

THE Guardian™

LTC Professionals Newsletter

F-Tag 441: Infection Control

Healthcare is such an important aspect in people's quality of life. It is meant to heal and help people stay healthy. But anytime you bring many people together - healthy or ill - it can be hazardous. In LTC facilities, infection control is as important for residents as it is for healthcare workers. F-Tag 441 states that a facility must establish and maintain an infection control program designed to provide a safe, sanitary, and comfortable environment and to help prevent the development and transmission of disease and infection. Established infection control programs must cover three aspects: 1.) preventing, identifying, and containing infections in the facility, 2.) determining what protocols must be carried out with individual residents, and 3.) documenting incidents and corrective actions.

The intent of F-Tag 441 is to make certain each facility has an effective program in place to investigate the cause of infection, control the spread of infections, and prevent new infections from occurring. Generally, a deeper investigation of a facility's infection control program will only occur if unsatisfactory signs are found

first. Your infection control program should be in writing and evaluated regularly.

Contact your state health department for guidance on establishing a program as the scope can be extensive. They can provide you with current industry standards and best practices. Your program should include procedures for everything from early diagnoses for TB to sanitation of tubs to staff training on infection control.

While a written infection control program is essential, here are some day-to-day steps you can take that will help meet state requirements:

- » If a resident has an infection, be sure to document when it began, what caused it, and what steps you have taken to prevent spreading within the facility.
- » Make sure everyone on staff is wearing gloves whenever needed.
- » Sanitize multiple use equipment, especially blood glucose meters, according to the manufacturers recommendations. If you are unsure of what these are, contact your manufacturer representative to have the information sent to you.
- » Train new staff and refresh all staff

on infection control procedures and practices. Consistency across the board is important.

Your infection control policies will be reviewed if any aspect of infection control practice is observed as an issue.

Diabetes care can be a hot button for F-Tag 441 as blood regularly comes into play. Wear gloves while performing blood glucose tests.

Remember to use single use lancets with a lockout feature and dispose of them properly in sharps containers. Use meters specifically designed for multi-resident use. Disinfect meters in between use on each resident. If you have any questions or concerns regarding infection control as it relates to your diabetes management program, contact your ARKRAY Assure® representative for a consultation on how to improve practices at your facility by calling 800.818.8877.

For more information and for the source of this article please visit:

http://cms.bhs.gov/manuals/Downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltf.pdf

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For questions, comments and suggestions on The Guardian™ please contact Sarah Zook at 800.818.8877 ext. 3226 or zooks@arkrayusa.com



Reader's Suggest: How to Reduce Staff Turnover

Last issue of the Guardian, we wrote about *How to Reduce Staff Turnover*. Staff turnover is frustrating, expensive, and reduces the quality of care residents receive. While there are a lot of ways to reduce staff turnover, who better to turn to for advice than the experts in the Long Term Care community—You! Many of you wrote in with great suggestions and tips about what you are doing in your facilities to reduce staff turnover and we are excited to share them here. Find out what others are doing to learn what you can do too!

» Have supervisors randomly give out gift cards to employees who are doing a great job. Being recognized for a job well done and five dollars for coffee or ice cream can have a huge impact on someone's day and how they feel about their job.

» Periodically, bring in lunch or treats for your staff. Sometimes pizza or donuts can help boost everyone's spirits. And getting a few minutes to chat with co-workers builds commraderie.

» Encourage employees to proactively address issues they see or work to improve processes. Frustrations can turn to challenges to be overcome when staff is empowered to do something positive about things that are getting them down.

» Have supervisors come alongside their employees to help with everyday tasks. Working on it together for a few minutes improves the relationship, helps the employee know their supervisor has their back, and helps everyone feel less overwhelmed.

» Smile. If you do it, other people will

too. Fake it til' you make it. Never underestimate how much a simple smile will impact your environment. And anyone can do it.

Thanks to everyone who took time to submit suggestions. Practical advice from the LTC community is invaluable.

Support your LTC community by submitting your tips for the next issue of *Readers Suggest*:

What is something you wish you had known before your last State Survey?

Submit your answers to:
info@arkrayusa.com
or fax them to
952.646.3230

New CE Courses

ARRKAY is committed to helping you in every aspect of your diabetes management program and education is a big part of that. We provide accredited CE credits to our customers—at no cost! We have recently added new courses to our online program! We now have a total of 5 credits available to you.

If you already have an account set up, check back in for new courses at www.ARRKAYEducation.com to enroll in new courses—don't

push those required credits off until the last minute. We make it easy by automatically submitting your online test scores to your state!

If you don't have your account set up yet, contact your ARKRAY Rep for the authorization code to get you started.

» **Diabetes: Macrovascular Complications of Diabetes Mellitus:** To discuss prevention strategies and pharmacological and non-pharmacological

treatment options for macrovascular complications of diabetes.

» **Diabetes: Acute Complications of Diabetes :** Covers hypoglycemia (causes, treatment, and prevention), nighttime low blood sugar, low blood sugar unawareness, hyperglycemia, sick day rules, diabetic ketoacidosis (cause and prevention) and hyperglycemic hyperosmolar non-ketotic coma or syndrome.



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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!

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

AST in LTC

Alternate Site Testing (AST) has become a regular practice among self care patients who have diabetes. Children with Type 1 often choose AST at home giving them another option for their frequent testing. But what about Alternate Site Testing in Long Term Care facilities?

While there are no regulations regarding using AST in LTC, ARKRAY does **not** recommend that healthcare professionals use AST in facilities for several reasons.

First, blood glucose results from sites other than the fingertip may be significantly different due to blood glucose levels changing rapidly after a meal or insulin. Blood from the fingertip provides the most “up to date” glucose readings in such cases.

Second, to obtain a blood sample for AST, you must use an AST lancing device with a clear end cap. These

devices are generally for individual use as opposed to the OSHA recommended single use safety lancets used by most healthcare professionals. Bruising can also be an issue with AST. Because resident comfort is a serious consideration, look for high gauge single use safety lancets (25 or 28 gauge) with quick spring action.

Third, additional training is needed for AST. Differences between AST and fingertip testing cannot be predicted for each individual. An understanding of these differences is essential to proper diabetes management.

Times when AST testing is inappropriate include:

- » If resident is within 2 hours of a meal
- » If resident is within 2 hours of insulin dosing
- » Within 2 hours of physical activity
- » If there is a history of hypoglycemia

AST is acceptable if:

- » Resident is being tested before a meal
- » Resident is in a fasting state
- » Two hours have passed since a meal, insulin dosing, or exercise.

It is clear that AST is not an ideal option in the LTC setting. However, ARKRAY acknowledges that under some circumstances, AST needs to be an available option. If your facility has a patient that requires AST, speak with your ARKRAY representative. They can not only help you find the right meter and lancet device, but make recommendations to help you meet OSHA recommendations, State regulations, and prevent cross contamination issues.



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\$50 Question

**Is Alternate Site Testing recommended
for Long Term Care Facilities?**

Submit your answer to info@arkrayusa.com
or fax to 952.646.3230

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.

Last Issue:

What are some factors contributing to staff turnover?

Answers could include:

Stress, salary, overwhelmed, lack of recognition or appreciation

The answer to the question was found on pages 1 and 3 of the last issue in the article entitled "The Cost of Staff Turnover."

