

## Long-Term Care Survey Alert

### Survey Management: GET SURVEYORS ON YOUR PAGE WITH DEMENTIA SERVICES

Sometimes even the best dementia care program won't make surveyors happy, especially if they aren't up to speed on Alzheimer's disease.

"Some surveyors are very savvy about Alzheimer's disease and others get very concerned about things like placement of call lights," says **Gail Schober**, director of the Alzheimer's program at **Sherrill House** in Boston. "Yes, you have to have call lights but usually a person with even moderate AD isn't going to be able to use a call light appropriately."

So your facility may have to educate surveyors in a "collegial way" about AD, your dementia care program and the clinical rationale for creative and flexible approaches that some surveyors may initially mistake as irresponsible, Schober advises. "You can help surveyors understand what people with AD can and cannot do at various stages of the disease, for example," Schober says.

You may have to explain why your staff changed a medication schedule to accommodate a particular resident's behavioral pattern. Or that you are allowing a resident to forego wearing a sling for an arm cast, as an example, because it causes her extreme emotional distress to wear it. These "deviations" should, however, be on the care plan.