



LONG TERM CARE & SENIOR LIVING BLOG

New Final Rule for National Emergency Preparedness for Medicare/Medicaid Providers & Suppliers

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Following recent natural disasters, such as Hurricane Sandy or episodes of serious flooding; the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published a Final Rule to help Medicaid & Medicare providers and suppliers plan for natural and man-made disasters. The new regulations provide consistent emergency preparedness requirements with a goal of enhancing patient safety during emergencies and a coordinated and defined response to disasters. The final rule was published September 16, 2016 and will become effective November 15, 2016. Requirements for healthcare facilities include the creation of emergency plans, policies and procedures; having a communication plan; and establishing training and testing programs for the emergency protocols.

Long-term care facilities (LTC) face additional new responsibilities under this Final Rule. LTC will need to have emergency and standby power systems, as well as plans concerning missing residents to account for or locate the missing resident. Long term care facilities will need to have a method to share appropriate information with residents and their families or representatives, but the rule does not require specific steps or strategies to share the documents with the families or representatives.

Inasmuch as this rule incorporates new requirements concerning responses to natural and man-made disasters, Medicare and Medicaid providers need to take action now to ensure compliance when the Final Rule becomes effective on November 15, 2016. We can help explain and aid in implementing the policy and procedure changes needed for compliance with this new rule. Let us know if you have any questions or need more information.

Here's a link to the Final Rule.