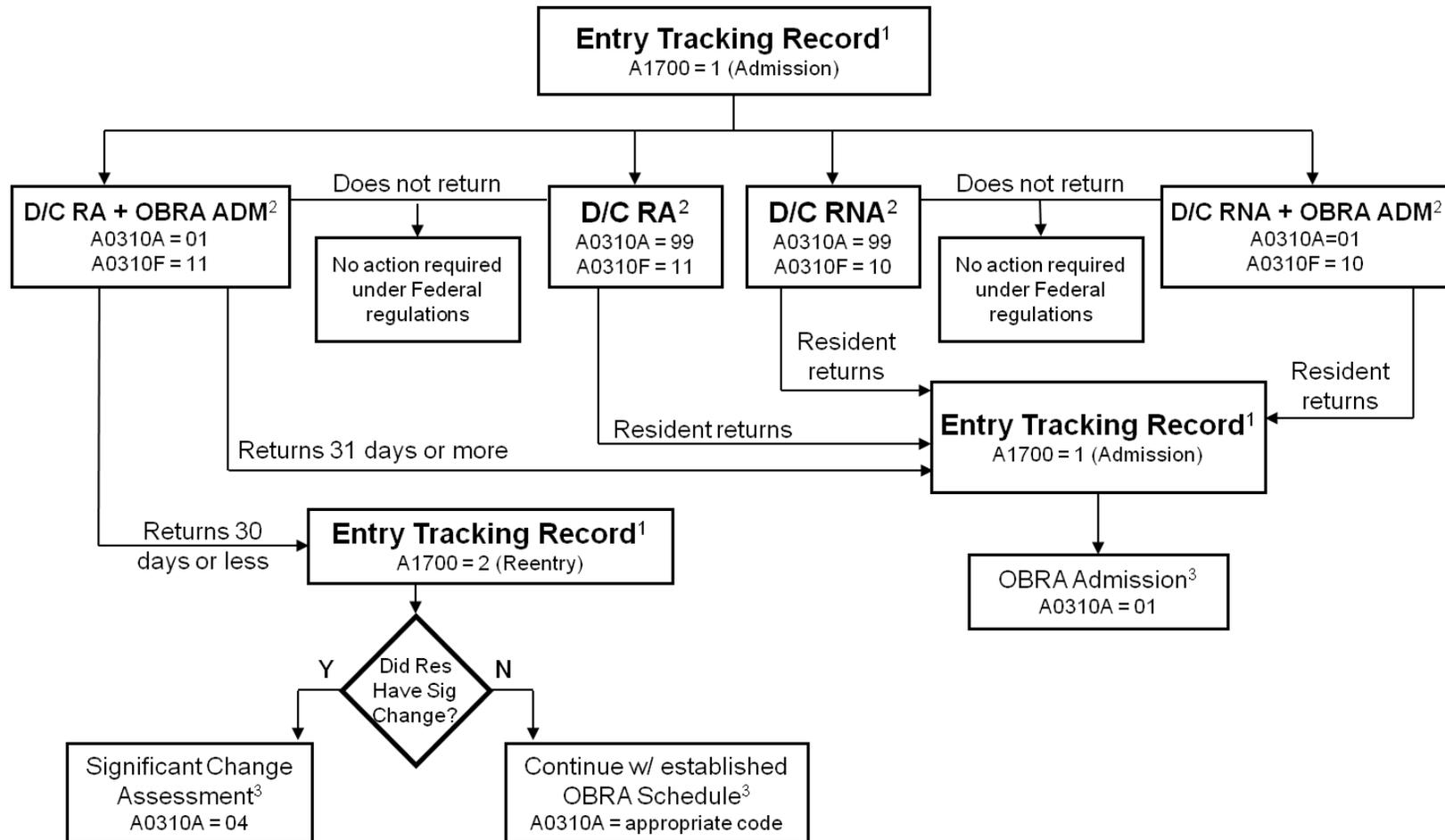
A2100 = 03

Assessment Management Requirements and Tips for Discharge Assessments:

- Must be completed when the resident is discharged from the facility (see definition of Discharge on page 2-10).
- Must be completed when the resident is admitted to an acute care hospital.
- Must be completed when the resident has a hospital observation stay greater than 24 hours.
- Must be completed on a respite resident every time the resident is discharged from the facility.
- May be combined with another OBRA required assessment when requirements for all assessments are met.
- May be combined with a PPS Medicare required assessment when requirements for all assessments are met.
- Discharge date (Item A2000) must be the ARD (Item A2300) of the Discharge assessment.
- For **unplanned discharges**, the facility should complete the Discharge assessment to the best of its abilities. The use of the dash, “-”, is appropriate when the staff are unable to determine the response to an item, including the interview items. In some cases, the facility may have already completed some items of the assessment and should record those responses or may be in the process of completing an assessment. The facility may combine the Discharge assessment with another assessment(s) when requirements for all assessments are met.
 - An unplanned discharge includes, for example:
 - Acute-care transfer of the resident to a hospital or an emergency department in order to either stabilize a condition or determine if an acute-care admission is required based on emergency department evaluation; or
 - Resident unexpectedly leaving the facility against medical advice; or
 - Resident unexpectedly deciding to go home or to another setting (e.g., due to the resident deciding to complete treatment in an alternate setting).
- Nursing home bed hold status and opening and closing of the medical record have no effect on these requirements.

The following chart details the sequencing and coding of Tracking records and Discharge assessments.

Entry, Discharge, and Reentry Algorithms



¹A0310A = 99 A0310B = 99 A0310C = 0 A0310D = 0 or blank A0310E = 0 A0310F = 01

²A0310B – E = appropriate code

³A0310B – F = appropriate code

When A1700 = 1, the first OBRA assessment should be an admission assessment unless D/C prior to completion.

ADM	Admission
D/C	Discharge
RA	Return Anticipated
RNA	Return Not Anticipated

2.7 The Care Area Assessment (CAA) Process and Care Plan Completion

Federal statute and regulations require nursing homes to conduct initial and periodic assessments for all their residents. The assessment information is used to develop, review, and revise the resident's plans of care that will be used to provide services to attain or maintain the resident's highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being.

The RAI process, which includes the Federally-mandated MDS, is the basis for an accurate assessment of nursing home residents. The MDS information and the CAA process provide the foundation upon which the care plan is formulated. There are 20 problem-oriented CAAs, each of which includes MDS-based "trigger" conditions that signal the need for additional assessment and review of the triggered care area. Detailed information regarding each care area and the CAA process, including definitions and triggers, appear in Chapter 4 of this manual. Chapter 4 also contains detailed information on care planning development utilizing the RAI and CAA process.

CAA(s) Completion

- Is required for OBRA-required comprehensive assessments. They are not required for non-comprehensive assessments, PPS assessments, Discharge assessments, or Tracking records.
- After completing the MDS portion of the comprehensive assessment, the next step is to further identify and evaluate the resident's strengths, problems, and needs through use of the CAA process (described in detail in Chapter 3, Section V, and Chapter 4 of this manual) and through further investigation of any resident-specific issues not addressed in the RAI/CAA process.
- The CAA(s) completion date (Item V0200B2) must be either later than or the same date as the MDS completion date (Item Z0500B). In no event can either date be later than the established timeframes as described in Section 2.6.
- It is important to note that for an Admission assessment, the resident enters the nursing home with a set of physician-based treatment orders. Nursing home staff should review these orders and begin to assess the resident and to identify potential care issues/problems. In many cases, interventions will already have been implemented to address priority issues prior to completion of the final care plan. At this time, many of the resident's problems in the 20 care areas will have been identified, causes will have been considered, and a preliminary care plan initiated. However, a final CAA(s) review and associated documentation are still required no later than the 14th calendar day of admission (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- Detailed information regarding each CAA and the CAA process appears in Chapter 4 of this manual.

Care Plan Completion

- Care plan completion based on the CAA process is required for OBRA-required comprehensive assessments. It is not required for non-comprehensive assessments, PPS assessments, Discharge assessments, or Tracking records.
- After completing the MDS and CAA portions of the comprehensive assessment, the next step is to evaluate the information gained through both assessment processes in order to identify problems, causes, contributing factors, and risk factors related to the problems. Subsequently, the IDT must evaluate the information gained to develop a care plan that addresses those findings in the context of the resident's strengths, problems, and needs (described in detail in Chapter 4 of this manual).
- The care plan completion date (Item V0200C2) must be either later than or the same date as the CAA completion date (Item V0200B2), but no later than 7 calendar days after the CAA completion date. The MDS completion date (Item Z0500B) must be earlier than or the same date as the care plan completion date. In no event can either date be later than the established timeframes as described in Section 2.6.
- For Annual assessments, SCSAs, and SCPAs, the process is basically the same as that described with an Admission assessment. In these cases, however, the care plan will already be in place. Review of the CAA(s) when the MDS is complete for these assessment types should raise questions about the need to modify or continue services and result in either the continuance or revision of the existing care plan. A new care plan does not need to be developed after each Annual assessment, SCSA, or SCPA.
- Nursing homes should also evaluate the appropriateness of the care plan after each Quarterly assessment and modify the care plan on an ongoing basis, if appropriate.
- Detailed information regarding the care planning process appears in Chapter 4 of this manual.

2.8 The Skilled Nursing Facility Medicare Prospective Payment System Assessment Schedule

Skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) must assess the clinical condition of beneficiaries by completing the MDS assessment for each Medicare resident receiving Part A SNF-level care for reimbursement under the SNF PPS. In addition to the Medicare-required assessments, the SNF must also complete the OBRA assessments. All requirements for the OBRA assessments apply to the Medicare-required assessments, such as completion and submission time frames.

Assessment Window

Each of the Medicare-required scheduled assessments has defined days within which the Assessment Reference Date (ARD) must be set. The facility is required to set the ARD on the MDS form itself or in the facility software within the appropriate timeframe of the assessment type being completed. For example, the ARD for the Medicare-required 5-day scheduled assessment must be set on days 1 through 8. Timeliness of the PPS assessment is defined by selecting an ARD within the prescribed ARD window. See Scheduled Medicare PPS

Assessments chart below for the allowed ARDs for each of the Medicare-required assessments and other assessment information.

