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This is Meg Kaehny, Alicia Metcalf, and Martha Powell from CU and we will be conducting the training. We assisted CMS in the development of the LTCSP so we have a deep understanding of the survey process. We have also been actively involved with the software contractor, Alpine Technology Group, in the development of the software that supports the LTCSP. As part of our contract with CMS, we generate the SOAR.

The Survey Outcome and Activity Reports are referred to as SOAR, are a series of Excel spreadsheet tabs that display information about state performance of the Long Term Care Survey Process (or LTCSP). During this presentation we will use a training SOAR report with fake data to describe the information provided in each report tab to help you accurately interpret the data. We provide illustrative examples and suggestions on using the data to identify patterns and trends to address potential concerns with survey performance.

Guide to the LTCSP SOAR

Guide to the LTCSP SOAR Reports

Survey Outcome and Activity Reports (SOAR) are a series of Excel spreadsheet tabs that display information about state survey agency (SA) performance of the Long Term Care Survey Process (LTCSP). This guide describes the information provided in each report tab to help report users accurately interpret and use the information. The description for each tab also includes a "What to Look For" section with illustrative examples and suggestions to help spark ideas on using the reports to identify patterns and trends in survey performance and support efforts to improve or reinforce state practices.

The reports are sent on a monthly basis and display cumulative data. All data received up to the end of a month are included in the reports that are sent the following month. For example, reports labeled as May 2018 are distributed mid-May and include a cumulative reporting of all data received by April 30, 2018.

Overview – State, Regional, and National Averages to Date

The first tab in the Excel spreadsheet provides an overview of a state's LTCSP performance and compares data at the following levels:

- **National:** Average of all surveys completed by all SAs in the nation to date.
- **Region:** Average of all surveys completed by all SAs in the region to date.
- **State:** Average of all surveys completed by the SA to date.

The tab shows the following information at the national, regional, and state levels. Note that all information other than the number of surveys reflects the average across all surveys.

- **# of Surveys:** Number of LTCSP surveys completed to date (i.e., since November 28, 2017).
- **Census:** Facility census at survey entry.

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Each state and regional office was sent the "Guide to the LTCSP SOAR". The guide defines each data item and describes how you can use the information to improve survey performance. You should refer to the guide when reviewing your report.

SOAR Process

- LTCSP (onsite survey data)
- CMS 670 and CMS-2567 – 2 month lag
- Sent monthly to select individuals
- Reflects data thru end of prior month
- National, Region, State Averages
 - Cumulative
 - Quarterly
- Just numbers – not necessarily good or bad
- Outliers or notable differences

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We receive two sets of data at different times from another contractor. One benefit of having an automated survey process is that you can now review the actual LTCSP data which reflects what occurred onsite. We receive the LTCSP data pretty quickly – in about three weeks after survey exit. In addition to the LTCSP data, we also receive 670 and 2567 data separately. The 670 and 2567 data is typically available about two months after we receive the LTCSP information which is why you will see many blanks reflected in the report for 670 and 2567 information. For the training SOAR report that we will review, you will see that there are 131 surveys with LTCSP data for State A, but only 99 surveys with 670 and 2567 data.

The reports are sent on a monthly basis to the individuals that the state or region has identified. The reports display cumulative data in the first few rows of data, followed by quarterly averages (starting with Q2 2018). All data received up to the end of a month are included in the reports that are sent the following month. For example, reports labeled as August 2018 are distributed mid-August and include a cumulative reporting of all data received by July 31, 2018. For today's SOAR, we are covering data through August 2018.

The reports contain averages for the nation (that is, all surveys to date), your region

(average for all states in your region), and a state average. We recently added averages for surveys conducted within each calendar year quarter (starting with Apr-June 2018), so that you can more easily track whether any interventions you've instituted have had their desired effect.

As we discuss the data for our training report and as you review your own data, we just want to emphasize the numbers doesn't necessarily mean something is good or bad. For any potential area of concern, we will highlight areas that you may want to consider as you determine the root cause for a potential issue and decide whether there is a need for training or clarification. Since this is a training report, we will discuss what your state can do if you find any data item is lower or higher than the national average.

Currently, we do not have statistically defined rules to identify low and high outliers. You will have to use your judgment to determine what you consider to be notable differences. When looking at the data, always take into account the number of surveys you are reviewing – when there is a small number of surveys or instances of something, identifying an outlier becomes more difficult.

Summary

- Identify notable differences
- Determine root cause
 - Reasonable explanation
 - Survey performance concern
- Implement new practices, clarification, training
- Monitor SOAR for improvement over time

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In summary, the SOAR data are intended to help you with training and quality improvement efforts. For all of the areas we've discussed, if you see notable differences for your state, you will want to determine why the area is different. Is there a reasonable explanation? Perhaps you determine a concern with how surveyors are implementing the survey process. Once you determine what is contributing to the difference, you can then implement new practices or resolve confusion around the issue and use the SOAR to look for improvement in the area over time.

Relevant Materials

- Guide to the LTCSP SOAR Reports
- LTCSP Mapping Document
- LTCSP Procedure Guide

- Questions?
- NHSurveyDevelopment@cms.hhs.gov

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That concludes the training. All of the documents we referenced during the training can be found on the ISTW website.

As the software continues to be refined, the SOAR will also continue to be refined.

If you have any questions about the SOAR data or would like to discuss your state's data, please send an email to the CMS Help Desk at NHSurveyDevelopment@cms.hhs.gov.