

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

QUALITY OF CARE: The Wrong Nursing Policies/Procedures Can Ladle Up A Numeric Soup Of F Tags

Keep your eye on these requirements.

If your policy and procedure manual doesn't spell out how to do nursing treatments that meet the standard of care, your facility is an F tag waiting to happen--several of them.

For example, surveyors can write up your facility at F328 if it doesn't have special policies and procedures for specified nursing procedures ranging from the basic to more subacute fare. The list includes:

- injections
- parenteral and enteral fluids
- colostomy, ureterostomy or ileostomy care
- tracheostomy care
- tracheal suctioning
- respiratory care
- foot care and prostheses

The bottom line: Under F328, "the facility must ensure residents receive proper care and treatment procedures for special needs," says **Nancy Shellhorse**, an attorney in Austin, TX.

Facilities that use outdated nursing procedures/policies--or ones that violate the accepted standard of care--could end up with an F281 citation, notes **Barbara Miltenberger**, a nurse attorney with **Husch & Eppenberger** in Jefferson City, MO. F281 requires facilities to provide services that meet accepted standards of clinical practice.

Beware: F281 consistently ranks among the top 10 deficiencies.

If a resident had a negative outcome tied to a faulty nursing procedure, the facility could also get a quality-of-care tag, such as F309, Miltenberger says.