When coding a standalone Change of Therapy OMRA (COT), a standalone End of Therapy OMRA (EOT), or a standalone Start of Therapy OMRA (SOT), facilities must set the ARD for the assessment for a day within the allowable ARD window for that assessment type, but may do so no more than two days after the window has passed.

The first day of Medicare Part A coverage for the current stay is considered day 1 for PPS assessment scheduling purposes. In most cases, the first day of Medicare Part A coverage is the date of admission or reentry. However, there are situations in which the Medicare beneficiary may qualify for Part A services at a later date. See Chapter 6, Section 6.7, for more detailed information.

Grace Days

There may be situations when an assessment might be delayed (e.g., illness of RN assessor, a high volume of assessments due at approximately the same time) or additional days are needed to more fully capture therapy or other treatments. Therefore, CMS has allowed for these situations by defining a number of grace days for each Medicare assessment. For example, the Medicare-required 5-Day ARD can be extended 1 to 3 grace days (i.e., days 6 to 8). The use of grace days allows clinical flexibility in setting ARDs. See chart below for the allowed grace days for each of the scheduled Medicare-required assessments. Grace days are not applied to unscheduled Medicare PPS Assessments.

Scheduled Medicare PPS Assessments

The Medicare-required standard assessment schedule includes 5-day, 14-day, 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day scheduled assessments, each with a predetermined time period for setting the ARD for that assessment. The Readmission/Return assessment is also a scheduled assessment.

The SNF provider must complete the Medicare-required assessments according to the following schedule to assure compliance with the SNF PPS requirements.

Medicare MDS Scheduled Assessment Type	Reason for Assessment (A0310B code)	Assessment Reference Date	Assessment Reference Date Grace Days+	Applicable Standard Medicare Payment Days^
5-day Readmission/Return	01	Days 1-5	6-8	1 through 14
	06			
14-day	02	Days 13-14	15-18	15 through 30
30-day	03	Days 27-29	30-33	31 through 60
60-day	04	Days 57-59	60-63	61 through 90
90-day	05	Days 87-89	90-93	91 through 100

+Grace Days: a specific number of days that can be added to the ARD window without penalty.

^Applicable Standard Medicare Payment Days may vary when assessment types are combined. For example, when a provider combines an unscheduled assessment, such as a Significant Change in Status Assessment (SCSA), with a scheduled assessment, such as a 30-day Medicare-required assessment, the new resource utilization group (RUG) would take effect on the ARD of the assessment. If the ARD of this assessment was day 28, the new RUG would take effect on day 28 of the stay. The exception would be if the ARD fell within the grace days. In that case, the new RUG would be effective on the first day of the regular payment period. For example, if the ARD of an unscheduled assessment combined with the 60-day assessment, was day 62, the new RUG would take effect on day 61.

Unscheduled Medicare PPS Assessments

There are situations when a SNF provider must complete an assessment outside of the standard scheduled Medicare-required assessments. These assessments are known as unscheduled assessments. When indicated, a provider must complete the following unscheduled assessments:

1. *Significant Change in Status Assessment* (for swing bed providers this unscheduled assessment is called the *Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment*): Complete when the SNF interdisciplinary team has determined that a resident meets the significant change guidelines for either improvement or decline (see section 2.6).
2. *Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment*: Complete because a significant error was made in the prior comprehensive assessment (see section 2.6).
3. *Start of Therapy Other Medicare Required Assessment (SOT-OMRA)*: Complete to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. This is an optional assessment (see section 2.9).
4. *End of Therapy Other Medicare Required Assessment (EOT- OMRA)*: Complete in two circumstances: (a) When the beneficiary who was receiving rehabilitation services (occupational therapy [OT], and/or physical therapy [PT], and/or speech-language pathology services [SLP]), was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group, all therapies have ended and the beneficiary continues to receive skilled services. (b) When the beneficiary who was receiving rehabilitation services (occupational therapy [OT], and/or physical therapy [PT], and/or speech-language pathology services [SLP]), was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and did not receive any therapy services for three or more consecutive calendar days. The EOT would be completed to classify the beneficiary into a non-therapy RUG group beginning on the day after the last day of therapy provided.
5. *Change of Therapy Other Medicare Required Assessment (COT-OMRA)*: Complete when the intensity of therapy, which includes the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM), and other therapy qualifiers such as number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy, changes to such a degree that the beneficiary would classify into a different RUG-IV category than the RUG-IV category for which the resident is currently being billed for the 7-day COT observation period following the ARD of the most recent assessment used for Medicare payment(see section 2.9). The requirement to complete a change of therapy is reevaluated with additional 7-day COT observation periods ending on the 14th, 21st, and 28th days after the most recent Medicare payment assessment ARD and a COT OMRA is to be completed if the RUG-IV category changes. If a new assessment used for Medicare payment has occurred, the COT observation period will restart beginning on the day following the ARD of the most recent assessment used for Medicare payment.

A Medicare unscheduled assessment in a scheduled assessment window cannot be followed by the scheduled assessment later in that window—the two assessments must be combined with an ARD appropriate to the unscheduled assessment. If a scheduled assessment has been completed and an unscheduled assessment falls in that assessment window, the unscheduled assessment may supersede the scheduled assessment and the payment may be modified until the next unscheduled or scheduled assessment. See Chapter 6 (Section 6.4) for complete details.

Tracking Records and Discharge Assessments Reporting

Tracking records and discharge assessments reporting are required on **all** residents in the SNF and swing bed facilities. Tracking records and standalone Discharge assessments do not impact payment.

The following chart summarizes the Medicare-required scheduled and unscheduled assessments, tracking records, and discharge assessments:

Medicare Scheduled and Unscheduled MDS Assessment, Tracking Records, and Discharge Assessment Reporting Schedule for SNFs and Swing Bed Facilities

Codes for Assessments Required for Medicare	Assessment Reference Date (ARD) Can be Set on Any of Following Days	Grace Days ARD Can Also be Set on These Days	Allowed ARD Window	Billing Cycle Used by the Business Office	Special Comment
5-day A0310B = 01 and Readmission/return A0310B = 06	Days 1-5	6-8	Days 1-8	Sets payment rate for days 1-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Section 2.12 for instructions involving beneficiaries who transfer or expire day 8 or earlier. CAAs must be completed only if the Medicare 5-day scheduled assessment is dually coded as an OBRA Admission or Annual assessment, SCSA or SCPA.
14-day A0310B = 02	Days 13-14	15-18	Days 13-18	Sets payment rate for days 15-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAAs must be completed only if the 14-day assessment is dually coded as an OBRA Admission or Annual assessment, SCSA or SCPA. Grace days do not apply when the 14-day scheduled assessment is dually coded as an OBRA Admission.
30-day A0310B = 03	Days 27-29	30-33	Days 27-33	Sets payment rate for days 31-60	
60-day A0310B = 04	Days 57-59	60-63	Days 57-63	Sets payment rate for days 61-90	
90-day A0310B = 05	Days 87-89	90-93	Days 87-93	Sets payment rate for days 91-100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If combined with the OBRA Quarterly assessment the completion date requirements for the OBRA Quarterly assessment must also be met.

(continued)

Medicare Scheduled and Unscheduled MDS Assessment Schedule for SNFs (cont.)

Codes for Assessments Required for Medicare	Assessment Reference Date (ARD) Can be Set on Any of Following Days	Grace Days ARD Can Also be Set on These Days	Allowed ARD Window	Billing Cycle Used by the Business Office	Special Comment
Start of Therapy Other Medicare- required Assessment (OMRA) A0310B = 01 - 07 and A0310C = 1 or 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-7 days after the start of therapy • The day of the first therapy evaluation counts as day 1 	N/A	N/A	Modifies payment rate starting on the date of the first therapy evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary assessment used to establish a Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation RUG.
End of Therapy OMRA A0310B = 01-07 and A0310C = 2 or 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-3 days after all therapy (PT, OT, SLP) services are discontinued. • The first non-therapy day counts as day 1. 	N/A	N/A	Modifies payment rate starting on the day after the latest therapy end date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not required if the resident has been determined to no longer meet Medicare skilled level of care. • Establishes a new non-therapy RUG Classification. • Only required for patients who are classified into Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation RUG on most recent PPS assessment. • For circumstances when an End of Therapy with Resumption option would be used, See Section 2.9.
Change of Therapy OMRA A0310B = 01-07 And A0310C = 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 7 of the COT observation period 	N/A	N/A	Modifies payment rate starting on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other scheduled or unscheduled PPS assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required only if the intensity of therapy during the 7-day look back period would change the RUG category classification of the most recent PPS Assessment • Establishes a new RUG classification

(continued)

Medicare Scheduled and Unscheduled MDS Assessment Schedule for SNFs (cont.)

Codes for Assessments Required for Medicare	Assessment Reference Date (ARD) Can be Set on Any of Following Days	Grace Days ARD Can Also be Set on These Days	Allowed ARD Window	Billing Cycle Used by the Business Office	Special Comment
Significant Change in Status Assessment (SCSA) A0310A = 04	Completed by the end of the 14th calendar day after determination that a significant change has occurred.	N/A	N/A	Modifies payment rate effective with the ARD when not combined with another assessment*	May establish a new RUG Classification.
Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment (CCA) A0310B = 01-07 and A0310D = 1	Completed by the end of the 14th calendar day after determination that a clinical change has occurred.	N/A	N/A	Modifies payment rate effective with the ARD when not combined with another assessment*	May establish a new RUG Classification.
Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment (SCPA) A0310A = 05	Completed by the end of the 14th calendar day after identification of a significant, uncorrected error in prior comprehensive assessment.	N/A	N/A	Modifies payment rate effective with the ARD when not combined with another assessment*	May establish a new RUG Classification.
Entry tracking record A0310F = 01	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	May not be combined with another assessment
Discharge Assessment A0310F = 10 or 11	Must be set for the day of discharge	N/A	N/A	N/A	May be combined with another assessment when the date of discharge is the ARD of the Medicare-required assessment
Death in facility tracking record A0310F = 12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	May not be combined with another assessment

*NOTE: When SCSA, SCPA, and CCA are combined with another assessment, payment rate may not be effective on the ARD. For example, a provider combines the 30-day Medicare-required assessment with a Significant Change in Status assessment with an ARD of day 33, a grace day, payment rate would become effective on day 31, not day 33. See Chapter 6, Section 6.4.

