



## F-TAG 323? DEFINING FALLS MANAGEMENT

The combination of F-323 and F-324 to F-323 *Accidents and Hazards* now increases scrutiny on a facility's ability to prevent “avoidable” accidents. This new F-Tag further defines what surveyors should look for in determining the processes a facility uses to proactively identify risk areas and correct the potential for future risk. Key terms such as “avoidable or unavoidable accident” and “adequate supervision” may lead to confusion in interpretation, but a close look at the guidelines defines expectations that should allow for manageable results. Bed-Check understands the importance of partnering with you to ensure compliance with this important survey area.

### **Q Does the new F-Tag focus only on falls?**

**A** The new F-Tag focuses on *Accidents* and *Supervision*. Along with falls management, it includes environmental hazards such as toxins and physical plant safety, smoking protocols, elopement, entrapment, equipment usage and safety, water and electrical hazard management and a facility's ability to identify risk.

### **Q Does Adequate Supervision mean that I have to increase staff to provide more 1:1 care?**

**A** Adequate Supervision refers to all of the necessary interventions needed to *Identify* the likelihood of a fall and to appropriately reduce that likelihood. If clinical assessments *identify* the need for more 1:1 supervision, then it is expected that a facility will find a way to meet that need. The key to success in this F-tag is a *thorough evaluation* of a resident's needs. F-323 calls for a system's approach to accident management that includes *Identifying* resident needs, *Evaluating* options to meet those needs, *Implementing* those options and *Monitoring* or modifying the success of those options.

Bed-Check understands that the successful use of monitors has to be within this framework and that monitors can be used as tools to support the other interventions also identified for fall prevention.

### **Q Are monitors considered Assistive Devices?**

**A** Assistive Devices refer to a device used to “promote, supplement, or enhance the resident's function and/or safety.” Fall monitors should be used as a way to alert staff, residents, and other caregivers on the potential for risk so that action can be taken. F-323 clearly defines that all staff must know how and why devices are being used. It also states clearly that a facility has an obligation to follow manufacturer's recommendations for usage. Bed-Check proudly offers in-house 1:1 training to your staff to ensure that compliance with the monitors can be met. As well, our extensive manufacturer testing consistently proves that our monitors are reliable. With the extra support to train your staff while providing you a superior product, you can focus your time on identifying resident's needs and modifying care plans to meet those needs versus worrying about how your equipment will work and if staff will know how to operate it.



***Q How can using a fall monitor help with Identifying, Evaluating, Implementing and Modifying?***

**A** Identifying a resident's needs is the first step in preventing an avoidable fall. The temporary use of a monitor to alert staff of a resident's physical habits can allow for extra support while supervising and devising a plan. Once the plan is determined, Bed-Check products can assist in meeting individualized care plans by using the many extra features we offer. For example, using a different monitor sound over the course of a week can be an extra alert to staff during a time period where a resident is showing a decline in function and clinical reasons for the decline have not yet been identified. If a resident becomes non-compliant with his/her plan of care, changing the monitor sound can be an added reminder to the resident of the risk he/she takes when not following recommendations. All of these options can add to the individualized care planning process. Documenting all assessments and interventions is critical to a facility's success with this F-tag.

***Q Should facilities eliminate the use of fall monitor equipment to be compliant with F-323?***

**A** Fall monitors are intended to be supportive interventions for comprehensive falls management. The language in F-323 indicates that it is the responsibility of a facility's clinical and non-clinical staff to thoroughly investigate a person's likelihood of falling and to put a plan in place to reduce that likelihood. At Bed-Check, we recognize that a fall monitor device should not be the sole intervention when trying to prevent falls. Rather, use of the fall monitor equipment, with other identified interventions, such as but not limited to: planned and scheduled 1:1 activities, rehabilitation or restorative programs, counseling services or dietary assessments is the best approach to falls management.

*Betty*