

## MDS Alert

### Risk Management ~ Step Up Your Efforts To Ensure Adequate Hydration In Hot Weather

Even if your facility has air conditioning, residents can be at risk for dehydration when the temperature creeps up on hot days.

**A key step:** Keep an eye on the temperature, which should run in the mid-70s advises **Clare Hendrick**, a geriatric nurse practitioner and consultant in San Clemente, CA. "One way to gauge whether it's too hot is to ask the staff to let you know when they feel too warm and thirsty."

Put up posters saying, "Pour a second glass" to remind residents, staff and family members to drink more in the summer months, suggests Hendrick. If the rooms get too hot, you can use portable air conditioners that just plug into the wall outlet, she adds.

**A big hit:** In the summer months, **Heritage Enterprises** puts a slushy machine in the living area where residents can help themselves -- or the nurse can fix a resident one of the flavored drinks, says **Debra Miller**, a dietitian at the Bloomington, IL nursing facility.