



Quality Improvement Reports:  
**Nursing Facility Ratings**

NURSING FACILITY INITIATIVES

# **Working Together to Reach the Highest Stars**

Implementing Solutions that Improve Quality and Ratings



# Achieving the Highest Score is what You're all About



Providing the highest quality of care is every nursing facility's goal. You strive to have the right number of caregivers delivering the best care in a safe and healthy environment for all of your residents.

Today, your residents and their families can see how well you are achieving these goals through CMS' 5-star quality rating system. Earning the highest score tells them you and your staff are meeting all of these standards—a low score can indicate there is work to be done.

In today's fast-moving nursing facility environment, you may need support in achieving and maintaining a high score, such as having:

- Someone to review and help improve your processes, training, and resources.
- Someone who understands how to apply state and federal regulations and who has extensive experience developing effective quality improvement processes in nursing facilities.
- Someone who can help you fix your issues before you are evaluated so that you earn the highest score possible.

Someone, that is, like Qlarant.



*“The Qlarant team has been an important part of our voyage to produce CMS 5-star worthy results.”*

—Nursing Facility Administrator

A Story of Success

# Moving from 1 to 4 Stars

## QLARANT HAS REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE HELPING A NURSING FACILITY REACH THE HIGHEST STARS.

A state agency tasked us to help a 1-star nursing facility determine how to improve their score. After consulting with Qlarant, performing a mock survey, and implementing quality improvement initiatives, the facility achieved a 4-star rating.

Here are just a few of the steps they took with Qlarant's support to help improve their score.

### STEP 1: ENHANCING STAFF COMPETENCIES

After evaluating the nursing staff, Qlarant found there wasn't sufficient staff with the appropriate competencies to provide quality care.

Working with the facility, we recommended they establish a competency-based training program that included clinical guidelines to enhance the staff's ability to assess and treat urgent care needs of their residents, including:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Mental illness and issues with alcohol
- Adjustment difficulties
- Trauma
- Loss
- Problems taking prescribed medications

The comprehensive, competency-based training program also targeted nursing aides. The program established goals, objectives, and evaluations to assure aides understood core competencies, along with remedial training for performance issues and documenting outcomes.

### STEP 2: PROMOTING THE RESIDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Training nursing staff to understand residents' specific needs is an important part of the ability to increase the quality of care for residents.

Qlarant derived the training from personal interviews with residents and members of their families, which revealed that many of them were unfamiliar with their rights and how to file a grievance.

Based on these results, Qlarant provided guidance for developing a presentation for Resident Council meetings to raise awareness of the facility's grievance process.

Information in the presentation could also be adapted and shared during the admission process, as part of routine training, through the existing family newsletter, and in other situations as needed.

*"The Qlarant team has been extremely helpful! They have worked very closely with our team and provided me with invaluable guidance on running a 24/7 long-term care facility."*

—Long-Term Care Client

### STEP 3: ESTABLISHING A QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT (QAPI) PROGRAM

Because the facility lacked a QAPI program or plan, Qlarant worked with staff to develop one that included strategies for improved communication and annual staff training in QAPI.

These steps were among other recommendations Qlarant developed in collaboration with the facility to increase the quality of care to residents, hold departments accountable for change, and help the facility prepare for external audits... all of which led to attaining a 4-star rating from CMS.

# Careful Planning + Pre-Audit Inspection = Facility Readiness

## THAT’S QLARANT’S EQUATION FOR NURSING FACILITY RATING SUCCESS FOR THE VA.

As part of our process, we conduct a vigorous and complete mock survey of your facility before the actual CMS audit.

During this phase, our reviewers assess the survey readiness of policies and procedures, working with you and your team to identify and resolve issues and help put your nursing facility on the right track.

## UNDERSTAND THE RULES AND REGULATIONS THAT GUIDE COMPLIANCE.

Our highly-trained evaluators know how to apply the rules and regulations to the day-to-day operations of nursing facilities. They understand the needs of the residents as well as the constraints of the facility, and are able to develop strategies to improve outcomes and move the facility in the right direction.

