MANAGING THE SURVEY PROCESS

Pre-Survey:

1. Review Policies/Procedures for system integrity ALL YEAR long. KEEP SYSTEMS IN PLACE!
   Focus on the following;
   a. 24 hour DNS/report systems
   b. Nurse Coordinator Systems
   c. Staff Development/training/personal files
   d. Environment > cleanliness/ repairs, entrance
   e. Kitchen > food temps/taste/
   f. Review family/resident counsel minutes

2. Six months prior to your scheduled survey;
   a. Review your past 2 annual surveys with key staff
   b. Review all complaint surveys and counsel minutes
   c. Share all survey results with all staff
   d. Develop action plans for problematic areas and stay focused. Meet weekly to assess goals and program towards same

3. Three months prior to your scheduled survey- continue above plus;
   a. Review QA program for problematic areas incorporates these 2 areas into your action plan you developed from survey reviews.
   b. Step up environmental rounds/repairs etc.

4. Two months prior to your scheduled survey, continue above plus;
   a. Review at key staff meeting and all staff meetings
   b. Start employee survey preparedness meetings
   c. Become VERY involved in Resident Counsel/family council. (hear complaints and fix complaints)
   d. Review Incident Reports/Log “trends” for incident, assessment and plan. Check log for problems, (i.e.: incomplete, codes used repeatedly.
   e. Check disaster manual;
      - Are phone numbers updated and names current
      - Check your water supply for out dater
   f. Follow up on medical records audits through completion

5. One month before survey-all of the above plus,
   a. Check postings i.e. 1-800 #/Ombudsman/ state survey available.
   b. LISTEN to report. Most citations develop from RECENT problems. Discuss with Nurse Coordinator.
c. Check your flow sheets; Tray monitor, med and tx, glucometer, temp. logs (nursing, dietary and water temps.)

d.

6. Things you should NOT do before survey-1 month out.
   a. Schedule your own vacation the month before or the month after survey.
   b. Approve vacation for Dept heads the month before or the month after the survey.
   c. Start a new program, new policy, new forms.
   d. Start remodel/construction.
   e. Schedule involved, large group meetings or activities.
   f. Change products, especially soap and food items.
   g. Upset your surveyors or ombudsman.
   h. Use agency or staff not familiar with your routines.
   i. Fire a dept head
   j. Ignore your loudest, most hostile patient or family
   k. Cut your hours anywhere
   l. Cut supplies-If you’re not on track the other 11 months of the year, this is one month you must have enough.

7. Things you should do before/during survey.
   a. Keep you staff current-No surprises
   b. Have a plan written out of who comes when and does what.
      I.e. **John:** rounds on 100 hall/lunch monitor/ check flow sheets, **Sue:** Track Becky- Keep her busy; don’t let her hoard towels today; **Ruth:** Check the utility room
   c. Cancel all meetings unless; urgent, family/patient involved
   d. Plan your day to increase time available for staff; rounds; problem solving etc. Most reports can wait until another day/week.
   e. Plan for long days, cancel personal appoints. Arrive no later than 1 hour before surveyors, 6:30 am and leave no earlier than 1 hour after.
   f. Meet with your staff briefly every am and pm, provide frequent pats on the back, and thank them for their hard work.

8. Survey tidbits
   a. It’s ok to have surveyors explaining regs to you and why something is citable. Sometimes you can give input that will prevent a citation. If you don’t understand, ask.
   b. Know where “they” are at in your building and what “they are doing”.
   c. Fix problems “they” point out right away. The fix must include all patients (systemic fix).
   d. Never ever give “them” your entire policy manual. Give “them” only the policy they requested. We do not have policies for everything. Things that we don’t have policies for are covered by regulations and/or
standards of practice. If they ask for a policy you are not aware of state “let me get that for you” and call the VP of Operations to hunt it down for you if we have it.

e. Answer “their” questions but do not ramble. The more you talk to “them” the more information you give away. It’s ok to chitchat with them. If you are dead wrong acknowledge this. Teach your staff if they make a mistake better to own it and fix it then to say they were not trained.

f. Try to review everything they want before you hand it over. Keep copies of all policies they want, keep a list of Incident reports, charts they review.

g. If an employee makes a booboo- tell them that it’s because “they” made him/her nervous and that normally they are a great nurse, C.N.A., NAC, etc.

h. Be prepared for off hour surveys-after 5pm and week ends and holidays. Surveys also start on noc shift. In WA, 1/3rd surveys start on nights.

i. Explain your QA program but do not give “them” your completed QA tools.

j. Don’t argue or create a negative atmosphere. Wait until you can meet with the Zone manager or team leader and/or cool down enough to talk to the surveyor.