Reviewer’s report

Title: Adjustment of Nursing Home Quality Indicators

Version: 1 Date: 30 April 2009

Reviewer: Ning Zhang

Reviewer’s report:

This is a follow-up study of a CMS funded project -“validation of Long-Term and Post-Acute Care Quality Indicators” (2003)- from the development team of MDS and RAI led by Dr. Morris and colleagues. The developments of both QIs and risk adjustment of QIs are critically important in public reporting, quality monitoring and performance improvement of nursing home care. It is also timely for the ongoing efforts in finalizing MDS 3.0. This study established and evaluated the resident-level risk adjustments for 79 facility-level QIs based on their autocorrelation reliability and validity. The innovative risk adjustment methods include restriction, stratification and indirect standardization using logistic regressions. The results show that more than half of QIs with new risk adjustments obtained high reliable and moderate validate estimates of NH quality of care. This study is highly publishable and much needed.

The question posed by the authors is well defined. The methods are appropriate and data data are sound. The limitationos the work are briefly discussed. The title and abstract accurately convey the findings.

Discretionary Revisions

1. On page 7 first paragraph second line, the authors say that these 79 QIs were chronic care measures. Can you briefly discuss why the post-acute care QIs were not included in this study?

2. It would be very informative to show the reliability and validity of newly developed (or enhanced) risk adjustments for current CMS QMs.

3. The last sentence on page 17 needs a period at the end.

4. Page 7 Methods section, first paragraph, fourth line, take out “June” between “second quarters of” and “2002”.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests.