



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
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**UPDATED INFORMATION CONCERNING
CIRCULAR LETTER: DHCQ 13-11-604**

To: Certified Nursing Homes and All Current Nurse Aide Registry Users

From: Sherman Lohnes
Division of Health Care Quality

Subject: Enrollment in New Web Based Nurse Aide Registry and Electronic Plan of Correction Applications

Date: December 9, 2013

The Department of Public Health, Division of Health Care Quality (DPH) is opening enrollment for two new web based tools in December 2013. Nursing and rest homes, as well as home health, homemaker, hospice and other agencies that are current users of the phone based Nurse Aide Registry system will each receive a letter with enrollment instructions for the new web based Nurse Aide Registry. Medicare and Medicaid certified nursing homes may now register directly on the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) website for future access to electronic statements of deficiency and submission of plans of correction.

As each of these applications will require users to have a unique log-on ID and password, we are sharing updated information on both to facilitate users enrolling their staff as may be appropriate to facility or agency needs.

Here is a brief description of each new system, and the steps to be taken by nursing homes for plans of correction, and current users of the nurse aide registry:

On-Line Nurse Aide Registry – All Current Users of the Nurse Aide Registry:

Massachusetts law requires all nursing homes, rest homes, and home health, homemaker and hospice agencies to check the Nurse Aide Registry prior to hiring any employee to ensure there is no prohibition to hiring. These verifications, which until now have been done by phone, will be done using a website associated with the licensing of nurses and nursing home administrators.

Each current user of the automated Nurse Aide Registry inquiry system will receive a letter by mail with their new log-in ID and password.

DPH anticipates that the online Nurse Aide Registry will be available on December 11, 2013. Current users will receive a letter by mail with their new log-in ID and password within days of activation of the online system. **The automated phone system will be discontinued on Friday, December 20, 2013.** Any changes to this schedule will be posted on the Nurse Aide Registry information page at: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/hcq/nurse-aides/>

All current users must immediately enroll in the on-line registry upon receipt of their log-in ID and password.

In addition, as facilities may have, or will receive questions from Certified Nurse Aides (CNAs) about the transition of the Nurse Aide Registry we have attached a list of Frequently Asked Questions for CNAs on the transition to the new systems which you may share with your employees, and which we will post on the above website. CNAs are not required to take any additional action under the new system.

For additional information on the transition of the Nurse Aide Registry, please contact the Registry at 617-753-8140 or 617-753-8144.

Electronic Plans of Correction (ePOC) – Medicare and Medicaid Certified Nursing Homes Only:

Statements of deficiency (SOD), which are now mailed to nursing homes by DPH, will soon be made available to nursing homes via a secure website created by CMS. The CMS website will also allow for the electronic submission of plans of correction.

Access to your online SOD requires advance enrollment in ePOC. Users will need to apply for two log-in IDs in order to access the CMS ePOC system. Please see the below website for instructions on enrolling for these log-in IDs, as well as the help desk contacts for issues with the application process. This page also contains a training video that outlines how facilities will use the system for processing their plans of corrections:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/utility/epoc.html>

Additional information on accessing your statement of deficiency and submitting your plan of correction will be made available as the system is implemented.

Certified nursing homes must enroll in ePOC no later than December 31, 2013. As the system is implemented, facilities will be notified of the availability of their survey online at the time of their survey.

At this time CMS is only making ePOC available to certified nursing homes.

We look forward to working with you on the roll-out of each of these new programs.