



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Veterans Health Administration  
Washington DC 20420

**IL 11-2005-001**

In Reply Refer To: 11S

**January 6, 2005**

**OFFICE OF PATIENT CARE SERVICE'S INFORMATION LETTER**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAI/MDS ON LTC-SCI UNITS**

1. This Information Letter provides information on the implementation of the Resident Assessment Instrument and Minimum Data Set (RAI/MDS) in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Units surveyed under the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) Long-Term Care (LTC) standards.

2. Background

a. VHA Directive 2001-029, Resident Assessment Instrument/Minimum Data Set (RAI/MDS) established VHA policy that the RAI/MDS developed by HCFA (now known as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, (CMS)) be implemented in any VA long-term care and/or Nursing Home Care Unit bed section or program that is accredited under the JCAHO Long-term Care Standards and that the RAI/MDS must be used consistent with CMS guidelines.

b. SCI LTC Units that are accredited under the JCAHO Long-term Care Standards are proceeding with implementation of RAI/MDS and the transmission of data.

3. Effective October 2004, use of the RAI/MDS was implemented in all VA SCI units that are accredited under the JCAHO Long-term Care Standards.

4. Veterans Integrated Services Networks (VISNs) 1 and 12 continue to complete assessments and transmit data.

5. VISN 3 and 6 are implementing assessments and transmitting data pending completion of staff training.

4. References

a. VHA Directive 2001-029, Resident Assessment Instrument/Minimum Data Set (RAI/MDS), May 10, 2001.

b. CMS RAI/MDS Utilization Guidelines Version 2.0 Manual, Revised, December 2002.

5. Questions regarding SCI units may be referred to Margaret Hammond, M.D., Chief Consultant, Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders Strategic Healthcare Group at (206)768-5401.

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