



**NOTIFICATION**

**9/25/09**

**TO: ESRD FACILITIES**

**FROM: THE CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES (CMS)  
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN’S KIDNEY EPIDEMIOLOGY  
AND COST CENTER (UM-KECC)**

**REGARDING: THE RECALCULATION OF THE STANDARDIZED MORTALITY  
RATIOS (SMRs) ON THE DIALYSIS FACILITY REPORTS**

The Survey and Certification Group (SCG) of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is working with the Quality Improvement Group (QIG) and the Quality Measures & Health Assessment Group (QMHAG) of the Office of Clinical Standards & Quality (OCSQ) to facilitate the recalculation of the Standardized Mortality Ratios (SMRs) on the Dialysis Facility Reports (DFRs) which were distributed this summer to Networks and ESRD facilities. We would like you to be informed about the issues involved in the recalculation, and we would like to work with you for a smooth transition to a recalculated SMR.

**What Happened?**

While investigating a comment from a facility, the University of Michigan’s Kidney Epidemiology & Cost Center (UM-KECC) discovered that changes in the way state population death rates were incorporated into the SMR calculation this year resulted in large differences in the SMR for facilities in some parts of the country. In response to this comment, UM-KECC reevaluated the calculation and determined that the SMR model should be revised to account for race-specific population death rates by State. CMS and UM-KECC decided that it was important to have the most accurate mortality information possible available to facilities, Networks, States, and the public on the Dialysis Facility Compare (DFC) Web site. Therefore, the SMR will be recalculated for each facility, and a revised Dialysis Facility Report (DFR) will be available for each facility with the recalculated SMR.

**What Will Happen?**

UM-KECC will recalculate the SMRs and the DFC categories and replace all of the 2009 DFRs on the Dialysis Report Web site **on September 30, 2009**. The updated DFRs will be available to the ESRD Networks and the individual dialysis facilities on September 30th. An abbreviated comment period will take place from **September 30-October 15**.

**What Will Change in the DFRs?**

Only Table 1 and the Dialysis Facility Compare Table (page 2 of the DFR) will have new values. None of the other tables in the DFR will change. In Table 1, the expected death and SMR measures will be recalculated (items 1d, 1f, 1j-o, 1s, 1u, and 1x-z). The rest of Table 1, including counts of patients and deaths, will not change. In the DFC table on page 2, the numbers in the patient survival section will

change. The DFC survival classification may also change, although most facilities (95%) will not see a change in the DFC classification. The other DFC measures shown on this table, anemia management and dialysis adequacy, will not change.

### **How Can Dialysis Facilities Access the Reissued DFR on the Reports Web site?**

The new reports will be available on the Dialysis Reports Secure Web site ([www.dialysisreports.org](http://www.dialysisreports.org)) beginning **September 30, 2009**. Paper copies of the DFRs will not be mailed to facilities. Facilities will need to log on to the Web site using the email address they previously selected as their username and their password to view the new DFR for their facility. We encourage all facilities that have never logged on to the Web site to create an account and log on before September 30 to ensure that their usernames and passwords are working correctly. Only 11% of facilities have created individual user accounts at this time so we anticipate a high volume of new account creation.

To create an individual account, facilities need to locate their original 2009 DFR and find the Master Account Holder username and password located on the first page. The first page also contains instructions on how to create individual accounts needed to access the DFR. If the facility cannot find its original DFR report, the Network can also obtain the password from the facility file (see [Facility\\_List.pdf](#)) on their Network's 2009 Dialysis Facility Report Documentation CD. The Master Account Holder username is the facility number used on the Dialysis Facility Report.

Once logged on with their Master Account Holder credentials, they can go to the bottom of the Web page and click on "create new user" to create an individual account for themselves and any other authorized users. For individual accounts, the username will be an email address and a temporary password will be emailed to this email account. To set up an ongoing password, facilities should log on to the Web site using their email address as the username and the assigned temporary password.

### **Will Facilities Have a Comment Period?**

Yes. An abbreviated comment period will begin on **September 30** and last until **October 15, 2009**. As before, facilities will log on to the Web site [www.dialysisreports.org](http://www.dialysisreports.org) and click on "comments" next to their facility report to post a comment. They can comment on the corrected SMR as part of the DFC Survival measure, post a comment for their State Surveyor, or post a comment for UM-KECC. This process is similar to the original comment period during the summer. Please note any comments posted during the original comment period will remain in the system so it is not necessary to repost comments.

### **Whom Should Be Contacted With Comments or Questions?**

Please contact UM-KECC with any questions regarding the recalculation, the Web site, or the process for transition. The UM-KECC staff can be reached at 998-9823 (phone) or [keccdf@umich.edu](mailto:keccdf@umich.edu).

Thank you for partnering with CMS and UM-KECC on this effort.