



News Release

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Heather Howard,
Commissioner

For Release:
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NJ Department of Health and Senior Services Proposes to Readopt and Amend N.J.A.C.8:42, which Establishes Licensing Standards for Home Health Agencies.

The Office of Certificate of Need and Healthcare Facility Licensure in the Health Facilities Evaluation and Licensing Division of the Senior Services and Health Systems Branch of the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services (NJ DHSS) proposes to readopt and amend N.J.A.C. 8:42, which establishes licensing standards for home health agencies.

Home health agencies are licensed by DHSS to provide preventive, rehabilitative and therapeutic services to patients on a visiting basis in a place of residence used as a patient's home.

N.J.A.C. 8:42 implements the requirements of the Health Care Facilities Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 et seq.) by maintaining the administrative rules for the licensure of home health agencies and the standards for the provision of services by these agencies in New Jersey. Home health care remains a growing segment of the health care industry nationwide, and has proven to be a viable and desirable alternative to institutional care in many cases. Proposed N.J.A.C. 8:42 requires home health agencies to provide nursing, homemaker-home health aide, and physical therapy services.

The proposed amendments to the definition of home health agency would specify that services be provided on a visiting basis in a place of residence used as a patient's home, that licensed agencies are eligible for Medicare certification, and that the required services are the minimum services that must be provided by an agency. The proposed amendments would also require home health agencies to have a registered nurse available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, who would be required to contact a patient regarding clinical issues within one hour of the patient's call to the agency.

The notice of proposal appears in the July 21, 2008 issue of the New Jersey Register.

The public has until September 19, 2008 to comment on the proposal. Persons wishing to comment on the proposal must submit their comments in writing to Ruth Charbonneau, Director, Office of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, PO Box 360, Trenton, NJ 08625. Written comments on the proposal must be postmarked on or before September 19, 2008, which is the close of the 60-day public comment period for the proposal.

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