

## DHEC Updates/DPH Health Quality Updates 7/3/24

**GENERAL:** Please note going forward these updates will be called the DPH(Department of Public Health) Health Care Quality Updates as DHEC has now officially split. The new name for the regulatory division for nursing homes and assisted living is now called Health Care Quality Bureau of Nursing Homes and Medical Services. Their emails have been changed and will have the same beginning but will have the @DPH.SC.gov verses the @DHEC.SC.gov. Their system is set up to automatically forward emails for one year.

The email address for sending additional information with in 24 hours is now [NHTeam@DPH.SC.gov](mailto:NHTeam@DPH.SC.gov)

The new mailing address is 2100 Bull Street Columbia, SC 29201

Website address for providers: [For Professionals | South Carolina Department of Public Health \(sc.gov\)](https://www.schca.org/for-professionals)

DHP staff shared that their physical office may also be changing, however they are not sure where they will be located as of yet but will keep us posted as they learn.

**Staffing Updates:** One generalist position is currently posted, and one triage(complaints) nurse position is open as Rochell has retired. They continue to ask for additional staff to assist with case load and hopefully reduce burn out on the surveyor end. Angie Smith shared that their desire is to have enough surveyors trained/SMQT qualified which would allow the managers to do “pop-ups”. “Pop-Ups” would allow the manager to come on site during the survey so that they can observe the surveyors to ensure that process is followed verses having to be a surveyor on the actual team. They shared a time line of 3 to 6 months of when this could possibly be in place. This may be in response to our having expressed great concerns over surveyors sharing incorrect information with facilities on multiple issues i.e. related to what is reportable, to whom something has to be reported and generally a poor understanding of the regulations. We can not stress enough, that you need to know at the facility level the regulations. If you have concerns that something has been shared with you that might be incorrect, please reach out to Kim at the office at 803-772-7511 or [kwilkerson@schca.org](mailto:kwilkerson@schca.org).

**Survey Issues:** We continue to discuss issues related to improving communication during the survey process as well as at exit. Several ideas were shared as ways to accomplish this and DPH agreed to discuss and explore these ideas as a management group. Hopefully they will identify a process that will help ensure that facilities understand what they have identified as deficient practice. We have also advocated for sharing directly with the administrator all concerns that are going to be taken to decision making prior to decision making actually occurring.

Discussion was had related to the disruption that occurs when facilities have two different complaint surveys (one with a contracted surveyor and then another one with a state surveyor who is looking at licensure side). They shared that sometimes this occurs when there is a timing issue on the federal side of how quickly the complaint must be investigated. They expressed that they are willing to try to send both surveyors out when it is possible to do so.

**Additional Information:** Please note that additional information that you send to them related to possible citations, should not include what you did to correct the deficient practice that they identified i.e. education provided to staff related to the deficient practice identified by the survey team. That would

be part of a plan of correction. You should provide them with additional information that the survey team did not have or did not accept as to why the issue was actually not deficient practice.

**New IDR Process:** They are in the final stages of finalization of the IDR process where they will have one administrator also sit on the IDR panel for our state. This process should start in August. Once they have everything finalized and signed off on by CMS, they will share the finished process with us.