2.9 MDS Medicare Assessments for SNFs

The MDS has been constructed to identify the OBRA Reasons for Assessment and the SNF PPS Reasons for Assessment in Items A0310A and A0310B respectively. If the assessment is being used for Medicare reimbursement, the Medicare Reason for Assessment must be coded in Item A0310B. The OBRA Reason for Assessment is described earlier in this section while the Medicare PPS assessments are described below. A SNF provider may combine assessments to meet both OBRA and Medicare requirements. When combining assessments, all completion deadlines and other requirements for both types of assessments must be met. If all requirements cannot be met, the assessments must be completed separately. The relationship between OBRA and Medicare assessments are discussed below and in more detail in Sections 2.11 and 2.12.

PPS Scheduled Assessments for a Medicare Part A Stay

01. Medicare-required 5-Day Scheduled Assessment

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 1 through 5 of the Part A SNF covered stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 8 if using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Authorizes payment from days 1 through 14 of the stay, as long as the resident meets all criteria for Part A SNF-level services.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES Assessment Submission and Processing (ASAP) system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).
- If combined with the OBRA Admission assessment, the assessment must be completed by the end of day 14 of admission (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- Is the first Medicare-required assessment to be completed when the resident is first admitted for SNF Part A stay.
- Is the first Medicare-required assessment to be completed when the Part A resident is re-admitted to the facility following a discharge assessment – return not anticipated or if the resident returns more than 30 days after a discharge assessment–return anticipated.
- If a resident goes from Medicare Advantage to Medicare Part A, the Medicare PPS schedule must start over with a 5 -day PPS assessment as the resident is now beginning a Medicare Part A stay.

02. Medicare-required 14-Day Scheduled Assessment

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 13 through 14 of the Part A SNF covered stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 18 if using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Authorizes payment from days 15 through 30 of the stay, as long as all the coverage criteria for Part A SNF-level services continue to be met.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).
- If combined with the OBRA Admission assessment, the assessment must be completed by the end of day 14 of admission and grace days may not be used when setting the ARD.

03. Medicare-required 30-Day Scheduled Assessment

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 27 through 29 of the Part A SNF covered stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 33 if using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Authorizes payment from days 31 through 60 of the stay, as long as all the coverage criteria for Part A SNF-level services continue to be met.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).

04. Medicare-required 60-Day Scheduled Assessment

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 57 through 59 of the Part A SNF covered stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 63 if using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Authorizes payment from days 61 through 90 of the stay, as long as all the coverage criteria for Part A SNF-level services continue to be met.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).

05. Medicare-required 90-Day Scheduled Assessment

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 87 through 89 of the Part A SNF covered stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 93 if using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Authorizes payment from days 91 through 100 of the stay, as long as all the coverage criteria for Part A SNF-level services continue to be met.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).

06. Medicare-required Readmission/Return Assessment

- Completed when a resident whose SNF stay was being reimbursed by Medicare Part A is hospitalized, discharged return anticipated, and then returns to the SNF from the hospital within 30 days and continues to require and receive Part A SNF-level care services. Under these conditions, the entry tracking record completed upon return to the SNF will be coded as a reentry with Item A1700 = 2.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 1 through 5 of the Part A SNF covered stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 8 if using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Authorizes payment from days 1 through 14 of the stay, as long as all the coverage criteria for Part A SNF-level services continue to be met.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).
- If combined with the OBRA Admission assessment, the assessment must be completed by the Day 14 counting the date of admission as Day 1 (admission date plus 13 calendar days).

PPS Unscheduled Assessments for a Medicare Part A Stay

07. Unscheduled Assessments Used for PPS

There are several unscheduled assessment types that may be required to be completed during a resident's Part A SNF covered stay.

Start of Therapy (SOT) OMRA

- Optional.
- Completed only to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or a Rehabilitation (therapy) group, the assessment will not be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Completed only if the resident is not already classified into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 5-7 after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date) with the exception of the Short Stay Assessment (see Chapter 6, Section 6.4). The date of the earliest therapy evaluation is counted as day 1 when determining the ARD for the Start of Therapy OMRA, regardless if treatment is provided or not on that day.
- May be combined with scheduled PPS assessments.
- An SOT OMRA is not necessary if rehabilitation services start within the ARD window (including grace days) of the 5-day assessment, since the therapy rate will be paid starting Day 1 of the SNF stay.
- The ARD may not precede the ARD of first scheduled PPS assessment of the Medicare stay (5-day or readmission/return assessment).
 - For example if the 5-day assessment is performed on Day 8 and an SOT is performed in that window, the ARD for the SOT would be Day 8 as well.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Establishes a RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment (see Chapter 6, Section 6.4 for policies on determining RUG-IV payment), which begins on the day therapy started.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).

End of Therapy (EOT) OMRA

- Required when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the planned or unplanned discontinuation of all rehabilitation therapies for three or more consecutive days.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on day 1, 2, or 3 after all rehabilitation therapies have been discontinued for any reason (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest). The last day on which therapy treatment was furnished is considered day 0 when determining the ARD for the End of Therapy OMRA. Day 1 is the first day after the last therapy treatment was provided whether therapy was scheduled or not scheduled for that day. For example:
 - If the resident was discharged from all therapy services on Tuesday, day 1 is Wednesday.
 - If the resident was discharged from all therapy services on Friday, Day 1 would be Saturday.

- If the resident received therapy Friday, was not scheduled for therapy on Saturday or Sunday and refused therapy for Monday, Day 1 would be Saturday.
- May be combined with any scheduled PPS assessment. In such cases, the item set for the scheduled assessment should be used.
- The ARD for the End of Therapy OMRA may not precede the ARD of the first scheduled PPS assessment of the Medicare stay (5-day or readmission/return assessment).
 - For example: if the 5-day assessment is completed on day 8 and an EOT is completed in that window, the ARD for the EOT should be Day 8 as well.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days).
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment regardless of day selected for ARD.
- Must be submitted electronically to the QIES ASAP system and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).
- In cases where a resident is classified into a Rehabilitation or Rehabilitation plus Extensive Services RUG category and experiences a planned or unplanned discontinuation of therapy services for three or more consecutive calendar days and the resident is discharged from the facility *on* the third day of missed therapy services, then no EOT OMRA is required. If the facility chooses to complete an EOT OMRA in this situation, it may be combined with the discharge assessment.
- In cases where a resident is discharged from the SNF *on or prior to* the third consecutive day of missed therapy services, then no EOT is required. More precisely, in cases where the date coded for Item A2000 is on or prior to the third consecutive day of missed therapy services, then no EOT OMRA is required. If a SNF chooses to complete the EOT OMRA in this situation, they may combine the EOT OMRA with the discharge assessment.
- If the EOT OMRA is performed because three or more consecutive days of therapy were missed, and it is determined that therapy will resume, there are three options for completion:
 1. Complete only the EOT OMRA and keep the resident in a non-Rehabilitation RUG category until the next scheduled PPS assessment is completed. For example:
 - Mr. K. was discharged from all therapy services on Day 22 of his SNF stay. The EOT OMRA was performed on Day 24 of his SNF stay and classified into HD1. Payment continued at HD1 until the 30- day assessment was completed. At that point, therapy resumed (with a new therapy evaluation) and the resident was classified into RVB.
 2. In cases where therapy resumes after an EOT OMRA is performed and more than 5 consecutive calendar days have passed since the last day of therapy provided, or therapy services will not resume at the same RUG-IV therapy classification level that had been in effect prior to the EOT OMRA, an SOT OMRA is required to classify the resident back into a RUG-IV therapy group and a new therapy evaluation is required as well. For example:

- Mr. G. who had been classified into RVX did not receive therapy on Saturday and Sunday. He also missed therapy on Monday because his family came to visit, on Tuesday he missed therapy due to a doctor's appointment and refused therapy on Wednesday. An EOT OMRA was performed on Monday classifying him into the ES2 non-therapy RUG. He missed 5 consecutive calendar days of therapy. A new therapy evaluation was completed and he resumed therapy services on Thursday. An SOT OMRA was then completed and Mr. G. was placed back into the RVX therapy RUG category.
 - Mrs. B., who had been classified into RHC did not receive therapy on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday because of an infection, and it was determined that she would be able to start therapy again on Thursday. An EOT OMRA was completed to pay for the three days she did not have therapy with a non-therapy RUG classification of HC2. It was determined that Mrs. B. would not be able to resume therapy at the same RUG-IV therapy classification, and an SOT OMRA was completed to place her into the RMB RUG-IV therapy category. A new therapy evaluation was required.
3. In cases where therapy resumes after the EOT OMRA is performed and the resumption of therapy date is no more than 5 consecutive calendar days after the last day of therapy provided, and the therapy services have resumed at the same RUG-IV classification level, and with the same therapy plan of care that had been in effect prior to the EOT OMRA, an End of Therapy OMRA with Resumption (EOT-R) may be completed. For Example:
- Mrs. A. who was in RVL did not receive therapy on Saturday and Sunday because the facility did not provide weekend services and she missed therapy on Monday because of a doctor's appointment, but resumed therapy Tuesday. The IDT determined that her RUG-IV therapy classification level did not change as she had not had any significant clinical changes during the lapsed therapy days. An EOT-R was completed and Mrs. A. was placed into ES3 for the three days she did not receive therapy. On Tuesday, Mrs. A. was placed back into RVL, which was the same therapy RUG group she was in prior to the discontinuation of therapy. A new therapy evaluation was not required.

NOTE: If the EOT OMRA has not been accepted in the QIES ASAP when therapy resumes, code the EOT-R items (O0450A and O0450B) on the assessment and submit the record. If the EOT OMRA without the EOT-R items has been accepted into the QIES ASAP system, then submit a modification request for that EOT OMRA with the only changes being the completion of the EOT-R items and check X0900E to indicate that the reason for modification is the addition of the Resumption of Therapy date.

