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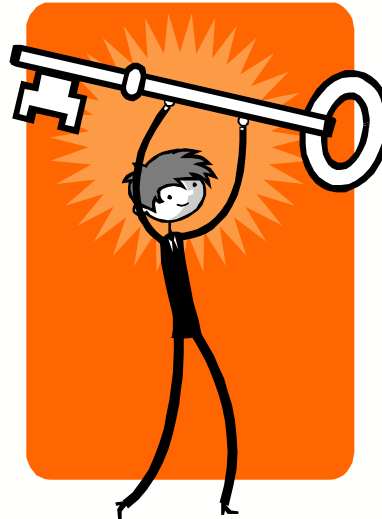
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F-Tags: The Key

In the last issue of *The Guardian*, we asked you how we could improve. We received a lot of encouraging comments and a few requests. The requests were for articles on F-Tags – specifically as they pertain to diabetes. Well, you asked and we have answered. This issue of *The Guardian* contains the first of a series of articles on F-Tags to help you meet regulations with ease. That being said, it is best to begin at the end: F-Tag 520 Quality Assurance and Assessment (QAA). Implementing this F-Tag will provide the foundation in your quest for exceeding standards.

Each facility is required to have a quality assessment and assurance committee consisting of the DON, a physician, and at least three other facility staff

members. Additional committee members should include the administrator, who has knowledge of how the facility runs and the authority



to implement changes; the medical director, who is responsible for development of resident care policies; a nurse or

other person with direct responsibility for resident care; and a member with direct responsibility for the physical facility. The facility social worker may be another wise member for the QAA Committee. The committee is required to meet at least quarterly to identify issues, develop plans for improvement, and implement corrective actions. The intent of F-Tag 520 is to have ongoing evaluation and improvement at all levels of the facility – and studies have shown that this accountability is highly effective in enhancing quality of care in LTC facilities. Because the State cannot require disclosure of committee records, it creates a safe environment in which to address deficiencies and remedy them.

There are many ways the QAA
(Continued on page 2)

Infection Control and Blood Glucose Testing

Testing blood glucose levels in residents with diabetes is extremely important. It allows you to know how to give them the best possible care based on where they are at. Over time, trends in blood glucose readings can help guide decisions on how to make major health program decisions for that resident. There is no doubt about it –

frequent testing makes for better resident care. However, just like anything where blood is involved, there can be hazards. Infection control is important to consider when choosing a blood glucose monitoring system; specifically performing blood glucose test and meter maintenance.

1. When performing blood glucose tests on residents, always wear gloves. They are an important layer of protection for you. In order to protect residents, make sure you use a new pair of gloves for each resident you test.

(Continued on page 3)

F-Tag 520, cont.

committee can choose to approach this enormous task. Addressing apparent problems in the facility is an

obvious answer, and certainly these are issues to address first.

Another way to approach it is to self assess your facility tag by tagging issues or making

improvements within each requirement as you work on that particular F-Tag. A third way to approach the

QAA process is to look at each disease management program. For examples, Diabetes Care Management would cause you to look at screening for diabetes, blood glucose testing processes and equipment, nutritional needs and programs, comorbidities and how they are screened and cared for, etc., etc.

Perhaps a combination of these three approaches would help the QAA Committee achieve the most significant progress. While the Quality

Assessment and Assurance Committee may feel like another time consuming mandatory requirement, establishing it well and working effectively may be the single most important step you take toward reducing F-Tag citations. While identifying and implementing plans to improve processes and quality is an enormous amount of work, the effort put in will ultimately make things run more smoothly. And *that* is an investment worth making.



For more information and the source of this article, please visit http://cms.hhs.gov/manuals/Downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf

Diabetes Resources

With so much information out there on Diabetes, it is hard to know where to go for reliable information. Below are some websites you will want to check out:

American Diabetes Association

www.diabetes.org

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is an excellent diabetes resource with everything from information for individuals who might not yet have diabetes

to the most recent clinical information for healthcare professionals.

American Medical Directors Association

www.amda.com

The American Medical Directors Association (AMDA) is focused on Long Term Care, meaning it will be relevant to your residents, and your job. Their diabetes guidelines are up-to-date and will be more likely to answer specific

questions you may have. Check out their newly published 2008 LTC Diabetes Guidelines.

