



Information for Healthcare Improvement



# Expedited Appeal Connection

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## HSAG, FMQAI's Parent Company Becomes the CA QIO

On December 15, 2008, The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced that the Health Services Advisory Group (HSAG) has begun working with beneficiaries and providers to protect the quality of care available to citizens of California. The HSAG now serves as the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) in California and provides free expert resources to selected health care providers to improve quality and safety of care and transform the way health care is delivered locally.

The HSAG and other QIOs across the country also work with Medicare beneficiaries and their advocates every day to help them resolve complaints or appeals they have about the quality of care they receive from Medicare providers. QIOs strive to address beneficiaries' concerns while working with health care providers to help them provide better care in the future.

Previously, Lumetra served as the Medicare QIO for California. Through a competitive process, CMS awarded the state QIO contract to HSAG. Now that Lumetra's contract with CMS has ended, HSAG is now equipped to handle all aspects of QIO work for the state and is the only entity authorized by CMS to serve as California's QIO.

The QIO program, created by law in 1982, provides for the award of three-year contracts to 53 organizations throughout the country—one in each state as well as the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico—to improve the quality, safety, efficiency, and economy of health care services delivered to Medicare beneficiaries and the public at large.

HSAG-FL will be handling the case review portion of the California contract for HSAG. This means that HSAG-FL will be handling the beneficiary complaints as well as the expedited determinations for California.

## *Expedited Determination Training Workshops*

FMQAI does plan to conduct training workshops for the expedited determination process in Florida in 2009. The training is tentatively scheduled for April and May in Fort Walton Beach, Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, Fort Myers, West Palm Beach and North Miami Beach. In the interim, if you have staff that needs training in the Expedited Determination process, please direct them to our web site, [www.fmqai.com](http://www.fmqai.com). Click on Healthcare Initiatives, then click on Medical Case Review. On the left hand side, click Continuing Education. There is one CEU available for each course taken.



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