

Assisted Living Report Card Advisory Group Meeting

Date: 3/04/2025

Location: Zoom virtual meeting hosted by University of Minnesota

Attendance

Advisory Group Attendee	Organization
Todd Bergstrom	Care Providers Minnesota
Jeff Bostic	LeadingAge Minnesota
Angie Kluempke	Medica (Managed Care Organization)
Laura Orr	Minnesota Elder Justice Center
Carolyn Perron	Minnesota Board on Aging
Daphne Ponds	Minnesota Department of Health
Tom Rinkoski	AARP
Parichay Rudina	Ombudsman for Long Term Care
Michaun Shetler	Care Providers Minnesota

Staff and presenters	Organization
Julie Angert	Department of Human Services
Lauren Glass	Department of Human Services
Rachel Shands	Department of Human Services
Tetyana Shippee	University of Minnesota
Tricia Skarphol	University of Minnesota
Observers	Organization
Jean Hanvik	Stratis Health
Mary Henschel	Community Member
Martina Johnson	Department of Human Services
Teresa Lewis	Department of Human Services
Rick Michals	Minnesota Department of Health
Toby Pearson	Care Providers Minnesota
Reena Shetty	Department of Human Services

Agenda

- Welcome and brief introduction of new attendees
- DHS present:

- Website usage and evaluation plan
- Publishing MDH data
- 2025 QOL survey and ratings timeline

Website usage and evaluation plan

Goals of the website evaluation plan:

- Quantify the report card's value to Minnesota stakeholders.
- Inform continuous quality improvement for website content and features.
- Drive marketing and communications efforts to increase report card usage.

1. The first set of priorities is to use existing data available to DHS, these include:

- Number of sessions
- Number of returning users
- How long do people use the site in a session
- Comparing our usage data to the Nursing Home Report Card and similar websites
- Reading level of our content

The next set of priorities require help from MNIT or these priorities may not be feasible at this point.

2. How often do people use certain features including:

- Get Help page
- FAQ PDF
- Ratings Guide PDF
- More detailed results (breakout tables on a single facility page)

3. Where do people leave the site?

4. What sites send people to our site?

Additionally, we are working with the Nursing Home Report card colleagues to improve both sites. Along with the website evaluation, we want to get feedback from actual or potential users, use plain language to improve readability, and utilize search engine optimization.

Website metrics using June – August 2024 with December 2024 – February 2025 data

- The number of website users is between 900-1,100 per month with return users making up 20-30% of the monthly users.

- First time users spend around 5 minutes per session compared to around 6 minutes for return users.
- Page views per session have stayed at 6-7 pages for both first time and return users.

Advisory Group questions and answers related to the website evaluation plan

Question: Whenever I see individual data points on issues like minutes per session at 7.9 or 6.7, I wonder about what the individual data points look like. For example, do we have a way of tracking how many individual users visit for less than a minute, and then leave again because there was some barrier there. If they came and left within a minute, something might not have been working.

Response from DHS: One of the data points that was not included on the slides is what our MN-IT partners call zero one sessions. This is where a user will get to the website and then leave almost immediately. We have been tracking this as well. MN-IT further explained that this could be people who land on the page and encounter some barrier moving forward, but it could also be people who land on the page looking for something else. This data point could mean different things, but it is still useful and can give us some insight.

Follow-up comment: I have an additional point. It would be helpful to see and compare the median for all these numbers. I think this will give us a sense of what a typical person is doing as opposed to the average which I sense could be skewed in either direction by lengthy users or short-term users.

Question: Do we know what they were looking at or what page they were on when they decided to end their session? Can we get a level of information where we can determine if a user left because the information they are looking for wasn't there? For example, they were looking for information on a specific facility, but maybe that information wasn't there.

