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## PRESSURE ULCERS

### NEW MEDICARE REGULATIONS REGARDING PRESSURE ULCERS IN THE NURSING HOME

*By Nursing Home Administrator and Internist from Connecticut*

CMS (Medicare and Medicaid) and JCAHO (a national voluntary accreditation organization) have recently published revised regulations that specify an increased level of care that must be performed by Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF's) with regards to Pressure (Decubitus) Ulcers. Because of these revised regulations, SNF's that care for patients under the Medicare/Medicaid Program (virtually all Nursing Homes) will receive increased attention from State Surveyors towards the goal of zero tolerance for Pressure Ulcers. These new regulations specify ways in which SNF's must prevent and treat Pressure Ulcers, which are defined as either Avoidable or Unavoidable, with respect to whether or not the SNF has made an appropriate preventive effort:

"A resident who enters the facility without pressure sores does not develop pressure sores unless the individual's clinical condition demonstrates that they were unavoidable."

In short, the revised Medicare law puts an increased burden on SNF's to prevent and treat Pressure Ulcers, and failure to adhere to these new regulations will ultimately increase liability risk for Nursing Homes.

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