

OASIS Alert

READER QUESTION ~ Antidepressant Medication Could Be Successful

Determine what time period you are assessing.

Question: How do we answer OASIS item M0590 (Depressive feelings reported or observed in patient) if the patient is on an antidepressant and doesn't seem depressed during the assessment? Doesn't the fact that she is on an antidepressant mean she is depressed?

Answer: There is not an automatic connection to depressive symptoms just because the patient is on antidepressants, says **Rhonda Will**, senior clinical consultant with Northampton, MA-based **Fazzi Associates**. But a patient may be on medication and still have symptoms associated with depression.

For M0590, you are concerned with the time period of the day of assessment and the recent past, Will explains. The clinician doing the assessment is responsible for probing and assessing to see if the patient is currently experiencing depressive symptoms or behaviors or has recently experienced them, she tells **Eli**.

Strategy: Observe the patient's mood, energy and affect, as well as asking about how the patient feels about her life compared to six months or a year ago. Don't forget to talk with the caregiver as well.