

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMPLETING BODY CHECKS

Body checks are an important tool to assess a person for injuries, illness or possible abuse and neglect. The timing and manner of conducting body checks are key to their effectiveness in safeguarding people receiving services.

STAFF ACTIONS	
<p>COMPLETE BODY CHECKS AS REQUIRED</p> <p>Follow guidance in plans of care to conduct and document body checks on people receiving services. Note any marks or injuries found. Follow agency policies to complete checks after situational events such as a restraint, elopement, or a fall. When marks or injuries are noted, conduct and document body checks until all marks or injuries are healed. Seek medical attention from nursing, primary care physicians, or urgent care for any marks or injuries that require medical care.</p>	<p>ADD A PHOTO?</p> <p>Check agency policies for requirements or restrictions on photographing marks or injuries found during body checks. This includes photographs to document an injury or the absence of one if it is being completed after an incident or the progression of an injury following its initial identification. Check with a supervisor or manager before taking a picture to confirm it is ok to do so. Avoid using a personal cell phone to take or text any photographs of people receiving services. Remember your HIPAA training!</p>
<p>DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT</p> <p>Write clearly to ensure that fellow staff, nurses and managers will be able to read the body check form. This will save time later. Don't forget to sign and date the body check form. Include a printed name and staff title next to all signatures.</p>	<p>PRACTICE SENSITIVITY</p> <p>Consider the person's feelings and what they need to feel comfortable and safe when preparing to conduct a body check. Explain what will happen before beginning the body check and while completing it. When possible, fit the body check into the person's normal routine and have it completed by a preferred staff. Demonstrate understanding and patience if a person refuses to consent. Document the refusal and seek support from a manager or a supervisor.</p>
<p>BE DESCRIPTIVE</p> <p>Include details when documenting marks or injuries found during body checks. Note whether it was completed for the person's whole body or just one area, whether marks or injuries were old or new, their size, color, and location.</p> <p>For example: <i>a quarter-sized faded bruise, light purple in color, was located on the person's shin bone, just below his right knee.</i></p>	<p>FILL IN THE BLANKS</p> <p>Complete all areas of the body check form and don't leave any blanks. Include the type of mark or injury, the location, possible cause, whether the person required medical treatment, and whether the nursing department was notified.</p>