

## Long-Term Care Survey Alert

### **SURVEY MANAGEMENT: Ask Staff To Put On Their Surveyor Hats**

**This strategy can help keep you survey ready 24/7.**

Teaching staff what to look for and correct it in real time can pay off spades during a survey, which is more important than ever these days.

A major survey challenge: "Some surveyors skip the initial entrance conference and head straight to the unit when they come in the door," observes **Janet Dykstra, MS, RN, CDONA/LTC**. "They want to get a look before everyone starts scrambling to fix things," says Dykstras, a consultant with **LW Consulting Inc.** in Jenkintown, PA.

Thus, "it's a good idea to have staff, including CNAs, housekeeping and maintenance folks, involved in doing regular rounds in the facility," adds **Edythe Cassel Walters, MBA, RN, NHA**, director, **LW Consulting Inc.**

That way, your survey won't get off on the wrong foot which can happen when surveyors do initial walking rounds and see lots of little things that add up, in their minds, to a problem facility.

**Key point:** Involve more than just managers in doing the environment checks. "You want front-line people doing rounds on evening and night shifts and teaching them to be aware of little things such as a urinal sitting on the bedside table with the water pitcher or nasal cannulas left uncovered," says Walters.

"Make sure to get CNAs and activities staff, for example, involved in doing the rounds. Those are the people who are with the residents all the time," Walters adds. "And if they are correcting things, the facility will have less to fix."

**Make this a survey preparation tool:** For a checklist of common survey violations that your staff can pick up during rounds, see "Cut off These 23 F Tags At The Pass," in the October 2006 Long-Term Care Survey Alert.