

# Medical Staffing Organization and Quality of Care Outcomes in Post-Acute Care Settings

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**Issue:** Medical providers are significant drivers of care in post-acute long-term care (PALTC) settings, yet little research has examined the medical provider workforce and its role in ensuring quality of care.

**Methods:** This study examined the impact of nursing home medical staffing organization (NHMSO) dimensions on the quality of care in US nursing homes. The NHMSO dimensions provide a psychometric scale to evaluate structural and cultural attributes of nursing home staffing, and include composition of staff, appointment process, commitment (physician cohesion, leadership turnover and capability), departmentalization (physician supervision, autonomy, and interdisciplinary involvement), documentation, and informal dynamics (interpersonal relationships). The principal data source was a survey specifically designed to study medical staff organization for post-acute care. Respondents were medical directors and attending physicians providing PALTC. We linked a number of medical provider and nursing home characteristics to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services Nursing Home Compare quality measures hypothesized to be sensitive to input by medical providers.

**Findings:** From the sample of nursing home medical providers surveyed (n=1,511), 560 responses were received, yielding a 37% response rate; 425 medical provider responses contained sufficient data for analysis. The results of the impact of NHMSO dimensions were mixed, with many domains not having any significance or having negative relationships between provider characteristics and quality measures. Respondents who reported having a formal process for granting privileges and nursing homes with direct employment of physicians reported significantly fewer emergency visits.

**Discussion:** Further research is needed regarding what quality measures are sensitive to both medical provider characteristics and NHMSO characteristics.

**Key Words:** Nursing homes, medical provider, physician, quality measures

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