

Minimum Data Set (MDS) Section Q Education

Whether you are new to your position or a seasoned long-term care professional, you may have questions about Section Q within the MDS (Minimum Data Set). Section Q addresses discharge planning and the resident's desires to return to the community. When Section Q was added to the MDS in 2010, education about the resulting referral process was limited. The Iowa Department on Aging recently received a grant through the Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop and present some education on this topic to long-term care professionals.

Under the grant, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, through the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsmen, has been requested to distribute CMS brochures to facilities, residents, and their families. These brochures are titled "Your Right to Get Information About Returning to the Community".

Our Office will be contacting facilities to request that these brochures be placed in admission packets, and/or displayed in a public area. By assisting residents and their families obtain information about community supports and services; we can work collaboratively to empower them to become actively involved in appropriate discharge/transition planning. To receive these brochures or to request additional copies, please contact the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at: 1-866-236-1430. These brochures are also available on our [website](#) and may be printed.

To further support our educational efforts, our Office has a pre-recorded webinar (and PDF slides) available for facility staff to view and/or print. The Section Q webinar titled "MDS Section Q Education: Helping People Return to the Community" addresses:

- The responsibilities of each participating entity when making a Section Q referral. These entities include: the nursing facility, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise, the Options Counselor through the Lifelong Links Aging and Disability Resource Network, the resident and family and/or legal decision maker, and the Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman.
- When is/is not a Section Q referral appropriate?
- Examples of Success Scenarios through the Section Q process.
- Steps to take when a Section Q referral is appropriate (please note a Section Q referral can take place **ANY TIME**, not just when the MDS assessment is due).
- When does a Section Q referral end?
- Follow up needed by the Nursing Facility and the Options Counselor through the Lifelong Links Aging and Disability Resource Network.
- Frequently Asked Questions.

[Access the Recording](#), [Download the Presentation](#)

Our Office has also created an “At a Glance” sheet which provides the steps to take when a Section Q referral is appropriate. You may access this information through our [website](#). Or, you may contact the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman to request copies.

For additional questions, please contact your Local Long-Term Care Ombudsman directly, or through our toll free number at: 1-866-236-1430.

The mission of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of individuals residing in long-term care by investigating complaints, seeking resolutions to problems, and providing advocacy with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care.