NOTE: When an EOT-R is completed, the Therapy Start Date (O0400A5, O0400B5, and O0400C5) on the next PPS assessment is the same as the Therapy Start Date on the EOT-R. If therapy is ongoing, the Therapy End Date (O0400A6, O0400B6, and O0400C6) would be filled out with dashes.

4. In cases when the therapy end date is in one payment period and the resumption date is in the next payment period, the facility should bill the non-therapy RUG given on the EOT OMRA beginning the day after the last day of therapy treatment and begin billing the therapy RUG that was in effect prior to the EOT OMRA beginning on the day that

therapy resumed (O0450B). If the resumption of therapy occurs after the next billing period has started, then this therapy RUG should be used until modified by a future scheduled or unscheduled assessment.

For example, a resident misses therapy on Days 11, 12, and 13 and resumes therapy on Day 15. In this case the facility should bill the non-therapy RUG for Days 11, 12, 13, and 14 and on Day 15 the facility should bill the RUG that was in effect prior to the EOT.

Change of Therapy (COT) OMRA

- Required when the resident was receiving any amount of skilled therapy services and when the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) delivered, and other therapy qualifiers such as number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy) changes to such a degree that it would no longer reflect the RUG-IV classification and payment assigned for a given SNF resident based on the most recent assessment used for Medicare payment.
- ARD is set for Day 7 of a COT observation period. The COT observation periods are successive 7-day windows with the first observation period beginning on the day following the ARD set for the most recent scheduled or unscheduled PPS assessment, except for an EOT-R assessment (see below). For example:
 - If the ARD for a patient's 30-day assessment is set for day 30, and there are no intervening assessments, then the COT observation period ends on Day 37.
 - If the ARD for the patient's most recent COT (whether the COT was completed or not) was day Day 37, the next COT observation period would end on Day 44.
- In cases where the last PPS Assessment was an EOT-R, the end of the first COT observation period is Day 7 after the Resumption of Therapy date (O0450B) on the EOT-R, rather than the ARD. The resumption of therapy date is counted as day 1 when determining Day 7 of the COT observation period. For example:
 - If the ARD for an EOT-R is set for day 35 and the resumption date is the equivalent of day 37, then the COT observation period ends on day 43.
- An evaluation of the necessity for a COT OMRA (that is, an evaluation of the therapy intensity, as described above) must be completed after the COT observation period is over.
- The COT would be completed if the patient's therapy intensity, as described above, has changed to classify the resident into a higher or lower RUG category. For example:
 - If a facility sets the ARD for its 14-day assessment to day 14, Day 1 for purposes of the COT period would be Day 15 of the SNF stay, and the facility would be required to review the therapy services provided to the patient for the week consisting of Day 15 through 21. The ARD for the COT OMRA would then be set for Day 21, if the facility were to determine that, for example, the total RTM has changed such that the resident's RUG classification would change from that found on the 14-day assessment (assuming no intervening assessments). If the total RTM would not result in a RUG classification change, and all other therapy category qualifiers have

remained consistent with the patient's current RUG classification, then the COT OMRA would not be completed.

- If Day 7 of the COT observation period falls within the ARD window of a scheduled PPS Assessment, the SNF may choose to complete the PPS Assessment alone by setting the ARD of the scheduled PPS assessment for an allowable day that is *on or before* Day 7 of the COT observation period. This effectively resets the COT observation period to the 7 days following that scheduled PPS Assessment ARD. Alternatively, the SNF may choose to combine the COT OMRA and scheduled assessment following the instructions discussed in Section 2.10.
- In cases where a resident is discharged from the SNF *on or before* Day 7 of the COT observation period, then no COT OMRA is required. More precisely, in cases where the date coded for Item A2000 is on or before Day 7 of the COT observation period, then no COT OMRA is required. If a SNF chooses to complete the COT OMRA in this situation, they may combine the COT OMRA with the discharge assessment.
- The COT ARD may not precede the ARD of the first scheduled or unscheduled PPS assessment of the Medicare stay used to establish the patient's current RUG-IV therapy classification.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD (ARD + 14 days)
- Establishes a new RUG-IV category. Payment begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other PPS assessment.
- Must be submitted electronically and accepted into the QIES ASAP system within 14 days after completion (Item Z0500B) (completion + 14 days).

Significant Change in Status Assessment (SCSA)

- Is an OBRA required assessment. See Section 2.6 of this chapter for definition, guidelines in completion, and scheduling.
- May establish a new RUG-IV classification.
- When a SCSA for a SNF PPS resident is not combined with a PPS assessment (A0310A = 04 and A0310B = 99), the RUG-IV classification and associated payment rate begin on the ARD. For example, a SCSA is completed with an ARD of day 20 then the RUG-IV classification begins on day 20.
- When the SCSA is completed with a scheduled Medicare-required assessment and grace days are not used when setting the ARD, the RUG-IV classification begins on the ARD. For example, the SCSA is combined with the Medicare-required 14-day scheduled assessment and the ARD is set on day 13, the RUG-IV classification begins on day 13.
- When the SCSA is completed with a scheduled Medicare-required assessment and the ARD is set within the grace days, the RUG-IV classification begins on the first day of the payment period of the scheduled Medicare-required assessment standard payment period. For example, the SCSA is combined with the Medicare-required 30-day scheduled assessment, which pays for days 31 to 60, and the ARD is set at day 33, the RUG-IV classification begins day 31.

Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment

- Is a required assessment for swing bed providers. Staff is responsible for determining whether a change (either an improvement or decline) in a patient's condition constitutes a "clinical change" in the patient's status.
- Is similar to the OBRA Significant Change in Status Assessment with the exceptions of the CAA process and the timing related to the OBRA Admission assessment. See Section 2.6 of this chapter.
- May establish a new RUG-IV classification. See previous Significant Change in Status subsection for ARD implications on the payment schedule.

Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

- Is an OBRA required assessment. See Section 2.6 of this chapter for definition, guidelines in completion, and scheduling.
- May establish a new RUG-IV classification. See previous Significant Change in Status subsection for ARD implications on the payment schedule.

Coding Tips and Special Populations

- When coding a standalone Change of Therapy OMRA (COT), a standalone End of Therapy OMRA (EOT), or a standalone Start of Therapy OMRA (SOT), the interview items may be coded using the responses provided by the resident on a previous assessment **only** if the DATE of the interview responses from the previous assessment (as documented in item Z0400) were obtained no more than 14 days before the DATE of completion for the interview items on the unscheduled assessment (as documented in item Z0400) for which those responses will be used.
- When coding a standalone Change of Therapy OMRA (COT), a standalone End of Therapy OMRA (EOT), or a standalone Start of Therapy OMRA (SOT), facilities must set the ARD for the assessment for a day within the allowable ARD window for that assessment type, but may only do so no more than two days after the window has passed. For example, if Day 7 of the COT observation period is May 23rd and the COT is required, then the ARD for this COT must be set for May 23rd and this must be done by May 25th. Facilities may still exercise the use of this flexibility period in cases where the resident discharges from the facility during that period.

2.10 Combining Medicare Scheduled and Unscheduled Assessments

There may be instances when more than one Medicare-required assessment is due in the same time period. To reduce provider burden, CMS allows the combining of assessments. Two Medicare-required Scheduled Assessments may **never** be combined since these assessments have specific ARD windows that do not occur at the same time. However, it is possible that a Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and a Medicare Unscheduled Assessment may be combined or that two Medicare Unscheduled assessments may be combined.

When combining assessments, the more stringent requirements must be met. For example, when a nursing home Start of Therapy OMRA is combined with a 14-Day Medicare-required Assessment, the PPS item set must be used. The PPS item set contains all the required items for the 14-Day Medicare-required assessment, whereas the Start of Therapy OMRA item set consists of fewer items, thus the provider would need to complete the PPS item set. The ARD window (including grace days) for the 14-day assessment is days 13-18, therefore, the ARD must be set no later than day 18 to ensure that all required time frames are met. For a swing bed provider, the swing bed PPS item set would need to be completed.

If an unscheduled PPS assessment (OMRA, SCSA, SCPA, or Swing Bed CCA) is required in the assessment window (including grace days) of a scheduled PPS assessment that has not yet been performed, then facilities must combine the scheduled and unscheduled assessments by setting the ARD of the scheduled assessment for the same day that the unscheduled assessment is required. In such cases, facilities should provide the proper response to the A0310 items to indicate which assessments are being combined, as completion of the combined assessment will be taken to fulfill the requirements for both the scheduled and unscheduled assessments. A scheduled PPS assessment cannot occur after an unscheduled assessment in the assessment window—the scheduled assessment must be combined with the unscheduled assessment using the appropriate ARD for the unscheduled assessment. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the number of assessments required for SNF PPS payment purposes and to ensure that the assessments used for payment provide the most accurate picture of the resident's clinical condition and service needs. More details about combining PPS assessments are provided in this chapter and in Chapter 6, Section 30.3 of the Medicare Claims Processing Manual (CMS Pub. 100-04) available on the CMS web site. Listed below are some of the possible assessment combinations allowed. A provider may choose to combine more than two assessment types when all requirements are met. When entered directly into the software the coding of Item A0310 will provide the item set that the facility is required to complete. For SNFs that use a paper format to collect MDS data, the provider must ensure that the item set selected meets the requirements of all assessments coded in Item A0310 (see Section 2.15).

In cases when a facility fails to combine a scheduled and unscheduled PPS assessment as required by the combined assessment policy, the payment is controlled by the unscheduled assessment. For example: if the ARD of an EOT OMRA is set for Day 14 and the ARD of a 14-day assessment is set for Day 15, this would violate the combined assessment policy. Consequently, the EOT OMRA would control the payment. The EOT would begin payment on Day 12, and continue paying into the 14-day payment window until the next scheduled or unscheduled assessment used for payment.

DEFINITIONS

USED FOR PAYMENT

An assessment is considered to be "used for payment" in that it either controls the payment for a given period or, with scheduled assessments may set the basis for payment for a given period.

PPS Scheduled Assessment and Start of Therapy OMRA

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within the ARD window for the Medicare-required scheduled assessment **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date). If both ARD requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.

