

SYMPTOM IDENTIFICATION FOR AGITATION ASSOCIATED WITH DEMENTIA DUE TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Use this resource to help with:

- **Identifying and documenting agitation symptoms** or behaviors observed in residents with Alzheimer's dementia
- **Capturing observations** for communication to designated personnel for evaluation
- **Asking the interdisciplinary team** to determine if further assessment should be completed

The International Psychogeriatric Association uses 4 criteria to define agitation:

- The resident must meet the criteria for a cognitive impairment or dementia syndrome
- The behavior(s) must produce excess disability beyond that due to cognitive impairment* and significantly impair ≥ 1 of the following:
 - Interpersonal relationships
 - Other aspects of social functioning
 - Ability to perform or participate in daily living activities
- The resident must exhibit 1 of the following behaviors:
 - ≥ 1 agitation behavior(s) associated with emotional distress, and the behavior(s) must be recurrent for a minimum of 2 weeks, OR
 - Behavior that represents a dramatic change in the resident's usual behavior[†]
- The agitation cannot be attributable solely to:
 - Another psychiatric disorder
 - Suboptimal care conditions
 - A medical condition
 - The physiological effects of a substance

*According to the clinician's opinion.

[†]In special circumstances, the ability to document the behaviors over 2 weeks may not be possible, and other terms of persistence and severity may be needed to capture the syndrome beyond a single episode.

Identifying the symptoms of Agitation associated with dementia due to Alzheimer's Disease

What are agitated symptoms?

Agitated behaviors are defined by the Cohen-Mansfield Agitation Inventory (CMAI). The CMAI is a clinically widespread tool that provides 29 symptoms of agitation to look for when caring for residents with Alzheimer's disease. Symptoms can be verbal, physically non-aggressive, or aggressive, and are scored by clinicians based on caregiver input.

Resident name _____

Check any symptom(s) observed

Agitation behaviors as defined by CMAI



Aggressive

- Screaming
- Biting
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Hurting self or others
- Cursing or verbal aggression
- Pushing
- Scratching
- Throwing things
- Spitting
- Tearing things/destroying property
- Grabbing onto people

Other: _____



Physically Non-aggressive

- Pacing, aimless wandering
- General restlessness
- Inappropriate dress or disrobing
- Trying to get to a different place
- Handling things inappropriately
- Performing repetitive mannerisms



Verbally Agitated

- Complaining
- Constant unwarranted request for attention or help
- Repetitive sentences or questions
- Negativism

Additional behaviors include making physical sexual advances, intentional falling, eating/drinking inappropriate substances, hiding things, hoarding things, making verbal sexual advances, and strange noises (weird laughter or crying).

Please find extra space on the back to add more information about your resident if needed.

