



Hello,

Happy New Year, and welcome to the Upstairs Solutions Newsletter.

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## We want to hear from you!

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## Top Ten F-Tag Citations

Have you ever wondered if you're the only one getting tagged for certain violations? Here are the top ten most frequent F-Tag citations:

10. **F225:** Not employ persons guilty of abuse, 5.31% of surveys (3,217 citations)
  
9. **F514:** Clinical records meet professional standards, 5.34% of surveys (3,235 citations)
  
8. **F314:** Proper treatment to prevent/heal pressure sores, 5.50% of surveys (3,330 citations)
  
7. **F279:** Develop comprehensive care plans, 5.83% of surveys (3,528 citations)

6. **F253:** Housekeeping and Maintenance Services, 6.09% of surveys (3,688 citations)
5. **F323:** Facility is free of accident hazards, 6.66% of surveys (4,031 citations)
4. **F324:** Supervision/devices to prevent accidents, 8.63% of surveys (5,223 citations)
3. **F281:** Services provided meet professional standards, 8.69% of surveys (5,262 citations)
2. **F371:** Store/prepare/distribute food under sanitary conditions, 9.34% of surveys (5,654 citations)
1. **F309:** Provide necessary care for highest practicable well-being, 10.62% of surveys (6,430 citations)

*Source: CASPERS 2006 (CLTC)*

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## **Unnecessary Drugs and Pharmacy Services -- New Med Management Guidelines**

On December 15, CMS updated the pharmacy and medication regulatory F-tags #329, #425, #428, and #431. You will have to wade through more than 100 pages of new and revised language. These new service tags will require close collaboration between the pharmacist, the facility staff, and the resident or responsible party. Those of you who are used to the frequent changes in CMS' regulations might be a little challenged in complying with these new guidelines.

By definition an "unnecessary drug" is any drug when used:

1. In excessive dose (including duplicative therapy)
2. For excessive duration
3. Without adequate monitoring
4. Without adequate indications for its use

5. In the presence of adverse consequences that indicate the dose should be reduced or discontinued

Under the new guidelines you must conduct monthly medication reviews to determine if there are unnecessary drugs or excessive doses.

Medications must be stored in a locked area at the correct temperature. Only authorized staff should have the key or combination. One common mistake that many facilities make is allowing the housekeeping staff to enter the medications rooms without supervision to mop and clean. You must make arrangements to have a nurse or other staff member present in these circumstances. Your staff must work closely with the pharmacy to insure that your medications are stored properly. This is one of the new key areas of emphasis in the guidelines.

Medication therapy must be appropriate to the individual resident, and your facility must make sure that the therapy (including administration of antipsychotic agents) is based on the following six specific aspects:

1. An adequate indication of use
2. Use of appropriate dose
3. Provision of behavioral interventions and gradual dose reduction for individuals receiving antipsychotics (unless clinically contraindicated) in an effort to reduce or discontinue the medication
4. Use of the appropriate duration
5. Adequate monitoring to determine whether therapeutic goals are met and detect the emergence or presence of adverse consequences
6. Reduction of dose or discontinuation of the medication in the presence of adverse consequences, as indicated

It might seem like it will be tough to comply with these new CMS guidelines, but if your team works together, and includes the physician, the pharmacist, the nursing staff, and most importantly the resident, then you will pass the test with flying colors.

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## About Upstairs Solutions LTC



Upstairs Solutions LTC is the leading provider of cost-effective on-line training and compliance tracking for the long-term care industry.

We provide a **full library of multimedia courses (modules)** that are delivered on-demand via the internet and designed exclusively for the long-term care industry, and a state-of-the-art web-based **Learning Management System (LMS)** to efficiently guide and track employee training activities.

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