- An SOT OMRA is not necessary if rehabilitation services start within the ARD window (including grace days) of the 5-day assessment, since the therapy rate will be paid starting Day 1 of the SNF stay.
- If the ARD for the SOT OMRA falls within the ARD window (including grace days) of a PPS scheduled assessment that has not been performed yet, the assessments **MUST** be combined.
- Complete the PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
A0310A = 99
A0310B = 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, or 06 as appropriate
A0310C = 1
A0310D = 0 (Swing Beds only)

PPS Scheduled Assessment and End of Therapy OMRA

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within the window for the Medicare scheduled assessment **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest date). If both ARD requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.
- If the ARD for the EOT OMRA falls within the ARD window (including grace days) of a PPS scheduled assessment that has not been performed yet, the assessments **MUST** be combined.
- Must complete the PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
A0310A = 99
A0310B = 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, or 06 as appropriate
A0310C = 2
A0310D = 0 (Swing Beds only)

PPS Scheduled Assessment and Start and End of Therapy OMRA

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within the window for the Medicare-required scheduled assessment **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is latest). If all three ARD requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.
- If the ARD for the EOT and SOT OMRA falls within the ARD window (including grace days) of a PPS scheduled assessment that has not been performed yet, the assessments **MUST** be combined.
- Must complete the PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
A0310A = 99
A0310B = 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, or 06 as appropriate
A0310C = 3
A0310D = 0 (Swing Beds only)

PPS Scheduled Assessment and Change of Therapy OMRA

- If Day 7 of the COT observation period falls within the ARD window (including grace days) of a scheduled PPS Assessment, then a SNF must elect to either combine the COT OMRA with the scheduled PPS assessment or may choose to complete the scheduled PPS assessment alone, as described in Section 2.9. If the scheduled PPS assessment is to be completed alone, then the ARD for the scheduled PPS assessment must be set for on or before Day 7 of the COT observation period. If the SNF chooses to combine the scheduled PPS assessment with the COT OMRA, then the ARD of the combined assessment must be set for Day 7 of the COT observation period.
- Must complete the scheduled PPS assessment item set.
- Since the scheduled assessment is combined with the COT OMRA, the combined assessment will set payment at the new RUG-IV level beginning on Day 1 of the COT observation period and that payment will continue through the remainder of the current standard payment period and the next payment period appropriate to the given scheduled assessment, assuming no intervening assessments. For example:
 - Based on her 14-day assessment, Mrs. T is currently classified into group RVB. Based on the ARD set for the 14-day assessment, a change of therapy evaluation for Mrs. T is necessary on Day 28. The change of therapy evaluation reveals that the therapy services Mrs. T received during that COT observation period were only sufficient to qualify Mrs. T for RHB. Therefore, a COT OMRA is required. Since the facility has not yet completed a 30-day assessment for Mrs. T, the facility must combine the 30-day assessment with the required COT OMRA. The combined assessment confirms Mrs. T's appropriate classification into RHB. The payment for the revised RUG classification will begin on Day 22 and, assuming no intervening assessments, will continue until Day 60.

PPS Scheduled Assessment and Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within the window for the Medicare-required scheduled assessment **and** within 14 days after the interdisciplinary team (IDT) determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change **and** the assessment must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the IDT determines that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change. If all requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.
- If the ARD for the Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment falls within the ARD (including grace days) of a PPS scheduled assessment that has not been completed yet, the assessments **MUST** be combined.
- Must complete the Swing Bed PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
 - A0310A = 99 (only value allowed for Swing Beds)
 - A0310B = 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, or 06, as appropriate
 - A0310C = 0
 - A0310D = 1

Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment and Start of Therapy OMRA

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the IDT determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) **and** the assessment must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the IDT determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change. If all requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.
- Must complete the Swing Bed PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
A0310A = 99
A0310B = 07
A0310C = 1
A0310D = 1

Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment and End of Therapy OMRA

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the IDT determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest) **and** the assessment must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the IDT determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change. If all requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.
- Must complete the Swing Bed PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
A0310A = 99
A0310B = 07
A0310C = 2
A0310D = 1

Swing Bed Clinical Change Assessment and Start and End of Therapy OMRA

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the IDT determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest) **and** the assessment must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the IDT determination that a change in the patient's condition constitutes a clinical change. If all requirements are not met, the assessments may not be combined.
- Must complete the Swing Bed PPS item set.
- Code the Item A0310 of the MDS 3.0 as follows:
A0310A = 99
A0310B = 07
A0310C = 3
A0310D = 1

2.11 Combining Medicare Assessments and OBRA Assessments⁷

SNF providers are required to meet two assessment standards in a Medicare certified nursing facility:

- The OBRA standards are designated by the reason selected in Item A0310A, **Federal OBRA Reason for Assessment**, and Item A0130F, **Entry/Discharge Reporting** and are required for all residents.
- The Medicare standards are designated by the reason selected in Item A0310B, **PPS Assessment**, and Item A0310C, **PPS Other Medicare Required Assessment - OMRA** and are required for resident's whose stay is covered by Medicare Part A.
- When the OBRA and Medicare assessment time frames coincide, one assessment may be used to satisfy both requirements. PPS and OBRA assessments may be combined when the ARD windows overlap allowing for a common assessment reference date. When combining the OBRA and Medicare assessments, the most stringent requirements for ARD, item set, and CAA completion requirements must be met. For example, the skilled nursing facility staff must be very careful in selecting the ARD for an OBRA Admission assessment combined with a 14-day Medicare assessment. For the OBRA Admission standard, the ARD must be set between days 1 and 14 counting the date of admission as day 1. For Medicare, the ARD must be set for days 13 or 14, but the regulation allows grace days up to day 18. However, when combining a 14-day Medicare assessment with the Admission assessment, the use of grace days for the PPS assessment would result in a late OBRA Admission assessment. To assure the assessment meets both standards, an ARD of day 13 or 14 would have to be chosen in this situation. In addition, the completion standards must be met. While a PPS assessment can be completed within 14 days after the ARD when it is not combined with an OBRA assessment, the CAA completion date for the OBRA Admission assessment (Item V0200B2) must be day 14 or earlier. With the combined OBRA Admission/Medicare 14-day assessment, completion by day 14 would be required. Finally, when combining a Medicare assessment with an OBRA assessment, the SNF staff must ensure that all required items are completed. For example, when combining the Medicare-required 30-day assessment with a Significant Change in Status Assessment, the provider would need to complete a comprehensive item set, including CAAs.

Some states require providers to complete additional state-specific items (Section S) for selected assessments. States may also add comprehensive items to the Quarterly and/or PPS item sets. Providers must ensure that they follow their state requirements in addition to any OBRA and/or Medicare requirements.

The following tables provide the item set for each type of assessment or tracking record. When two or more assessments are combined then the appropriate item set contains all items that would be necessary if each of the combined assessments were being completed individually.

⁷ OBRA-required comprehensive and Quarterly assessments do not apply to Swing Bed Providers. However, Swing Bed Providers are required to complete the Entry Record, Discharge Assessments, and Death in Facility Record.

Minimum Required Item Set By Assessment Type for Skilled Nursing Facilities

	Comprehensive Item Set	Quarterly/ PPS* Item Sets	Other Required Assessments/Tracking Item Sets for Skilled Nursing Facilities
Stand-alone Assessment Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBRA Admission • Annual • Significant Change in Status (SCSA) • Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive (SCPA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly • Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly • PPS 5-Day (5-Day) • PPS 14-Day (14-Day) • PPS 30-Day (30-Day) • PPS 60-Day (60-Day) • PPS 90-Day (90-Day) • PPS Readmission/Return 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry Tracking Record • Discharge assessments • Death in Facility Tracking Record • Start of Therapy OMRA • Start of Therapy OMRA and Discharge • Change of Therapy OMRA • OMRA • OMRA and Discharge
Combined Assessment Types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBRA Admission and 5-Day • OBRA Admission and 14-Day • OBRA Admission and any OMRA • Annual and any Medicare-required • Annual and any OMRA • SCSA and any Medicare-required • SCSA and any OMRA • SCPA and any Medicare-required • SCPA and any OMRA • Any OBRA comprehensive and any Discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly and any Medicare-scheduled • Quarterly and any OMRA • Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly and any Medicare-required • Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly and any OMRA • Any Discharge and any Medicare-required • Quarterly and any Discharge • Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly and any Discharge • Any Medicare-required and any Discharge 	N/A

*Provider must check with State Agency to determine if the state requires additional items to be completed for the required OBRA Quarterly and PPS assessments.

Minimum Required Item Set By Assessment Type for Swing Bed Providers

	Swing Bed PPS	Other Required Assessments/Tracking Item Sets for Swing Bed Providers
Assessment Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS 5-Day (5-Day) • PPS 14-Day (14-Day) • PPS 30-Day (30-Day) • PPS 60-Day (60-Day) • PPS 90-Day (90-Day) • PPS Readmission/Return • Clinical Change Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry Record • Discharge assessments • Death in Facility record • Start of Therapy OMRA • Start of Therapy OMRA and Discharge • Change of Therapy OMRA • OMRA • OMRA and Discharge
Assessment Type Combinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Change and any Medicare-required • Any Medicare-required and any Discharge 	N/A

Tracking records (Entry and Death in Facility) are never combined with other assessments.

The OMRA item sets are all unique item sets and are never completed when combining with other assessments, which require completion of additional items. For example, a **Start of Therapy OMRA** item set is completed only when an assessment is conducted to capture the start of therapy **and** assign a RUG-IV therapy group. In addition, a **Start of Therapy OMRA and Discharge** item set is only completed when the facility staff choose to complete an assessment to reflect the start of therapy and discharge from facility. If those assessments are completed in combination with another assessment type, an item set that contains all items required for both assessments must be selected.

2.12 Medicare and OBRA Assessment Combinations

Below are some of the possible assessment combinations allowed. A provider may choose to combine more than two assessment types when all requirements are met. The coding of Item A0310 will provide the item set that the facility is required to complete. For SNFs that use a paper format to collect MDS data, the provider must ensure that the item set selected meets the requirements of all assessments coded in Item A0310 (see Section 2.15).

