

COMPLIANCE CUE

CMS

2026 Updates to the Long-Stay Antipsychotic Quality Measure

BACKGROUND

Introduced in 2008, the Five-Star Quality Rating System allows residents and their families to compare nursing homes based off composite scores from three major domains: health inspections, staffing levels, and quality measures.

One such measure, the percentage of long-stay residents receiving antipsychotics, has received increased attention following the [2021 OIG Report](#), which revealed under reporting of antipsychotic use on MDS assessments. To address this concern, CMS released memo [QSO-25-20-NH](#) in September 2025, announcing re-specifications to the long-stay antipsychotic quality measure.

Effective January 2026, the re-specified measure now includes Medicare and Medicaid claims data, as well as Medicare Advantage encounter data, to supplement information collected from MDS assessments, to ensure accurate reflection of the facility's level of antipsychotic use on the CMS Nursing Home Care Compare tool.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

Measure Description

The long-stay antipsychotic measure reports the percentage of long-stay residents (length of stay ≥ 101 days) receiving antipsychotic drugs during the target period.

- **Target Period:** a calendar quarter or 3 months (e.g., Q1 2025).
- Quality measure reporting for 2026 uses [Q3 2025](#) as the initial data collection period.

Measure Specifications

Numerator: Identifies long-stay residents with a selected target assessment who received one or more antipsychotic medications while admitted to the facility.

Resident MDS assessments indicating receipt of an antipsychotic during the target period.

- Coded under **Section N0415 (High Risk Drug Classes)**.

Resident claims or encounter data indicating receipt of an antipsychotic during the target period.

- **Medicaid Rx (Pharmacy) or Medicare Part D Claim** for an antipsychotic during the nursing home stay.
- **Medicaid OT (Other Services) or Medicare OP (Outpatient) Claim** for a physician-administered antipsychotic (i.e., long-acting injection) with a service date during the nursing home stay.

Note: *Pharmacy claims are used for numerator identifications only and are NOT used to validate diagnoses for the denominator exclusions. Absence of diagnosis codes (e.g., ICD-10 codes) on pharmacy-related claims data will NOT affect calculations for the long-stay antipsychotic quality measure.*

COMPLIANCE CUE

CMS

2026 Updates to the Long-Stay Antipsychotic Quality Measure

Helpful Hint: Focus improvement efforts on medication reconciliation practices during transition of care, especially after hospital discharges, to help prevent unnecessary antipsychotics from being kept on resident medication regimens and to prevent subsequent fills by the pharmacy.

Denominator: Includes all long-stay nursing home residents within a selected target assessment except those meeting exclusion criteria.

Exclusions	Notes
<p>The resident is not continuously* enrolled in any of the following during each month of the target period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare Parts A, B, and D, or • Medicare Parts C and D,** or • Medicaid Only. 	<p>*Residents who switch between types of insurance coverage during the target period will be excluded.</p> <p>**Medicare Fee-For-Service or Medicare Advantage with Part D enrollment.</p>
<p>The resident is not continuously enrolled in any of the following during each month of the measure exclusion lookback window.*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare Parts A and B, or • Medicare Part C,** or • Medicaid Only. 	<p>*The same date one year prior to the target date until the target date (i.e., the one-year period leading up to, and including the target date).</p> <p>**Medicare Fee-For-Service or Medicare Advantage.</p>
<p>The resident is ≥ 65 years of age at admission* and is admitted within one year prior to the end of the target period, however they were not continuously enrolled in one for the following for each month of the pre-admission lookback window**:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicare Parts A and B, or • Medicare Part C, or • Medicaid Only. 	<p>*Age at admission is calculated by subtracting the admission date from the resident's birthdate (obtained from Medicare enrollment data or from Medicaid eligibility data).</p> <p>**The same date one year prior to the day before admission date, until one day before admission date.</p>
<p>Any of the following conditions are present on the target or prior MDS assessment, and in Medicare/Medicaid claims data* (unless otherwise indicated):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schizophrenia, • Tourette's Syndrome, • Huntington's Disease. 	<p>*Diagnosis code is present on the principal diagnosis code or code fields in Medicare/Medicaid claims data, with claim date occurring during the one-year:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> measure exclusion lookback window, or pre-admission lookback window if ≥ 65 years old and data indicates diagnosis of schizophrenia.
<p>The resident receives hospice care under Medicare Part A or Medicaid or is enrolled in hospice during any month between the beginning of the target period and the end of the episode:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥ 1 Medicare Part A Hospice Claim,* or • ≥ 1 Medicaid Hospice Claim,* or • Hospice eligibility Group Code** in Medicaid eligibility data for at least one month.* 	<p>*With a date overlapping with the period between the start of the target period and the end of the episode.</p> <p>**Group Code 44: individuals receiving hospice care.</p>

COMPLIANCE CUE

CMS

2026 Updates to the Long-Stay Antipsychotic Quality Measure

STEPS TO FACILITY COMPLIANCE

- ✓ Antipsychotics and other psychotropic medications are only prescribed following the comprehensive assessment of a resident's condition, and in accordance with accepted standards of practice.

A provider's decision to prescribe or discontinue a medication should never be influenced by the facility's current quality measure score or how their rating may change but instead be in accordance with professional standards of practice.

- ✓ Accurately code antipsychotics per requirements outlined in the [MDS 3.0 RAI Manual](#).
- ✓ Ensure accurate diagnoses are captured at admission, with emphasis on supporting documentation for use of an antipsychotic or 'other' medications used with psychotropic intent.
- ✓ Conduct behavioral meetings to review appropriateness of antipsychotics used to address harmful or disruptive resident behaviors.
- ✓ Ensure documentation within the resident's EHR is routinely updated and aligned amongst all members of the care team.

HOW PHARMERICA CAN HELP

PharMerica's consultant pharmacist team is available to:

- ✓ Participate in behavioral meetings, promoting collaborative discussion on resident care plans amongst the facility's interdisciplinary team.
- ✓ Identify medications appropriate for deprescribing interventions and provide recommendations on gradual dose reductions when appropriate.
- ✓ Review orders for antipsychotics, including PRN orders, during routine monthly medication regimen reviews to report and provide corrective action plans when chemical restraint potential is identified.
- ✓ Provide in-services and education to facility staff regarding clinically appropriate and safe psychotropic use.

PHARMERICA COMPLIANCE CUES

- ✓ [MDS 3.0 - Section N0415 \(High Risk Drug Classes\)](#)
- ✓ [F605 – Free from Chemical Restraints](#)
- ✓ [Psychotropic Medication Prescribing Guidelines](#)
- ✓ [Pharmacy-Related Updates to State Operations Manual Appendix PP](#)

COMPLIANCE CUE

CMS

2026 Updates to the Long-Stay Antipsychotic Quality Measure

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✓ [AHCA - Quality Measure Tip Sheet for the Revised Long-Stay Antipsychotic Medication Measure](#)
- ✓ [MDS 3.0 Quality Measures User's Manual \(v18.0\) \[ZIP File\]](#)
- ✓ [MDS 3.0 Quality Measures Supplemental Files \[ZIP File\]](#)
 - Antipsychotic Medication HCPCS Codes
 - Codes to Identify Hospice Services in Medicaid Claims Data
 - Codes to Identify Hospice Services in Part A Claims Data
 - ICD-10 Codes for Excluded Diagnoses
 - NDCs for Antipsychotic Medications