

RUG-IV: Signs of Depression

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RUG-IV Case Mix Review Fact Sheet #16

What is Case Mix?

Minnesota Case Mix is a system that classifies residents into distinct groups, called Resource Utilization Groups (RUGs), based on the resident's condition and the care the resident received at the time of the assessment. A value is assigned to each group, which is then used to calculate the daily rate of payment.

Depression can be associated with psychological and physical distress, decreased participation in therapy and activities, decreased functional status, and poorer outcomes. Mood disorders are common in nursing homes and are often underdiagnosed and undertreated. The Minimum Data Set (MDS) assessment identifies signs and symptoms of mood distress. It is important to identify these signs and symptoms because they can be treatable. The presence of mood indicators does not automatically mean that the resident has a diagnosis of depression. Facility staff identify these indicators and consider them when developing the resident's individualized care plan.

When conducting the assessment for mood indicators, a formalized interview called the PHQ-9© (Patient Health Questionnaire) is utilized unless the resident is rarely or never understood and/or the resident needs an interpreter, and one is not available. The PHQ-9© is a validated interview that screens for symptoms of depression. It provides a standardized severity score and a rating for evidence of a depressive disorder. A summary score indicates the extent of potential depression symptoms. The score does not diagnose a mood disorder but provides a standard of communication with clinicians and mental health specialists. The PHQ-9© total severity score also provides a way for health care providers and clinicians to easily identify and track symptoms and how these symptoms change over time.

When the resident is not able to complete the PHQ-9©, scripted interviews with staff provide critical information for understanding the resident's mood and for making care planning decisions.

The presence of **signs of depression** affects the classifications in the two Special Care RUG categories and the Clinically Complex RUG category.

Minnesota Department of Health

Case Mix Review

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www.health.state.mn.us/facilities/regulation/casemix/index.html

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