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# STAFF NEWSLETTER

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## *The Top 10 Mistakes: Think of them as Stepping Stones to Learning*

**“A smart man, they say, learns from his own mistakes, but a wise man learns from others' mistakes”**

Everyone can learn from trends in unannounced surveys that have recently taken place:

First, be aware CMS requires that every location with a Medicare Supplier Number (PTAN) must be physically visited by your accreditor. Remote, smaller locations are no longer going to dodge that bullet. Everyone gets to be inspected.

1. New Customer package / Medicare compliance: Be sure you are distributing the full 30 Supplier Standards rather than an obsolete version of 26, 26, or 21 standards. Include information on how to contact your accreditor (phone number, email address); also, the Joint Commission requires distribution on infection control and reducing risk of falls.
2. Personnel Records: competency reviews need to be documented for staff that work with patients or their equipment prior to solo work (all accreditors) and annually thereafter for all accreditors except the Joint Commission that requires competency at least once every 3 years; primary verification of state licensure and credentials for clinicians and ATPs (print screen from state or RESNA website)
3. Privacy/HIPAA: If a Service Technician / Clinician is asked by a patient or Home Health Aide about how a friend or acquaintance that they know who is also on your service is doing, he cannot talk about anything - not the friends status, nothing.
4. Infection Control: Don't bring back mattresses in contaminated disposable cover. All disposables should be left in the home when the item is picked up. Use hand sanitizer after removing gloves, be alert to prevent cross-contamination from touching other household surfaces and then touching of patient personal items such as nasal cannula.
5. Patient Record (file): be sure the patient's Emergency / Next of Kin contact phone number information is documented somewhere in your paperwork.
6. Physician orders: There have to be written physician order for oxygen conserving devices; oxygen prescriptions need duration (hours per day that the oxygen should be provided).
7. Warehouse: Regularly check for expired items in stock; broken or items needing repair shouldn't be found in the patient ready area; be sure there is documentation (a log) of equipment having been cleaned and inspected.
8. Annual activation and written critique of the company's emergency plan.
9. Written response within 14 days to all patient complaints in your patient complaint file.
10. NO free-standing oxygen tanks; or tanks stored in an unventilated space (closet) or near sources of ignition like heaters or propane tanks.