



Dear Doctor/Hospital Discharge Planner/ Social Worker:

Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk, Inc. appreciates your referrals for home health services.

We want to make you aware that Medicare has established a requirement for payment of home health services. Here are the key things that you need to know:

Effective January 1, 2011 Medicare requires:

- All individuals who are referred for home health services **must have a Face to Face Physician Encounter (“in person” visit) with a physician or non-physician practitioner (nurse practitioner, clinical nurse specialist or physician’s assistant) within a mandatory time frame -**
 - **Within the 90 days before the start of home health services or**
 - **Within 30 days after the home health nurse or therapist makes the first visit.**
- **If this requirement is not met, Medicare will not pay for the home health services.**
- **All Medicare certified home health agencies are required to comply** with this new requirement.
- This requirement is part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (health care reform law) and is intended to ensure that the care received is authorized by the physician.

Please contact Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk, Inc. at (631) 261-7200, if you have any questions so that we may assist you.

Visiting Nurse Service & Hospice of Suffolk, Inc. greatly appreciates your willingness to work together to comply with this requirement and provide the best possible service to our patients.

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Hornik, RN
Director of Performance Improvement & Education