4.7 The RAI and Care Planning

As required at 42 CFR 483.21(b), the comprehensive care plan is an interdisciplinary communication tool. It must include measurable objectives and time frames and must describe the services that are to be furnished to attain or maintain the resident's highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being. The care plan must be reviewed and revised periodically, and the services provided or arranged must be consistent with each resident's written plan of care. Refer to 42 CFR 483.20(d), which notes that a nursing home must maintain all resident assessments completed within the previous 15 months in the resident's active record and use the results of the assessments to develop, review, and revise the resident's comprehensive plan of care. Regulatory requirements related to care planning in nursing homes are located at 42 CFR 483.20(b)(1) and (2) and are specified in the interpretive guidelines (F tags) in Appendix PP of the State Operations Manual (SOM). The SOM can be found at: *https://www.cms.gov/regulations-and-guidance/guidance/manuals/internet-only-manuals-ioms-items/cms1201984*.

Good assessment is the starting point for good clinical problem solving and decision making and ultimately for the creation of a sound care plan. The CAAs provide a link between the MDS and care planning. The care plan should be revised on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in the resident and the care that the resident is receiving (see 42 CFR 483.21(b), Comprehensive Care Plans). This Chapter does not specify a care plan structure or format.

Table 2. Clinical Problem Solving and Decision Making Process Steps and Objectives

Process Step / Objectives *	Key Tasks **
Recognition / Assessment *Gather essential information about the individual*	– Identify and collect information that is needed to identify an individual's conditions that enables proper definition of their conditions, strengths, needs, risks, problems, and prognosis – Obtain a personal and medical history – Perform a physical assessment
Problem definition *Define the individual's problems, risks, and issues*	– Identify any current consequences and complications of the individual's situation, underlying condition and illnesses, etc. – Clearly state the individual's issues and physical, functional, and psychosocial strengths, problems, needs, deficits, and concerns – Define significant risk factors
Diagnosis / Cause-and-effect analysis *Identify physical, functional, and psychosocial causes of risks, problems, and other issues, and relate to one another and to their consequences*	– Identify causes of, and factors contributing to, the individual's current dysfunctions, disabilities, impairments, and risks – Identify pertinent evaluations and diagnostic tests – Identify how existing symptoms, signs, diagnoses, test results, dysfunctions, impairments, disabilities, and other findings relate to one another – Identify how addressing those causes is likely to affect consequences
Identifying goals and objectives of care *Clarify purpose of providing care and of specific interventions, and the criteria that will be used to determine whether the objectives are being met*	– Clarify prognosis – Define overall goals for the individual – Identify criteria for meeting goals
Selecting interventions / planning care *Identify and implement interventions and treatments to address the individual's physical, functional, and psychosocial needs, concerns, problems, and risks*	– Identify specific symptomatic and cause-specific interventions (physical, functional, and psychosocial) – Identify how current and proposed treatments and services are expected to address causes, consequences, and risk factors, and help attain overall goals for the individual – Define anticipated benefits and risks of various interventions – Clarify how specific treatments and services will be evaluated for their effectiveness and possible adverse consequences
Monitoring of progress *Review individual's progress towards goals and modify approaches as needed*	– Identify the individual's response to interventions and treatments – Identify factors that are affecting progress towards achieving goals – Define or refine the prognosis – Define or refine when to stop or modify interventions – Review effectiveness and adverse consequences related to treatments – Adjust interventions as needed – Identify when care objectives have been achieved sufficiently to allow for discharge, transfer, or change in level of care

* Refers to key steps in the care delivery process, related to clinical problem solving and decision making
** Refers to key tasks at each step in the care delivery process

The care plan is driven not only by identified resident issues and/or conditions but also by a resident's unique characteristics, strengths, and needs. A care plan that is based on a thorough

assessment, effective clinical decision making, and is compatible with current standards of clinical practice can provide a strong basis for optimal approaches to quality of care and quality of life needs of individual residents. A well developed and executed assessment and care plan:

- Looks at each resident as a whole human being with unique characteristics and strengths;
- Views the resident in distinct functional areas for the purpose of gaining knowledge about the resident's functional status (MDS);
- Gives the IDT a common understanding of the resident;
- Re-groups the information gathered to identify possible issues and/or conditions that the resident may have (i.e., triggers);
- Provides additional clarity of potential issues and/or conditions by looking at possible causes and risks (CAA process);
- Develops and implements an interdisciplinary care plan based on the assessment information gathered throughout the RAI process, with necessary monitoring and follow-up;
- Reflects the resident's/resident representative's input, goals, and desired outcomes;
- Provides information regarding how the causes and risks associated with issues and/or conditions can be addressed to provide for a resident's highest practicable level of well-being (care planning);
- Re-evaluates the resident's status at prescribed intervals (i.e., quarterly, annually, or if a significant change in status occurs) using the RAI and then modifies the individualized care plan as appropriate and necessary.

Following the decision to address a triggered condition on the care plan, key staff or the IDT should subsequently:

- Review and revise the current care plan, as needed; and
- Communicate with the resident or their family or representative regarding the resident, care plans, and their wishes.

The overall care plan should be oriented towards:

1. Assisting the resident in achieving their goals.
2. Individualized interventions that honor the resident's preferences.
3. Addressing ways to try to preserve and build upon resident strengths.
4. Preventing avoidable declines in functioning or functional levels or otherwise clarifying why another goal takes precedence (e.g., palliative approaches in end of life situation).
5. Managing risk factors to the extent possible or indicating the limits of such interventions.
6. Applying current standards of practice in the care planning process.
7. Evaluating treatment of measurable objectives, timetables and outcomes of care.
8. Respecting the resident's right to decline treatment.
9. Offering alternative treatments, as applicable.

10. Using an interdisciplinary approach to care plan development to improve the resident's abilities.
11. Involving resident, resident's family and other resident representatives as appropriate.
12. Assessing and planning for care to meet the resident's goals, preferences, and medical, nursing, mental and psychosocial needs.
13. Involving direct care staff with the care planning process relating to the resident's preferences, needs, and expected outcomes.