

INTERACT^{II} **Early Warning Tool**



Purpose:

The purpose of the Early Warning Tool is to help you identify when one of the residents you care for has changed. Such changes can result in the resident getting sicker if further evaluation is not done. This tool gives you a way to document what you see and to inform the nurse taking care of the patient.

Consistent use of this tool will help you and your nursing home:

- Identify and document changes in residents under your care
- Communicate changes to other nursing staff
- Identify possible opportunities to prevent sending your residents to the hospital
- Improve the overall level of care provided for residents

When to use:

The Early Warning Tool should be completed for all changes in resident status on a *shift-by-shift basis* by staff members who have *direct contact* with a resident. More than one change may be noted on each form.

It is important to get into the habit of documenting changes in status. The tool will provide the most useful information if it is completed during or at the end of your shift.

Who to involve:

This tool may be used by CNA's, food service staff, therapists, nursing staff, and other critical staff who have direct resident contact. What is most important is that the tool is completed for all residents with a change in status, that it is completed *during the shift* in which the change was noted, and that the change is reported to the nurse taking care of the resident.

Helpful Hints:

- **Keep the pocket card with you at all times.** The tool is designed to help guide you through a brief but complete review of early changes that often lead transfers of residents to the hospital.
- **Complete the Early Warning Tool form during or at the end of each shift in which a change was noted, and give it to the nurse taking care of the resident.**