

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Patient Assessment: Pay Attention To These Risk Indicators In Pneumonia Patients

Certain assessment parameters may hold more sway over patients' fate.

Pre-existing mood decline may bode poorly for residents with pneumonia. That's according to a risk-assessment tool predicting mortality and morbidity in residents with pneumonia or lower respiratory tract infection.

Mood deterioration predicted mortality in cases where nurses reported the mood decline within three months of the onset of the resident's pneumonia, says **David Mehr, MD, MS**, at the University of Missouri at Columbia, who helped develop and validate the instrument.

Researchers aren't sure, however, whether the mood change (captured by Section E of the MDS) actually reflects depression, Mehr adds. "People in decline tend to have mood deterioration," he notes.

In addition, body mass index appeared to be an important predictor of a pneumonia patient's mortality, according to the study that validated the tool. "Overweight people, even obese ones, had better survival rates than thin people, which probably has to do with their nutritional status," says Mehr.