

MDS Alert

Assessment Tip: Don't Let Your Residents Be Light - Or Heavy - Weights

Color-coding scheme tips scales toward improved accuracy.

Weighing patients can trip up your quality indicators and measures, so make sure your numbers are right on the money.

One facility improved the accuracy of its weights by implementing a color-coded system, reports **Diane Brown**, CEO of **Brown LTC Consultants** in Boston. "They use color-coded scales with matching color-coded cards for each resident," so staff weigh the residents on the same scale each time, Brown tells **Eli**.

The facility also assigned a detail-oriented person to do the weighing. "The staff person marks critical elements on the resident's color-coded card to make sure these are met," says Brown. These elements include the time of day the resident is weighed (before breakfast) and whether the person was wearing any appliances. "Some of the residents learned the system and would point out in some cases that they were supposed to be weighed on the yellow rather than the red scale or weren't wearing their usual appliance."