Working closely with your staff, we identify vulnerabilities and define the steps needed to resolve them and improve the care provided to residents.

We begin the process by conducting a resident census to identify sample selection for medical record review. At the end of the on-site survey, Qlarant reviewers meet with the facility’s staff and conduct an exit interview to provide overall findings. During the post-site phase, we provide a comprehensive report with specific recommendations.

## Qlarant’s On-site Mock Survey Includes:

- policy reviews
- a facility tour
- resident interviews
- resident observations
- family interviews
- nursing practice observation
- dining experience assessment
- food service observation
- resident medical record review
- quality assurance program creation
- abuse prevention evaluation
- accident and incident review
- infection control procedure observation
- interdisciplinary department observation
- staff training and education review
- personnel file review

## DEVELOP PROCESSES AND APPROACHES THAT ENSURE QUALITY CARE, SAFETY, AND EFFICIENCY.

Working one-on-one with your staff, we perform root-cause analyses; develop quality improvement strategies; and provide technical assistance, monitoring, and targeted training to help you improve your processes, comply with regulations, and ultimately improve those valuable star ratings.

Qlarant’s mock survey will give you a clearer picture of the challenges ahead. You can begin to focus your efforts and resources on initiatives that will reduce vulnerabilities and improve care on a continuous basis.

You will have a better understanding of resident needs and perspective and can demonstrate a commitment to quality improvement. When it comes time to reevaluate, the impact will really stand out.

## IN THE END: QUALITY IMPROVEMENT EQUALS BETTER CARE.

And better care equals more stars.

Qlarant works with your Quality Assurance department to establish a structured QAPI program (a crucial part of the rating).

Together, we can develop a quality assurance committee along with a structured reporting schedule. Data gathered from each department will measure improvement over time and will include baseline measures, benchmarks, and goals for continued success.

**Here’s The Bottom Line:** A nursing facility that has an effective QAPI program provides quality care and quality of life to the lives of its residents. Following this approach, you can be proactive with performance management and improvement and demonstrate the activities that result in rating success.



# We are Here to Help You Reach for the Stars

WE HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF ACHIEVING QUALITY RESULTS, PROVIDING MEANINGFUL RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DELIVERING EFFECTIVE OUTCOMES.



**Qlarant is a national leader** in healthcare quality improvement, with a proven track record of helping organizations elevate their quality performance to **successfully achieve their goals.**

Our evidence-based quality improvement work ensures that care is delivered at the **highest quality standard**—in the most timely and cost-efficient manner.

We review your programs to ensure compliance with quality standards and guiding regulations and

continuously seek opportunities for facilities to **improve and become the best they can be.**

Our track record of working with healthcare professionals, residents, families, and other stakeholders on large-scale quality initiatives puts Qlarant in a unique position. We provide valuable perspective on the priorities and methods best suited to help nursing facilities **earn their highest ratings.**

Best People	Best Solutions	Best Results
<b>SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS</b> consisting of long-term care, clinical, and quality professionals.	<b>TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE</b> tailored to nursing facilities and based on evidence.	<b>ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS</b> provided to facilitate immediate improvements.
<b>FLEXIBLE APPROACHES</b> provided to nursing facilities to improve compliance and quality of care.	<b>CUSTOMIZATION</b> embedded in our contract management process to meet nursing facility needs.	<b>LASTING SOLUTIONS</b> designed to assist nursing facilities in maintaining compliance and quality.

**Qlarant is your BEST solution** for quality improvement; detection and prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse; and the latest in data science and technology. We have the experience and expertise that align with nursing facility priorities to improve care for residents and their families.

**Get started on your  
road to a 5-star rating  
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Best People. Best Solutions. Best Results.®



CMS Federally Designated QIO-like Organization