

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Risk Management: Follow These 2 Risk Management Must-Do's

In the world of risk management, there's only one thing worse than not doing a fall risk assessment at admission. And that is doing a great one - and then failing to address the risks. Run-ner-up for the booby prize: Doing a risk assessment that you can't prove you did or when you did it.

Make sure the interdisciplinary team not only does a fall risk assessment on the resident, but also dates and places the risk screening in the medical record, stressed certified medical director **Mark Heard, MD**, in comments at a recent **American Medical Directors Association** conference in Nashville, TN. Without proof you did the risk assessment at intake, a facility can face a lawsuit if a resident falls - even if the staff did nothing wrong, Heard cautioned.

Then make sure you devise, implement and evaluate a care plan to address the identified risks. And keep the care plan loop moving with ongoing evaluation of the plan's effectiveness. "You never want to red flag a risk and then not follow up on it - or address the risk but not have the documentation to show you did," says **Scot Sauder, JD**. "That shortcoming gives the plaintiff's attorney a road map to a case against you. Don't give these guys free passes."