Medicare-required 5-Day and OBRA Admission Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 1 through 5 of the Part A SNF stay.
- ARD may be extended up to day 8 using the designated grace days.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) by the end of day 14 of the stay (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Medicare-required 14-Day and OBRA Admission Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on days 13 or 14 of the Part A SNF stay.
- ARD may not be extended from day 15 to day 18 (i.e., grace days may not be used).
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) by the end of day 14 of the stay (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and OBRA Quarterly Assessment

- Quarterly item set as required by the State.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on a day that meets the requirements described earlier for each Medicare-required scheduled assessment in Section 2.9 and for the OBRA Quarterly assessment in Section 2.6.
- ARD may be extended to grace days as long as the requirement for the Quarterly ARD is met.

- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Quarterly assessment completion requirements.

Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and Annual Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on a day that meets the requirements described earlier for each Medicare-required scheduled assessment in Section 2.9 and for the OBRA Annual assessment in Section 2.6.
- ARD may be extended to grace days as long as the requirement for the Annual ARD is met.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Annual assessment completion requirements.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and Significant Change in Status Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within the window for the Medicare-required scheduled assessment and within 14 days after determination that criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within the window for the Medicare-required scheduled assessment **and** within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in the prior comprehensive assessment has occurred.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in the prior comprehensive assessment has occurred.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment

- See Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and OBRA Quarterly Assessment.

Medicare-required Scheduled Assessment and Discharge Assessment

- PPS item set.

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set for the day of discharge (Item A2000) **and** the date of discharge must fall within the allowed window of the Medicare scheduled assessment as described earlier in Section 2.9.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD.

Start of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Admission Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on day 14 or earlier of the stay and 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date).
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a therapy group, the assessment will not be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) by day 14 of the stay (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion

Start of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment

- Quarterly item set as required by the State.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date) and meet the requirements for an OBRA Quarterly assessment as described in Section 2.6.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a therapy group, the assessment will not be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Quarterly assessment completion requirements.

Start of Therapy OMRA and Annual Assessment

- Comprehensive item set
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5) **and** meet the requirements for an OBRA Annual assessment as described in Section 2.6.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a therapy group, the assessment will not be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start of Therapy OMRA and Significant Change in Status Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date).

- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after determination that an uncorrected significant error in a comprehensive assessment has occurred **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date).
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in a comprehensive assessment has occurred.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment

- See SOT OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment

Start of Therapy OMRA and Discharge Assessment

- Start of Therapy OMRA and Discharge item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set for the day of discharge (Item A2000) **and** the date of discharge must fall within 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest date). The ARD must be set by no more than two days after the date of discharge. (See Section 2.8 for further clarification.)
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group. If the RUG-IV classification is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD.

End of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Admission Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on day 14 or earlier of the stay **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (difference is 3 or less for Item A2300 minus Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest).

- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) by day 14 of the stay (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- Completed only when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

End of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment

- Quarterly item set as required by the State.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest) **and** meet the requirements for an OBRA Quarterly assessment as described in Section 2.6.
- Completed only when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Quarterly assessment completion requirements.

End of Therapy OMRA and Annual Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest) **and** meet the requirements for an OBRA Annual assessment as described in Section 2.6.
- Completed only when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Annual assessment completion requirements.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

End of Therapy OMRA and Significant Change in Status Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment **and** 1-3 days after the end of therapy (O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest date).
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment.

- Completed only when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

End of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in the prior comprehensive assessment has occurred **and** 1-3 days after the end of therapy (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest date).
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in prior comprehensive assessment has occurred.
- Completed only when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

End of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment

- See EOT OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment.

End of Therapy OMRA and Discharge Assessment

- OMRA and Discharge item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set for the day of discharge (Item A2000) **and** the date of discharge must fall within 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest). The ARD must be set by no more than two days after the date of discharge. (See Section 2.8 for further clarification).
- Completed only when the resident was classified in a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group and continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Admission Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.

- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on day 14 or earlier of the stay **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest).
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) by day 14 of the stay (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group (Item Z0100A) **and** into a non-therapy group (Item Z0150A) when the resident continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies. If the RUG-IV classification (Item Z0100) is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment

- Quarterly item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest) **and** meet the requirements for OBRA Quarterly assessment as described in Section 2.6.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group (Item Z0100A) **and** into a non-therapy group (Item Z0150A) when the resident continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies. If the RUG-IV classification (Item Z0100A) is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Quarterly assessment completion requirements.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and Annual Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is the earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest) **and** meet the requirements for OBRA Annual assessment requirements as described in Section 2.6.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group (Item Z0100A) **and** into a non-therapy group (Item Z0150A) when the resident continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies. If the RUG-IV classification (Item Z0100A) is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.

- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Annual assessment completion requirements.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and Significant Change in Status Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the end of therapy (O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest date).
- Must be completed (Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group (Item Z0100A) **and** into a non-therapy group (Item Z0150A) when the resident continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies. If the RUG-IV classification (Item Z0100A) is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in the prior comprehensive assessment has occurred **and** 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) **and** 1-3 days after the end of therapy (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6, whichever is the latest date).
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected significant error in prior comprehensive assessment has occurred.
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group (Item Z0100A) **and** into a non-therapy group (Item Z0150A) when the resident continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies. If the RUG-IV classification (Item Z0100A) is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing.
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment

- See Start and End of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment.

Start and End of Therapy OMRA and Discharge Assessment

- OMRA-Start of Therapy and Discharge item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set for the day of discharge (Item A2000) and the date of discharge must fall within 5-7 days after the start of therapy (Item O0400A5 or O0400B5 or O0400C5, whichever is earliest) and 1-3 days after the last day therapy was furnished (Item O0400A6 or O0400B6 or O0400C6). The ARD must be set by no more than two days after the date of discharge. (See Section 2.8 for further clarification).
- Completed to classify a resident into a RUG-IV Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation group (Item Z0100A) **and** into a non-therapy group (Item Z0150A) when the resident continues to need Part A SNF-level services after the discontinuation of all therapies. If the RUG-IV classification (Item Z0100A) is not a therapy group, the assessment will **not** be accepted by CMS and cannot be used for Medicare billing..
- Establishes a new non-therapy RUG classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins the day after the last day of therapy treatment.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD.

Change of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Admission Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set on day 14 or earlier after admission **and** be on the last day of a COT 7-day observation period. Must be completed (Item Z0500B) by day 14 after admission (admission date plus 13 calendar days).
- Completed when the patient received skilled therapy services and a change of therapy evaluation determines that a COT OMRA is necessary, based on a determination that the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) delivered and other therapy qualifiers such as number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy), in the COT observation window differed from the therapy intensity on the last PPS assessment to such an extent that the RUG IV category would change).
- Establishes a new RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0100A), which begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other unscheduled PPS assessment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Change of Therapy OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment

- Quarterly item set as required by the State.
- ARD (Item A2300) must meet the requirements for an OBRA Quarterly assessment as described in Section 2.6 **and** be on the last day of a COT 7-day observation period.

- Completed when the patient received skilled therapy services and a change of therapy evaluation determines that a COT OMRA is necessary, based on a determination that the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) and other therapy qualifiers such as number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy), in the COT observation window differed from the therapy intensity on the last PPS assessment to such an extent that the RUG IV category would change.
- Establishes a new RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0100A), which begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other unscheduled PPS assessment.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Quarterly assessment completion requirements.

Change of Therapy OMRA and Annual Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must meet the requirements for an OBRA Annual assessment as described in Section 2.6 **and** be on the last day of a COT 7-day observation period.
- Completed when the patient received skilled therapy services and a change of therapy evaluation determines that a COT OMRA is necessary, based on a determination that the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) and other therapy qualifiers such as the number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy), in the COT observation window differed from the therapy intensity on the last PPS assessment to such an extent that the RUG IV category would change.
- Establishes a new RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other unscheduled PPS assessment.
- See Section 2.6 for OBRA Annual assessment completion requirements.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Change of Therapy OMRA and Significant Change in Status Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment **and** be on the last day of a COT 7-day observation period.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Change in Status assessment.
- Completed when the patient received skilled therapy services and a change of therapy evaluation determines that a COT OMRA is necessary, based on a determination that the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) delivered and other therapy qualifiers such as the number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy), in the COT observation window differed from the therapy intensity on the last PPS assessment to such an extent that the RUG IV category would change.

- Establishes a new RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other unscheduled PPS assessment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Change of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Comprehensive Assessment

- Comprehensive item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set within 14 days after the determination that an uncorrected error in the prior comprehensive assessment has occurred **and** be on the last day of a COT 7-day observation period.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD and within 14 days after the determination that the criteria are met for a Significant Correction assessment.
- Completed when the patient received skilled therapy services and a change of therapy evaluation determines that a COT OMRA is necessary, based on a determination that the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) and other therapy qualifiers such as the number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy), in the COT observation window differed from the therapy intensity on the last PPS assessment to such an extent that the RUG IV category would change.
- Establishes a new RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other unscheduled PPS assessment.
- See Section 2.7 for requirements for CAA process and care plan completion.

Change of Therapy OMRA and Significant Correction to Prior Quarterly Assessment

- See COT OMRA and OBRA Quarterly Assessment.

Change of Therapy OMRA and Discharge Assessment

- COT OMRA and Discharge item set.
- ARD (Item A2300) must be set for the day of discharge (Item A2000) **and** be on the last day of a COT 7-day observation period. The ARD must be set by no more than two days after the date of discharge. (See Section 2.8 for further clarification.)
- Completed when the patient received skilled therapy services and a change of therapy evaluation determines that a COT OMRA is necessary, based on a determination that the intensity of therapy (as indicated by the total reimbursable therapy minutes (RTM) and other therapy qualifiers such as the number of therapy days and disciplines providing therapy), in the COT observation window differed from the therapy intensity on the last PPS assessment to such an extent that the RUG IV category would change.

- Establishes a new RUG-IV classification and Medicare payment rate (Item Z0150A), which begins on Day 1 of that COT observation period and continues for the remainder of the current payment period, unless the payment is modified by a subsequent COT OMRA or other unscheduled PPS assessment.
- Must be completed (Item Z0500B) within 14 days after the ARD.

