



IMPORTANT MEDICARE REQUIREMENTS FOR HOME HEALTH CARE PATIENTS

PHYSICIAN FACE-to-FACE ENCOUNTER FACT SHEET

The Patient Protection Affordable Care Act has mandated a physician Face-to-Face Encounter (in-person visit) for Medicare home health services.

The Face-to-Face Encounter with the patient must be done by one of the following:

- **Community physician** who will certify the plan of home health care; **OR**
- **Hospitalist** in the hospital, as long as he/she can identify community physician who will certify plan of home health care; **OR**
- **Non-Physician Practitioner (NPP)** such as Nurse Practitioner, Clinical Nurse Specialist or Physician's Assistant, who must document the clinical findings and provide them to the certifying physician.

The Face-to-Face Encounter must occur:

- No earlier than 90-days before the admission visit to home health services; **OR**
- Within 30-days after the admission visit to home health services.

The Medicare Face-to-Face Encounter form must have:

- **Patient name**
- **Date** of the "in-person visit" *and* that the visit was related (completely or in part), to **the medical condition** for which the patient needs home health services
- Clinical findings that **support the medical necessity and need for Medicare-covered** skilled nursing, physical therapy and/or speech therapy **services; AND**
- Clinical findings supporting that **the patient is homebound.**

The Face-to-Face Encounter documentation must be a separate and distinct section of, or addendum to, the physician's orders (485's) *and* must be clearly **signed and dated** by the certifying physician who either performed the visit or received documentation from their NPP.

The home care agency is required by Medicare to maintain this documentation. Please contact the VNA of Somerset Hills at 908-766-0180, ext. 141, if we can be of further assistance.