Response: This is something that is included in our list of priorities for our website evaluation plan. First, we want to collect data on where people leave the site. If we do see trends that suggest areas on the website where people are leaving more often than we expect, we might want to focus on this and follow up through surveys and/or focus groups. Unfortunately, there are limits to what data we can get from website usage data and what it can tell us.

Question: I am interested in knowing the types of searches that are being done. Are they searching by a county or a specific facility? Are people on the website doing categorical or specific searches, and how much time is spent in both areas? To me, these are two different types of consumers, one who is looking for general information and one who wants more information about a specific setting.

Follow-up comment: I appreciate your insight. It does indicate some difference in the purpose of what people are using the website for and that can be helpful information too. We will note this feedback as we further refine our evaluation plan. We will continue to bring updates to advisory group members.

Question: My question is about the reading level of the content. When you indicate that one of your future priorities is improving readability, I'm wondering how are you assessing whether the reading level is adequate or not adequate?

Response: When we designed the site, we did take readability into consideration and tested the design and language of the documents and different pieces of the site with an internal group of internal partners who have expertise in graphic design and communications. However, different partners suggested a more systematic review of readability. We want to take a more systematic approach to improving readability by using tools that indicate the readability level and provide language to use to improve readability. Particularly, the ratings guide and frequently asked questions documents contain more technical language, and we want to try to improve these resources in a way the general public can understand.

Updates on publishing Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) data on the report card

Overview of MDH data being published

- MDH licensing survey ratings (resident health, safety, staffing)
- Reconsiderations for licensing survey tags used for ratings
- Linking MDH survey and maltreatment reports to the AL report card
- MDH maltreatment findings indicator

MDH licensing survey and reconsiderations data

- Resident health, safety, and staffing ratings were launched on February 26, 2025.
- Ratings are based on licensing surveys completed between July 1 – August 31, 2024.
 - Number of providers who received MDH survey ratings: 231
 - Number of ratings flagged for reconsideration: 2
- DHS is planning a news release to announce this launch.
- MDH survey ratings will be updated quarterly ongoing.
 - Ratings based on surveys completed September 1 – November 30, 2024, will be published in May 2025.

Linking MDH survey and maltreatment reports to the AL report card

- DHS plans to link providers' MDH licensing survey and maltreatment findings reports on each assisted living's individual quality profile page. This will include:
 - A link to the provider's most recent MDH licensing survey.
 - A list of substantiated maltreatment findings within the past twelve months where the facility is found to be wholly or jointly responsible, and a link to the MDH maltreatment findings report for each.
- Links will be automatically updated as MDH publishes new findings online.
- DHS has decided to delay this enhancement and plans to add it to the report card in May 2025.

MDH maltreatment findings indicator

- DHS plans to add a MDH maltreatment findings indicator to the AL Report Card in May 2025.
- This indicator will report on whether an AL setting has had a substantiated maltreatment finding where the provider is wholly or partially responsible.
- This indicator will have a 12-month lookback period and be updated automatically as MDH publishes findings online.

Advisory Group questions and answers related to updates on publishing MDH data

Question: One of the slides shows what the maltreatment findings indicator will look like on the report card and when you hover over the question mark it states, "Does the state have evidence of resident maltreatment at this facility in the last year?" This column has a "Yes" or "No" indicator. I'm not opposed to this indicator; I have an issue with the way this is presented. Just because a facility may have a "yes" indicator in this column doesn't mean that this facility should be overlooked, or that this facility not a good choice. I'm assuming that the

person looking at this without having any knowledge will only look at substantiated maltreatment, because maltreatment is a loaded word. We all know there is more context for this, and I think we need to inform the consumer correctly.

Comment 1: I think the question is a good one and it prompted me to think about the FAQ or the place that provides some elaboration. I think it's good to have definitions to give context so people can understand what they are looking at. What is maltreatment; knowing that the definition of abuse, neglect, exploitation, substantiated, inconclusive, and unsubstantiated could be useful for helping people sort through exactly what they are looking at when they see this page.

