



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH  
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

JANET OLSZEWSKI  
DIRECTOR

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 29, 2004

**TO:** Long Term Care Facilities

**FROM:** MDCH/Clinical Advisory Panel  
Quality Improvement Nurse Consultants

**SUBJECT:** *Process Guideline for Acute Change Of Condition*

Best clinical practice is only worthwhile to the extent that we use it to guide care for our residents.

An acute change of condition (ACOC) is a sudden, clinically important deviation from a patient's baseline in physical, cognitive, behavioral, or functional domains. "Clinically important" means a deviation that, without intervention, may result in complications or death. (AMDA, Acute Change of Condition. 2003). Collaboratively, our current focus area seeks to enable staff to evaluate and manage residents at the facility and avoid transfer to a hospital or emergency room (ER); by recognizing an ACOC and identifying its nature, severity, and causes. The purpose of the following instructions is to clarify how to apply the Documentation Checklist: *Process Guideline for Acute Change Of Condition*. Attached is a copy of the Process Guideline. It is also available on the Quality Improvement Nurse Consultant website: [www.michigan.gov/qinc](http://www.michigan.gov/qinc). This **optional** "best practice" tool for the management of acute change of condition was presented to you at the Fall 2004 Joint Provider/Surveyor Training on September 2, 2004. The effective date for usage of the tool is October 4, 2004.

Both facilities and surveyors will have the opportunity to use the Documentation Checklist when the management of an acute change in a resident's condition is of concern. Facilities will be accorded the opportunity to demonstrate that they have followed the steps in this guideline, as evidence to support an appropriate care process related to acute change of condition management.

A workgroup including doctors, nurses, and aides with experience in geriatrics, nursing home care, and infectious disease discussed in depth the topic of acute change of condition in the long-term care population. They used available references about geriatric acute change of condition to help them prepare the process guidelines. The documentation checklist contains a series of steps related to managing acute change of condition issues in nursing home residents.

Best clinical practice information helps each facility provide the best possible care throughout the year. Along with information in the federal OBRA regulations, our surveyors will use these process guidelines to review how your facility is managing acute change of condition concerns.