

## First Steps – Generating/Submitting MDS Data

- Designate staff to oversee the MDS process.
- Purchase computer hardware including surge protection and data back-up capabilities.
- Obtain/use dedicated telephone line.
- Submit QIES Questionnaire to the Medicare Data Communication Network (MDCN)
- Download AT&T Global dial-up software from the [www.qtso.com](http://www.qtso.com) website (located under the MDCN Section of the website). PLEASE NOTE: Broadband is now available for MDS transmissions in Missouri. If you do not choose to use Broadband, you must apply for a waiver. Please check for information related to broadband and/or a waiver, which will be on the website.
- Download RAVEN data entry software or purchase private vendor product.
- Receive training for using data entry software and submission process from vendor.
- Train a minimum of two facility personnel on the submissions process.
- Get familiar with the Initial Feedback and Final Validation reports.
  - Feedback reports will be provided to the nursing home indicating acknowledgement of the transmission of the data and specifying the status of the record validation.
  - The information is transmitted via a modem to the MDS Data Management System where the file is validated to ensure the basic elements comply with the MDS data specifications
  - The user remains online to ensure that the submission has been accepted; an Initial Validation Report will be generated that will show whether the file was accepted or rejected
  - If the submission passes the initial validation check, then each record is checked for errors or exceptions to the data specifications and a final validation report is issued (data edits performed)
- The facility must use MDS software capable of encoding MDS records and exporting data files in accordance with the MDS data specifications.
- The facility must obtain the CMS mandated software updates from their software vendor.

### Back-Up Data:

- It is the responsibility of all providers to have a regular back up plan for all local assessment data. Data is recommended to be backed up nightly.
- The state will NOT recreate lost data. If a facility experiences a data loss, the facility will be responsible for recreating the lost information.
- If you need assistance with the back up of your data or have questions with regard to this issue, contact the QTSO Help Desk for assistance ([mds\\_help@ifmc.org](mailto:mds_help@ifmc.org)). (NOTE: There is an **underscore** between MDS and help!)

### Safe-Guarding Your MDS Data:

- Train at least two staff members on the MDS submission process.
- Use and test a method to ensure your computer system is regularly backed-up in case of hardware failure.
- Use surge protection/uninterrupted power supplies for both your computer and telephone line.