Comment 2: How do we know that a consumer will base their choice only on seeing a substantiated maltreatment indicator of "yes". How do we know that we would be biasing the consumer or that it is not transparent to the consumer? I think as a group we all agreed that we need to display substantiated maltreatment for transparency. I'm just trying to understand the assumption that this is the most important factor. I agree that there should be more definitions on what makes up quality in assisted living facilities, and I agree that quality is multidimensional. Do we have a general statement that quality includes different factors that could influence your choices. If we have this, maybe it should be displayed more prominently.

Response from DHS: The landing page of the report card website and in the FAQs, we speak about some of these points. We plan to have a more detailed explanation in the ratings guide and frequently asked questions. This will be a further explanation of where this data is coming from, specifically MDH substantiated maltreatment findings, and that these are specific findings from within the last 12 months where the facility is found to be partially or wholly responsible. Maltreatment findings will be released with links that people can use to find out specifically what occurred, if they are concerned. We use this as another piece of data along with 5-star ratings that are being offered. I think we would be getting a lot of questions if we didn't provide maltreatment data as part of the overall picture of what is going on with the provider. I think this publicly available information is something that people want to know. These are all points that will continue to be taken into consideration. We appreciate everybody's feedback.

Quality of life survey and ratings timeline for 2025

- February 2025: Remaining 2024 resident and family survey ratings published
- March 2025: DHS published 2025 resident and family survey ratings and thresholds
- April 2025: Resident interviews begin
- May 2025: Family surveys begin

- September 2025: Resident interviews end
- November 2025: Family surveys end
- January 2026: DHS publishes 2025 resident quality of life survey ratings
- April 2026: DHS publishes 2025 family satisfaction survey ratings

Additional considerations for future rounds of surveys

- DHS received requests from some providers to provide Vital Research survey reports in a format that can be more easily transferred into data analysis systems.
 - DHS has decided to continue using PDF survey reports for 2025 surveys and explore adding an alternative type of report to future survey rounds.
 - DHS asked providers:
 - Have you heard this request from some of your members?
 - How many members would benefit from providing data in an exportable format?
 - What suggestions for alternatives have you heard from your members?

Advisory Group questions and answers related to quality of life survey updates for 2025

Comment 1: DHS and Vital Research should look at the request to provide data to providers in a different format soon. There are two assumptions made by having a report card: 1) consumers want to use it and 2) having a report card will improve facilities. The current format, especially for providers with multi-settings, doesn't work for facilities to use in a way that provides continuous quality improvement. Facilities want to use in-person surveys to improve quality, and we need to improve the timeliness to receive this data in a more useful format.

Comment 2: Many members have asked for this information, and our organization would likely use it to help people create quality improvement processes, both for providers with more corporate or less corporate support. It is a significant hindrance that it is not in a usable format.

Comment 3: I agree that there is value here. I haven't heard this from our members, but it wouldn't surprise me if there was an interest in them doing it. Have you considered doing things the way CMS does it? Post all facility results data in a downloadable Excel format and people can sort it to compare against themselves or against their neighbors. It seems like it would be easier than figuring out another way to distribute it in Excel that is specific to the facility but would still somehow have to be compiled on the corporate office side.

Response-DHS: We do have a way for people to download an excel file from the report card that shows the star ratings and overall scores. However, I believe the interest in the data that's provided by Vital research reports is broken down even further by question or domain and currently those are not provided on the report card website. We are working with our vendor to try to figure out options that are within our budget. We hear this is a priority for provider groups and we will continue to work on this and provide updates as we have them.

Advisory Group Next Steps

- Today's meeting slides and notes will be posted to the project webpage: www.mn.gov/dhs/assisted-living-report-card
- Our next meeting is TBD. Topics will likely include:
 - Updates on publishing maltreatment indicator
 - MDH progress with maltreatment reconsiderations timelines
 - Website usage and communications planning updates