

John O'Connor:

Hello, this is John O'Connor from McKnight's. I'm here in Las Vegas at the American Health Care Association's annual show. Joining us today is with Leah Klusch from the Alliance Training Center.

We're thrilled to have you Leah. Thanks again for joining us. Leah, we're hearing quite a bit about the MDS. What are some of the things that you're paying attention to these days?

Leah Klusch:

Well, we have a lot going on with the MDS right now, John. The industry is having to adjust to a lot of changes. The first thing is that the amount and the frequency of the assessments that we're going to do is increasing because of the new regulations and new policies [taking effect] on October 1. The second issue is that we have a lot of new definitions and materials in the RAI manual update that we are dealing with simultaneously with those changes.

O'Connor:

Very good. Now, there's a lot to digest. What are some of the things that you are telling you clients to pay attention to?

Klusch:

The first thing is that operations needs to be involved with these transfers and processes to these new policies. So, we're not only dealing with the clinical database but we are really dealing with a lot of data that is going to have an impact on payment. So, you have to be sure that your processes, your billing and assessment processes, are very clean and that you've done the training that is necessary for these changes.

O'Connor:

Very good. We're hearing a lot about how CMS is sort of taking an anti-fraud stance and zero-tolerance policy toward mistakes. What have you heard about that and what does it mean for providers?

Klusch:

CMS has been very absolute about the determinations of compliance and also the quality of the database. There is a no forgiveness policy. That is going to affect payment in a big way. So, facilities need to be very careful, especially in their October billing cycle, that they have all hands on deck ; that people have been very very carefully trained and managed very well.

O'Connor:

Thanks for joining us Leah.

Klusch:  
You're welcome.