

## OASIS Alert

### Reader Question: Check Margins When Two Pressure Ulcers Become One

Question: When we admitted our patient, she had two distinct pressure ulcers in close proximity. Over the course of the episode her ulcers deteriorated and there is no longer any separating tissue. How should we answer M1308 -- Current number of unhealed (non epithelialized) pressure ulcers at each stage?

Answer: If your patient had one pressure ulcer, later developed another pressure ulcer, and eventually the wound margins met, you would count them as two ulcers for M1308, the **Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services** said in the October 2012 Quarterly OASIS Q&As. This is true as long as you're able to use the wound margins to tell one ulcer from the other.

However, depending on the timing and progression of the pressure ulcers, it may be difficult to know whether a current ulcer was once two ulcers, CMS said. Plus, knowing where one ulcer ends and another begins for assessment and reporting purposes can be tricky. In such situations, it's up to the assessing clinician to determine the number of pressure ulcers.