

MFEI Level of Care Tool

Module 9— Health Conditions



Module 9: Health Conditions

Covered in this module:

- Falls
- Instability of Condition



22. Falls

Intent: To determine whether the person has a history of falling, which is an important factor in assessing the person's risk of future falls and risk for hospitalization or institutionalization

Definition: Any unintentional change in position; includes falls that occur while being assisted by others; includes falling against wall or furniture

22. Falls: Process

- Falls should be recorded whether or not an injury resulted
- Information and context learned here can help inform other sections, e.g., support needs in ADLs and IADLs
- Noting information gained from other items, such as changes in the ADL item locomotion, may also help the person recall falls
- Using a common time marker, such as the 4th of July, or one specific to the person being assessed, such as their birthday, may help the person to recall falls that occurred within the 1, 3, or 6 month periods
- Be culturally sensitive about using religious holidays as markers; use only if you are aware of the person's religious traditions
- If the precise number or timing of falls cannot be recalled, use the person's best estimate

22. Falls: Example Questions

- Have you fallen in the last month? How many times?
- How about before then? Did you have any falls in [appropriate months]?
- Thinking even further back, did you have any falls during the summer/spring/winter/fall?

22. Falls: Coding

- **22. Falls (in last 6 months)**

- a. In last 30 days:**

- No falls
 - One fall
 - Two or more falls

- b. 31-90 days ago:**

- No falls
 - One fall
 - Two or more falls

- c. 91-180 days ago:**

- No falls
 - One fall
 - Two or more falls

Practice Scenarios

Falls: Practice Scenario A

Mr. Z failed to reach a grab bar last week while transferring to the toilet. His aide was standing by, and was able to break his fall so that he was not injured. However, Mr. Z landed on the floor and needed two people to get him up onto the toilet. He reported no other falls.

How would you code item 22a. *Falls in the last 30 days* for Mr. Z?

Falls: Practice Scenario A

Answer

Mr. Z missed reaching for a grab bar **last week** while transferring to the toilet. His aide was standing by, and was able to break his fall so that he was not injured. However, Mr. Z **landed on the floor** and needed two people to get him up onto the toilet. He reported **no other falls during that period.**

a. In the last 30 days: **One fall**

Falls: Practice Scenario B

Ms. B reported falling several times “a while back” when transferring from her wheelchair into her friend’s car. She said the ground was icy and the chair moved while she was transferring. She remembered that the falls occurred when she was going out to celebrate Valentine’s Day, which was four months ago. She couldn’t recall falling at any other time.

How would you code item 22c. *Falls in the last 90-180 days* for Ms. B?

Falls: Practice Scenario B

Answer

Ms. B reported **falling several times “a while back”** when transferring from her wheelchair into her friend’s car. She said the ground was icy and the chair moved while she was transferring. She remembered that the **falls occurred when she was going out to celebrate Valentine’s Day, which was four months ago.** She could recall **no other falls.**

c. In the last 91-180 days ago: **Two or more falls**

Instability of Condition

23. Instability of Condition: Intent

- The intent of this item is to record whether the person is experiencing **health conditions that may cause their condition to be unstable** (as in fluctuating, precarious or deteriorating), as this **may affect home care needs**
- This item also helps contextualize the look-back period for those with instable conditions

23. Instability of Condition: Definitions

- a. **Conditions/diseases make cognitive, ADL, mood, or behavior patterns unstable (fluctuating, precarious, or deteriorating)**
 - For example, the person may have a condition such as a brain injury, ulcerative colitis, rheumatoid arthritis, or multiple sclerosis that causes variable amounts of pain or changing mobility needs, possibly resulting in increased dependence on others

23. Instability of Condition: Definitions

b. Experiencing an acute episode or flare-up of a recurrent or chronic problem

- The person has symptoms of an acute condition (e.g., heart attack, flu) or a recurrent acute condition (e.g., UTI, aspiration pneumonia)
- The person is experiencing an exacerbation or flare-up of a chronic condition, e.g. new-onset shortness of breath, or increased pedal edema in person with congestive heart failure
- This type of acute episode usually:
 - is of sudden onset
 - has a time-limited course
 - requires evaluation by a physician

23. Instability of Condition: Process

- Consult with the person and the person's family and caregivers, as appropriate; review any clinical records
- Recognize that discussing a deteriorating condition may be a very sensitive subject for the person and their family

23. Instability of Condition: Example Questions

- Do you have any conditions or disease that I should know about? Is that a new condition/disease?
- Do your symptoms come and go?
- Do you feel that your condition/disease can cause you fatigue or pain, or changes in your behavior or mood?
- Are there things that can cause your condition to get worse? (e.g. weather, stress, health issues, etc.)

23. Instability of Condition: Coding

a. **Conditions/diseases that make cognitive, ADL, mood or behavior patterns unstable (fluctuating, precarious, deteriorating)**

No Yes

b. **Experiencing an acute episode, or a flare-up of a recurrent or chronic problem**

No Yes

Practice Scenarios

Instability of Condition: Practice Scenario A

Ms. C has lived with multiple sclerosis for many years, but recently her gait has become more unsteady and she reports significant nerve pain. Her physician has changed her medication and asked her to see him again in one month.

Based on this information, how would you code item 23a. *Conditions/diseases make cognitive, ADL, mood, or behavior patterns unstable* for Ms. C?

Instability of Condition: Practice Scenario A – Answer

Ms. C has lived with multiple sclerosis for many years, but recently **her gait has become more unsteady and she reports significant nerve pain**. Her physician has **changed her medication** and asked her to see him again **in one month**.

23a. **Yes**

Instability of Condition: Practice Scenario B

Ms. K has chronic heart failure and has been experiencing shortness of breath and increased swelling of her legs. She is under the care of a home health nurse and has had a change of medication. She has been advised to limit her activity until her condition improves.

How would you code item 23b. *Experiencing an acute episode, or a flare-up of a recurrent or chronic problem* for Ms. K?

Instability of Condition: Practice Scenario B - Answer

Ms. K has **chronic heart failure** and has been **experiencing shortness of breath and increased swelling of her legs**. She is under **the care of a home health nurse** and has had a **change of medication**. She has been advised to **limit her activity** until her condition improves.

23b. Yes