2.13 Factors Impacting the SNF Medicare Assessment Schedule⁸

Resident Expires Before or On the Eighth Day of SNF Stay

If the beneficiary dies in the SNF or while on a leave of absence before or on the eighth day of the covered SNF stay, the provider should prepare a Medicare-required assessment as completely as possible and submit the assessment as required. If there is not a PPS MDS in the QIES ASAP system, the provider must bill the default rate for any Medicare days. The Medicare Short Stay Policy may apply (see Chapter 6, Section 6.4 for greater detail). The provider must also complete a Death in Facility Tracking Record (see Section 2.6 for greater detail).

Resident Transfers or Discharged Before or On the Eighth Day of SNF Stay

If the beneficiary is discharged from the SNF or transferred to another payer source before or on the eighth day of the covered SNF stay, the provider should prepare a Medicare-required assessment as completely as possible and submit the assessment as required. If there is not a PPS MDS in the QIES ASAP system, the provider must bill the default rate for any Medicare days. The Medicare Short Stay Policy may apply (see Chapter 6, Section 6.4 for greater detail). When the beneficiary is discharged from the SNF, the provider must also complete a Discharge assessment (see Sections 2.11 and 2.12 for details on combining a Medicare-required assessment with a discharge assessment).

Short Stay

If the beneficiary dies, is discharged from the SNF, or discharged from Part A level of care on or before the eighth day of covered SNF stay, the resident may be a candidate for the short stay policy. The short stay policy allows the assignment into a Rehabilitation Plus Extensive Services or Rehabilitation category when a resident received rehabilitation therapy and was not able to have received 5 days of therapy due to discharge from Medicare Part A. See Chapter 6, Section 6.4 for greater detail.

Resident is Admitted to an Acute Care Facility and Returns

If a Medicare Part A resident is admitted to an acute care facility and later returns to the SNF (even if the acute stay facility is less than 24 hours and/or not over midnight) to resume Part A coverage, the Medicare assessment schedule is restarted. The type of entry on the Entry Tracking record (as described in Section 2.6) completed by the provider determines whether a Medicare-required 5-day or a Medicare Readmission/Return assessment should be completed.

⁸ These requirements/policies also apply to swing bed providers.

When the Medicare resident returns to the SNF and the entry type on the Entry Tracking record is a Reentry (Item A1700=2), the first required Medicare assessment is the Medicare Readmission/Return assessment (Item A0310B = 06) as long as the resident is eligible for Medicare Part A services, requires and receives skilled services and has days remaining in the benefit period.

When the Medicare resident returns to the SNF and the entry type on the Entry Tracking record is an Admission (Item A1700=1), the first required Medicare assessment is the Medicare-required 5-Day assessment (Item A0310B = 01) as long as the resident is eligible for Medicare Part A services, requires and receives skilled services and has days remaining in the benefit period.

For Swing bed providers, the first required Medicare assessment is always the Medicare-required 5-Day assessment (Item A0310B = 01) as long as the resident is eligible for Medicare Part A services, requires and receives skilled services and has days remaining in the benefit period.

Resident Is Sent to Acute Care Facility, Not in SNF over Midnight, and Is Not Admitted to Acute Care Facility

If a resident is out of the facility over a midnight, but for less than 24 hours, and is not admitted to an acute care facility, the Medicare assessment schedule is not restarted. However, there are payment implications: the day preceding the midnight on which the resident was absent from the nursing home is not a covered Part A day. This is known as the “midnight rule.” The Medicare assessment schedule must then be adjusted. The day preceding the midnight is not a covered Part A day and therefore, the Medicare assessment clock is adjusted by skipping that day in calculating when the next Medicare assessment is due. For example, if the resident goes to the emergency room at 10 p.m. Wednesday, day 22 of his Part A stay, and returns at 3 a.m. the next day, Wednesday is not billable to Part A. As a result, the day of his return to the SNF, Thursday, becomes day 22 of his Part A stay.

Resident Takes a Leave of Absence from the SNF

If a resident is out of the facility for a Leave of Absence (LOA) as defined on page 2-12 in this chapter, the Medicare assessment schedule may be adjusted for certain assessments. For **scheduled PPS assessments**, the Medicare assessment schedule is adjusted to exclude the LOA when determining the appropriate ARD for a given assessment. For example, if a resident leaves a SNF at 6:00pm on Wednesday, which is Day 27 of the resident’s stay and returns to the SNF on Thursday at 9:00am, then Wednesday becomes a non-billable day and Thursday becomes Day 27 of the resident’s stay. Therefore, a facility that would choose Day 27 for the ARD of their 30-day assessment would select Thursday as the ARD date rather than Wednesday, as Wednesday is no longer a billable Medicare Part A day.

In the case of **unscheduled PPS assessments**, the ARD of the relevant assessment is not affected by the LOA because the ARDs for unscheduled assessments are not tied directly to the Medicare assessment calendar or to a particular day of the resident’s stay. For instance, Day 7 of the COT observation period occurs 7 days following the ARD of the most recent PPS assessment used for payment, regardless if a LOA occurs at any point during the COT observation period. For example, if the ARD for a resident’s 30-day assessment were set for November 7 and the

resident went to the emergency room at 11:00pm on November 9, returning on November 10, Day 7 of the COT observation period would remain November 14.

Resident Leaves the Facility and Returns During an Observation Period

The ARD is not altered if the beneficiary is out of the facility for a temporary leave of absence during part of the observation period. In this case, the facility may include services furnished during the beneficiary's temporary absence (when permitted under MDS coding guidelines; see Chapter 3) but may not extend the observation period.

Resident Discharged from Part A Skilled Services and Returns to SNF Part A Skilled Level Services

In the situation when a beneficiary is discharged from Medicare Part A services but remains in the facility in a Medicare and/or Medicaid certified bed with another pay source, the OBRA schedule will be continued. Since the beneficiary remained in a certified bed after the Medicare benefits were discontinued, the facility must continue with the OBRA schedule from the beneficiary's original date of admission. There is no reason to change the OBRA schedule when Part A benefits resume. If and when the Medicare Part A benefits resume, the Medicare schedule starts again with a 5-Day Medicare-required assessment, MDS Item A0310B = 01. See Chapter 6, Section 6.7 for greater detail to determine whether or not the resident is eligible for Part A SNF coverage.

The original date of entry (Item A1600) is retained. The beneficiary should be assessed to determine if there was a significant change in status. A SCSA could be completed with either the Medicare-required 5-day or 14-day assessment or separately.

Delay in Requiring and Receiving Skilled Services

There are instances when the beneficiary does not require SNF level of care services when initially admitted to the SNF. See Chapter 6, Section 6.7.

Non-Compliance with the PPS Assessment Schedule

According to Part 42 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Section 413.343, an assessment that does not have its ARD within the prescribed ARD window will be paid at the default rate for the number of days the ARD is out of compliance. Frequent early or late assessment scheduling practices may result in a review. The default rate takes the place of the otherwise applicable Federal rate. It is equal to the rate paid for the RUG group reflecting the lowest acuity level, and would generally be lower than the Medicare rate payable if the SNF had submitted an assessment in accordance with the prescribed assessment schedule.

Early PPS Assessment

An assessment should be completed according to the Medicare-required assessment schedule. **If an assessment is performed earlier than the schedule indicates (the ARD is not in the defined window), the provider will be paid at the default rate for the number of days the assessment was out of compliance.** For example, a Medicare-required 14-Day assessment with

an ARD of day 12 (1 day early) would be paid at the default rate for the first day of the payment period that begins on day 15.

In the case of an early COT OMRA, the early COT would reset the COT calendar such that the next COT OMRA, if deemed necessary, would have an ARD set for 7 days from the early COT ARD. For example, a facility completes a 30-day assessment with an ARD of November 1 which classifies a resident into a therapy RUG. On November 8, which is Day 7 of the COT observation period, it is determined that a COT is required. A COT OMRA is completed for this resident with an ARD set for November 6, which is Day 5 of the COT observation period as opposed to November 8 which is Day 7 of the COT observation period. This COT OMRA would be considered an early assessment and, based on the ARD set for this early assessment would be paid at the default rate for the two days this assessment was out of compliance. The next seven day COT observation period would begin on November 7, and end on November 13.

Late PPS Assessment

If the SNF fails to set the ARD within the defined ARD window for a Medicare-required assessment, including the grace days, and the resident is still on Part A, the SNF must complete a late assessment. The ARD can be no earlier than the day the error was identified.

If the ARD on the late assessment is set for **prior to the end of the period during which the late assessment would have controlled the payment**, had the ARD been set timely, and/or **no intervening assessments have occurred**, **the SNF will bill the default rate for the number of days that the assessment is out of compliance**. This is equal to the number of days between the day following the last day of the available ARD window (including grace days when appropriate) and the late ARD (including the late ARD). **The SNF would then bill the Health Insurance Prospective Payment System (HIPPS) code established by the late assessment for the remaining period of time that the assessment would have controlled payment.** For example, a Medicare-required 30-day assessment with an ARD of Day 41 is out of compliance for 8 days and therefore would be paid at the default rate for 8 days and the HIPPS code from the late 30-day assessment until the next scheduled or unscheduled assessment that controls payment. In this example, if there are no other assessments until the 60-day assessment, the remaining 22 days are billed according to the HIPPS code on the late assessment.

A second example, involving a late unscheduled assessment would be if a COT OMRA was completed with an ARD of Day 39, while Day 7 of the COT observation period was Day 37. In this case, the COT OMRA would be considered 2 days late and the facility would bill the default rate for 2 days and then bill the HIPPS code from the late COT OMRA until the next scheduled or unscheduled assessment controls payment, in this case,

DEFINITIONS

INTERVENING ASSESSMENT

Refers to an assessment with an ARD set for a day in the interim period between the last day of the appropriate ARD window for a late assessment (including grace days, when appropriate) and the actual ARD of the late assessment.

