

Program Memorandum Intermediaries

Department of Health and
Human Services (DHHS)
HEALTH CARE FINANCING
ADMINISTRATION (HCFA)

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CHANGE REQUEST 1453

SUBJECT: Medicare Contractor Use of the Regional Home Health Intermediary (RHHI) Outcomes and Assessment Information Set Verification Protocol for Review of Home Health Agency (HHA) Prospective Payment Bills

The purpose of this Program Memorandum (PM) is to provide instructions for the use of the RHHI Outcomes and Assessment Information Set Verification (ROVER) Protocol. The ROVER is an automated accuracy protocol used to assist in the medical review of home health claims submitted by HHAs who are being paid under the HHA Prospective Payment System. The RHHIs should continue to follow the medical review guidelines and related instructions in Transmittal Number A-00-71, "Medical Review of Home Health Services," Change Request 1356, dated October 2, 2000. This PM does not change the review of requirements for home health payment or beneficiary qualification for coverage of services as defined in 42 CFR 409.40 (e.g., physician certification and recertification, confined to home, under a plan of care of a physician, in need of skilled services).

A. General.--The ROVER utilizes medical records to verify that the information contained on an HHA completed Outcomes and Assessment Information Set (OASIS) is reflective of the condition of the patient and the services actually delivered during a particular point in time. The protocol is a lap-top based software program that guides medical review staff through a review of information in the clinical record, allowing the reviewer to document whether or not the case-mix OASIS items are validated by the information contained in the record. The software program is concise and user friendly. The end-products are two-fold resulting in a recommended Home Health Resource Group classification based on the in-put data, and a reporting database containing information from the reviews. As a result, the information gained by the use of the ROVER is not only for data verification, but also for intermediary data analysis and provider education.

B. Requirements for Use of ROVER Protocol.--Contractors shall have ROVER incorporated into their medical review operational process no later than February 1, 2001. HCFA will be providing ROVER software and training to the RHHIs no later than January 2001.

The ROVER Protocol is a menu-driven Windows based software application that runs under Microsoft (MS) Access®. Designed for personal computer (PC) or lap-top use, the program allows reviewers to document their assessment of the correct response for each case-mix item and the validation source within the patient record, as well as to input text comments of their findings. The program guides RHHI reviewers through entry of the appropriate data to identify the case being reviewed, their OASIS scores, and documentation sources. Edit checks, covering out-of-range and missing data, are used to alert the reviewer to incomplete or invalid entries. After all items are entered, the software can generate a paper report documenting the review which then can be stored in a case file.

1. Hardware and Software Specifications--The minimum computer hardware and software requirements for installation and operation are as follows:

- C IBM-compatible PC with a 486DX/66 MHz or higher processor;
- C Microsoft Windows 95 or later operating system, or Microsoft Windows NT 4.0;
- C MS Access® 97;
(NOTE: MS Access® 97 is not available at a site, the ROVER protocol can be supplied as “run time” version, which will run independently without the need for MS Access® being present on the PC.);
- C 16MB of RAM (32MB recommended);
- C 20MB free hard disk space;
- C VGA or higher-resolution monitor;
- C Mouse or compatible pointing device; and
- C CD-ROM drive.

2. Installation--ROVER installation is straightforward and is described in the User's Manual which will be supplied by HCFA to all RHHIs no later than January 1, 2001. Users who have MS Access® 97 installed on their PC shall create a ROVER directory on their PC and copy two files into it: the ROVER application (ROVERPGM.MDB) and the ROVER review database (ROVERDAT.MDB). Those lacking MS Access® will install the run-time version of the program using an install wizard that is included with the program.

C. Medical Review Using the ROVER Protocol--ROVER supports the reviewer's examination of the medical record documentation to verify that the HHA completed OASIS is reflective of the patient's condition and that the reported services were actually delivered. Upon completion of the review items, the protocol computes the HHRG and HIPPS codes based on reviewer's responses and compares it to the HHRG and HIPPS assigned by the HHA. The reviewer can then accept the HHRG billed by the provider or adjust the claim as necessary. HCFA expects that RHHIs shall use this protocol as a supplement to current medical review procedures.

D. Data Management and Reporting--The ROVER software has an export/import/reporting module that will produce very basic reports to support program administration and provider education. We are requiring that each RHHI develop a process to store each reviewer's claim review activity (e.g., download review activity to a diskette for storage). It is important to note that all review information on a PC must be backed-up before terminating the PC for business use, otherwise the information will be lost. Programming to allow the mass collection, storage and organization of all reviewers' ROVER responses is anticipated for the near future. In addition, RHHIs must develop an in-house PC networking process in order to send each reviewer's reports (e.g., summary reports) to a common data file. The aggregated outcome information can be used to support RHHI routine data analysis, and individual or general provider education activities.

These instructions should be implemented within your current operating budget.

Implementation date for this PM should be implemented upon receipt of the HCFA supplied ROVER protocol but no later than February 1, 2001.

Effective date for this PM is effective for home health claims with dates of services on or after October 1, 2000.

Contact Kevin Young at @ (410) 786-6133 or Jill Nicolaisen at @ (410) 786-5873 if you have questions regarding this PM.

This PM may be discarded December 31, 2002.