ARKRAY and the Assure® Products

www.arkrayusa.com

We don't just manufacture products. We are involved in the industry and are your partners in diabetes management. We offer confident diabetes solutions. Contact us to find out how we can help you!

The Guardian by Email!



Did you know that *The Guardian* Newsletter for Long Term Care Professionals is available online? Each quarter, we post it on our website!

If you want to make sure you do not miss new issues of *The Guardian*, we can email you a quarterly notification so

you can read on your computer right away!

If you would like to receive these quarterly emails with a link to the online version of *The Guardian* Newsletter, send an email to Sarah Zook at zooks@arkrayusa.com with the word SUBSCRIBE in the subject line!

We promise not to sell, rent, or trade your email address to anyone else, so you can know you are safe and protected from spam. Your privacy is important to us!

Thanks for your loyal readership. We look forward to having you read online!

Infection Control and Testing, *cont.*

2. Look for a meter where the blood dosing is as far away from the meter as possible. The closer you bring blood to the meter, the more likely it will be for blood to get on places it shouldn't be.
3. Look for a meter with a strip release feature or test strip with large handle to avoid any contact with blood when removing used test strips.
4. You may contemplate using an individual meter for each resident. While this may seem like an easy solution, it opens doors to logistical and time management issues. Your state or accrediting body may require that you perform a control solution test regularly on each meter that is in use to ensure that the meter is functioning properly. The more meters you are using, the more time you spend on control solution testing. Use a meter that comes with procedures for multi-resident use.
5. Cleaning and disinfecting your meter is another key aspect to infection control and blood glucose testing. This is especially important if you use one meter for multiple residents. We recommend disinfecting your blood glucose meters between testing each resident to avoid any cross contaminations issues.



Gloves are a needed barrier for protection when working with blood and other fluids.

1



Application site far from meter.

2



Application site too close to meter.

3



Strip release button eliminates need to touch used test strips.



Used test strip must be touched at application site to remove.

To clean the outside of the Assure® Pro or Assure® 4 blood glucose meters, use a lint-free cloth dampened with soapy water or isopropyl alcohol (70% - 80%). To disinfect a blood glucose meter, dilute 1mL of household bleach (5% - 6% sodium hypochlorite solution) in 9 mL of water to achieve a 1:10 dilution. The solution can then be used to dampen a paper towel (do not saturate the towel). Use the dampened paper towel to wipe down the meter.

In the event your facility does not allow bleach to be kept in the facilities, effective alternative products include Steris Coverage Spray HB by Fisher Scientific and Sani-Cloth HB Germicidal Disposal Wipe by PDI.

Since testing is such a routine part of your day, it is important to us as your Diabetes Partner to make it is easy and safe for you and your residents as possible. Remember, infection control can be made easier by choosing the right meter, using cleaning guidelines, and wearing the appropriate protective products.

Having an application site as far from the meter as possible helps with infection control.

November is Diabetes Month

Nationwide:

- 23.6 million people – 7.8% of the population – have diabetes
- Diagnosed: 17.9 million people
- Undiagnosed: 5.7 million people

If current trends continue one out of three Americans, and one in two minorities, born in 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime.

Learn more about diabetes, how to prevent it, and how to care for it at www.diabetes.org



5198 West 76th Street
Edina, MN 55439 USA
Toll Free: 800.818.8877
Fax: 952.646.3230
info@arkrayusa.com

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\$50 Question

What infection control features should you look for in a blood glucose meter?

In every issue of *The Guardian*, ARKRAY will ask a question about topics featured in the issue. A **\$50 AMEX gift certificate** will be awarded to one person who submits the correct answer. Those submitting the correct answer will be pooled in a drawing. You will only be notified if you are the winner.

Submission Details:

Please mail, fax, or email your answer along with your full name, facility name, facility address and phone number to the attention of **Sarah Zook** at **ARKRAY USA, Inc.**
5198 W 76th St.
Edina, MN 55439
Fax: 952.646.3230
info@arkrayusa.com
DEADLINE: Dec. 20, 2008

Last Issue:

What vitamins can help reduce memory decline after high fat meals for seniors?

Answer:

Vitamins C and E!

The answer to the question was found on page 2 of the last issue in the article entitled "Remember?"

*Congratulations
to last quarter's
Winner!*