

September 2, 2019

Dear Nursing Facility Administrator:

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) is beginning its annual Nursing Facility Quality of Life/Experience Surveys. Vital Research, an independent research firm, is contracted by the state to conduct three surveys, of long-stay residents, short-stay residents, and resident representatives. DHS gives providers the opportunity to earn additional funds by using these surveys in quality improvement. DHS also shares results with the public on the Minnesota Nursing Home Report Card at nhreportcard.dhs.mn.gov.

On September 9, Vital Research staff will begin contacting facilities to schedule face-to-face interviews. Interviewers invite long-stay residents to participate, unless they have severe cognitive impairment, are ill or their guardian refuses on their behalf. At larger facilities, interviewers invite a random sample of residents. The survey is designed and tested for use with nursing facility residents, including those with dementia and memory loss. In addition, interviewers are trained to collect responses from residents across a range of disabilities. Interviews will begin September 25, 2019, with an expected end date of December 13, 2019.

Vital Research will mail the family member survey to participants on a similar timetable. Vital Research will mail the short-stay survey to residents discharged each month after a stay of 30 days or fewer. Data collection for the short-stay survey will begin in January and continue for up to 12 months.

Vital Research uses resident census and representative contact lists from facilities to create its interview and mailing lists. Please begin updating the addresses and phone numbers of key representatives of residents within the next week. Below is a chart with facility responsibilities:

Nursing Facility Responsibilities	Due Date
1. Vital Research will contact you by phone to schedule your long-stay resident interview date(s).	3 weeks before your interview date
2. Submit Resident and associated Key Representative contact list to Vital Research. <i>Include your entire current resident census even though short-stay residents will not be interviewed.</i> Do not include Key Representative information for short-stay residents (those with an intended stay of 30 days or fewer on admission).	2 weeks before your interview date
3. Provide the following lists to interviewers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Residents in <i>isolation</i> b) Residents whose <i>legal guardian refuses participation</i> 	On the day of interviews

Vital Research staff will provide more information about the interview process when they contact your facility for scheduling. Please direct questions to Karin Rainey, Vital Research Project Manager, at 1-888-848-2555.

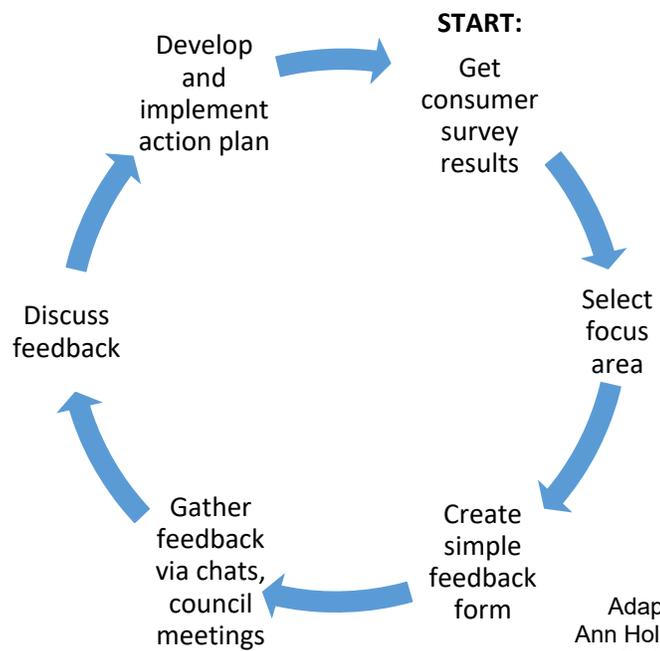
For census list submission instructions, Frequently Asked Questions, and sample survey announcements for residents, families and staff, visit vitalresearch.com/mnsurvey2019.

For information on the short-stay survey, visit vitalresearch.com/mnshortstay/.

Finally, **DHS strongly discourages “prepping” residents prior to your interview dates.**

Over the years, residents in certain facilities have told interviewers they recently answered the survey questions. In some cases these residents then refused to participate.

To make the most of your surveys, think of them as part of an ongoing conversation (see the example at right). Providers who ask their residents and families how they can do better and who follow through have often seen significant, lasting improvements.



Adapted from Ann Holme, LTC Ombudsman

DHS will share preliminary results with you one to five weeks after your interviews on the Nursing Facility Provider Portal at nfportal.dhs.state.mn.us. For other questions or to learn more about DHS pay for performance opportunities, contact Teresa Lewis at 651-431-4208 or teresa.lewis@state.mn.us. Thank you for your efforts to make life better for nursing facility residents in Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Valerie Cooke, Director
Nursing Facility Rates and Policy Division