November 3, 2014

Q: I am confused with regard to resident identification wristbands. Are they allowed? Is there any difference on the use of identification wristbands between short-stay and long term stay residents?

A: Section 2-106a (210 ILCS 45/2-106a) of the Nursing Home Care Act states, “No identification wristlets shall be employed except as ordered by a physician who documents the need for such mandatory identification in the resident's clinical record. When identification bracelets are required, they must identify the resident's name, and the name, telephone number, and address of the facility issuing the identification wristlet.” Based on this statutory language, it does not matter whether the resident is short-stay or long term. There are no federal guidelines with respect to identification wristbands.