

MDS Alert

Reader Question: Skill Residents in This Situation

Question: One of our residents became infected with COVID-19, declined quickly, and was transferred to a hospital. While at the hospital she was on a ventilator, but she managed to recover and was readmitted to our facility. There was no 60-day break between her prior SNF stay and the hospitalization. Now that she's back, can she be skilled, even though she is no longer testing positive for COVID-19? She needs therapy in order to recover further.

Connecticut Subscriber

Answer: "Yes you can, and that is wonderful news. Her need for SNF care now is directly related to the emergency. COVID is why she could not generate a wellness period," says **Judy Wilhide Brandt, RN, BA, CPC, QCP, RAC-MTA, DNS-CT**, principal for Wilhide Consulting Inc.

Make sure you clearly document medical decision making and medical necessity. You should have a process in place that details how you come to a decision about coverage for each resident.