DAYS OUT OF COMPLIANCE

Refers to the number of days between the day following the last day of the available ARD window, including grace days when appropriate, and the late ARD (including the late ARD) of an assessment.

for at least 5 days. NOTE: In such cases where a late assessment is completed and no intervening assessments occur, the late assessment is used to establish the COT calendar.

If the ARD of the late assessment is set **after the end of the period during which the late assessment would have controlled payment**, had the assessment been completed timely, or in cases where **an intervening assessment** has occurred and the resident is still on Part A, the provider must still complete the assessment. The ARD can be no earlier than the day the error was identified. **The SNF must bill all covered days during which the late assessment would have controlled payment had the ARD been set timely at the default rate regardless of the HIPPS code calculated from the late assessment.** For example, a Medicare-required 14-day assessment with an ARD of Day 32 would be paid at the default rate for Days 15 through 30. A late assessment cannot be used to replace a different Medicare-required assessment. In the example above, the SNF would also need to complete the 30-day Medicare-required assessment within Days 27-33, which includes grace days. The 30-day assessment would cover Days 31 through 60 as long as the beneficiary has SNF days remaining and is eligible for SNF Part A services. In this example, the late 14-day assessment would not be considered an assessment used for payment and would not impact the COT calendar, as only an assessment used for payment can affect the COT calendar (see section 2.8).

A second example involving an unscheduled assessment would be the following. A 30-day assessment is completed with an ARD of Day 30. Day 7 of the COT observation period is Day 37. An EOT OMRA is performed timely for this resident with an ARD set for Day 42 and the resident's last day of therapy was Day 39. Upon further review of the resident's record on Day 52, the facility determines that a COT should have been completed with an ARD of Day 37 but was not. The ARD for the COT OMRA is set for day 52. The late COT OMRA should have controlled payment from Day 31 until the next assessment used for payment. Because there was an intervening assessment (in this case the EOT OMRA) prior to the ARD of the late COT OMRA, the facility would bill the default rate for 9 days (the period during which the COT OMRA would have controlled payment). The facility would bill the RUG from the EOT OMRA as per normal beginning the first non-therapy day, in this case Day 40, until the next scheduled or unscheduled assessment used for payment.

Missed PPS Assessment

If the SNF fails to set the ARD of a scheduled PPS assessment prior to the end of the last day of the ARD window, including grace days, and the resident was already discharged from Medicare Part A when this error is discovered, the provider cannot complete an assessment for SNF PPS purposes and the days cannot be billed to Part A. An existing OBRA assessment (except a stand-alone discharge assessment) in the QIES ASAP system may be used to bill for some Part A days when specific circumstances are met. See Chapter 6, Section 6.8 for greater detail.

In the case of an unscheduled PPS assessment, if the SNF fails to set the ARD for an unscheduled PPS assessment within the defined ARD window for that assessment, and the resident has been discharged from Part A, the assessment is missed and cannot be completed. All days that would have been paid by the missed assessment (had it been completed timely) are considered provider-liable. However, as with the late unscheduled assessment policy, the provider-liable period only lasts until the point when an intervening assessment controls the payment.

Errors on a + Medicare Assessment

To correct an error on an MDS that has been submitted to the QIES ASAP system, the nursing facility must follow the normal MDS correction procedures (see Chapter 5).

*These requirements/policies also apply to swing bed providers.

2.14 Expected Order of MDS Records

The MDS records for a nursing home resident are expected to occur in a specific order. For example, the first record for a resident is expected to be an Entry record with entry type (Item A1700) indicating admission, and the next record is expected to be an admission assessment, a 5-day PPS assessment, a discharge, or death in facility. The QIES ASAP system will issue a warning when an unexpected record is submitted. Examples include, an assessment record after a discharge (an entry is expected) or any record after a death in facility record.

The target date, rather than the submission date, is used to determine the order of records. The target date is the assessment reference date (Item A2300) for assessment records, the entry date (Item A1600) for entry records, and the discharge date (Item A2000) for discharge or death in facility records. In the following table, the prior record is represented in the columns and the next (subsequent) record is represented in the rows. A “no” has been placed in a cell when the next record is not expected to follow the prior record; the QIES ASAP system will issue a record order warning for record combinations that contain a “no”. A blank cell indicates that the next record is expected to follow the prior record; a record order warning will *not* be issued for these combinations.

For the first MDS 3.0 record with event date on or after October 1, 2010, the last MDS 2.0 record (if available) should be used to determine if the record order is expected. The QIES ASAP system will find the last MDS 2.0 record and issue a warning if the order of these two records is unexpected.

Note that there are not any QIES ASAP record order warnings produced for Swing Bed MDS records.

Expected Order of MDS Records

Next Record	Prior Record												
	Entry	OBRA Admission	OBRA annual	OBRA quarterly	PPS 5-day or readmission/return	PPS 14-day	PPS 30-day	PPS 60-day	PPS 90-day	PPS unscheduled	Discharge	Death in facility	No prior record
Entry	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no		no	
OBRA Admission		no	no	no			no	no	no		no	no	no
OBRA Annual		no	no								no	no	no
OBRA Quarterly, sign. change, sign correction											no	no	no
PPS 5-day or readmission/return					no	no	no	no	no		no	no	no
PPS 14-day	no					no	no	no	no		no	no	no
PPS 30-day	no				no		no	no	no		no	no	no
PPS 60-day	no	no			no	no		no	no		no	no	no
PPS 90-day	no	no			no	no	no		no		no	no	no
PPS unscheduled											no	no	no
Discharge											no	no	no
Death in facility											no	no	no

Note: “no” indicates that the record sequence is not expected; record order warnings will be issued for these combinations. Blank cells indicate expected record sequences; no record order warning will be issued for these combinations.

2.15 Determining the Item Set for an MDS Record

The item set for a particular MDS record is completely determined by the reason for assessment Items (A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, A0310D, and A0310 F). Item set determination is complicated and standard MDS software from CMS and private vendors will automatically make this determination. This section provides manual lookup tables for determining the item set, when automated software is unavailable.

The first lookup table is for nursing home records. The first 4 columns are entries for the reason for assessment (RFA) Items A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, and A0310F. Item A0310D (swing bed clinical change assessment) has been omitted because it will always be skipped on a nursing home record. To determine the item set for a record, locate the row that includes the values of Items A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, and A0310F for that record. When the row is located, then the item set is identified in the ISC and Description columns for that row. If the combination of Items A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, and A0310F values for the record cannot be located in any row, then that combination of RFAs is not allowed and any record with that combination will be rejected by the QIES ASAP system.

Nursing Home Item Set Code (ISC) Reference Table

OBRA RFA (A0310A)	PPS RFA (A0310B)	OMRA (A0310C)	Entry/ Discharge (A0310F)	ISC	Description
01	01,02,06,99	0	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
01	01,02,06,07	1,2,3	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
01	02,07	4	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
03	01 thru 06,99	0	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
03,04,05	01 thru 07	1,2,3	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
03,04,05	02 thru 05,07	4	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
04,05	01 thru 07,99	0	10,11,99	NC	Comprehensive
02,06	01 thru 06,99	0	10,11,99	NQ	Quarterly
02,06	01 thru 07	1,2,3	10,11,99	NQ	Quarterly
02,06	02 thru 05,07	4	10,11,99	NQ	Quarterly
99	01 thru 06	0,1,2,3	10,11,99	NP	PPS
99	02 thru 05	4	10,11,99	NP	PPS
99	07	1	99	NS	SOT OMRA
99	07	1	10,11	NSD	SOT OMRA and Discharge
99	07	2,3,4	99	NO	EOT, EOT-R or COT OMRA
99	07	2,3,4	10,11	NOD	EOT, EOT-R or COT OMRA and Discharge
99	99	0	10,11	ND	Discharge
99	99	0	01,12	NT	Tracking

Consider examples of the use of this table. If Items A0310A = 01, A0310B = 99, A0310C= 0 and Item A0310F = 99 (a standalone admission assessment), then these values are matched in row 1 and the item set is an OBRA comprehensive assessment (NC). The same row would be selected

if Item A0310F is changed to 10 (admission assessment combined with a return not anticipated discharge assessment). The item set is again an OBRA comprehensive assessment (NC). If Items A0310A = 99, A0310B = 99, A0310C= 0 and Item A0310F = 12 (a death in facility tracking record), then these values are matched in the last row and the item set is a tracking record (NT). Finally, if Items A0310A = 99, A0310B = 99, A0310C= 0 and A0310F = 99, then no row matches these entries, and the record is invalid and would be rejected.

There is one additional item set for inactivation request records. This is the set of items active on a request to inactivate a record in the national MDS QIES ASAP system. An inactivation request is indicated by A0050 = 3. The item set for this type of record is “Inactivation” with an ISC code of XX.

The next lookup table is for swing bed records. The first 5 columns are entries for the reason for assessment (RFA) Items A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, A0310D, and A0310F. To determine the item set for a record, locate the row that includes the values of Items A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, A0310D, and A0310F for that record. When the row is located, then the item set is identified in the ISC and Description columns for that row. If the combination of A0310A, A0310B, A0310C, A0310D, and A0310F values for the record cannot be located in any row, then that combination of RFAs is not allowed and any record with that combination will be rejected by the QIES ASAP system.

Swing Bed Item Set Code (ISC) Reference Table

OBRA RFA (A0310A)	PPS RFA (A0310B)	OMRA (A0310C)	SB Clinical Change (A0310D)	Entry/ Discharge (A0310F)	ISC	Description
99	01 thru 06	0,1,2,3	0	10,11,99	SP	PPS
99	01 thru 07	0,1,2,3	1	10,11,99	SP	PPS
99	02 thru 05	4	0	10,11,99	SP	PPS
99	02 thru 05,07	4	1	10,11,99	SP	PPS
99	07	1	0	99	SS	SOT OMRA
99	07	1	0	10,11	SSD	SOT OMRA and Discharge
99	07	2,3,4	0	99	SO	EOT , EOT-R or COT OMRA
99	07	2,3,4	0	10,11	SOD	EOT , EOT-R or COT OMRA and Discharge
99	99	0	0	10,11	SD	Discharge
99	99	0	0	01,12	ST	Tracking

The “Inactivation” (XX) item set is also used for swing beds when Item A0050 = 3.