

How to Use this Book

This book takes the reader on a step-by-step journey to compliance. The book identifies the issues, answers and best practices to be considered when writing patient grievance policies and procedures.



The companion audio CD presents the material in a unique and entertaining format. The listener will meet Allen Richards, a health care administrator, struggling to understand the often vague and confusing CMS grievance regulations. With help from Advocate Alliance, Allen successfully navigates his way through the compliance maze. Throughout this book, this CD symbol will reference the reader to the corresponding CD track.

This manual is designed to help hospital leaders understand the CMS grievance regulations and identify issues likely to be raised during an accrediting organization or State agency survey. The application and impact of laws, regulations and standards can vary widely based on specific facts and circumstances. This discussion, including suggested **best practices**, is offered as a guideline and is not a substitute for consultation with legal counsel or other professional advisors.

To assist the reader, the following icons are also used throughout the text:



Indicates Code of Federal Regulation (CFR). The CFR is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. It is divided into 50 titles that represent broad areas subject to Federal regulation. CMS regulations are contained in Title 42.



Indicates Interpretive Guidelines. CMS Interpretive Guidelines are established to provide guidance to personnel conducting surveys. The Guidelines serve to clarify and/or explain the intent of the regulation. All surveyors are required to use the Interpretive Guidelines when assessing compliance with Federal requirements.



Indicates Surveyor Focus. CMS Survey Procedures detail the information surveyors must obtain in order to determine whether the provider is in compliance with CMS regulations.



Links. Links referred to in this manual are also available via the Advocate Alliance web site, and can be found at www.advocatealliance.net/aa_grievance.htm