



No Pass Zone

Protocol Implementation Tips

Purpose

The No Pass Zone protocol ensures that every staff member takes responsibility for resident safety and comfort. If staff members see a call light on, they should not pass by without responding, even if it is outside their usual role. This approach supports residents to get help faster, reduces falls and injuries, improves resident and family satisfaction and quality of care, and strengthens teamwork by creating a culture where everyone works together to meet resident needs.

Collect Baseline Data

Before implementing the No Pass Zone, observe how long call lights currently take to be answered. Baseline data will provide a clear starting point to measure improvement and demonstrate why change is needed. When collecting baseline data, be sure to collect information from all nursing units, for various shifts, and high traffic times, such as going to and after meals. Also, collect your data that includes weekends so it represents a comprehensive sample of call light volume in the facility. Plan on this taking 4–7 days. Compile the data in a way that shows the call light information by nursing unit, shift, Monday–Friday and weekends so staff can visually see the opportunities for improvement. Share the results with the team to highlight the need for improvement and reinforce the importance of the No Pass Zone protocol.

How to Collect Data

- Be discreet so that staff do not know they are being timed, as this can influence behavior.
- Time how long it takes from when the light turns on until a staff member enters the room.
- Use a simple log to track the date, time, and call light response duration.
- Calculate the average response time after collecting enough samples that reflect various shifts, days of week, and all nursing units.

Create Awareness and Engagement

General Staff Meeting

Start by explaining the benefits and purpose of the No Pass Zone protocol at a general staff meeting. Emphasize that regardless of title or department, if staff members see a call light on, they must respond. Highlight how this culture improves resident safety, satisfaction, and reduces call light response times while fostering teamwork and shared accountability.

Resident Council Meeting

Prior to the resident council meeting, discuss the No Pass Zone protocol with the council president to gain buy-in. Encourage the president to share this information with residents during the resident council meeting so they understand the staff commitment to better resident service and safety.

Create and Distribute a No Pass Zone Flyer

Develop an eye-catching flyer with clear, simple messaging to inform staff, residents, and families about the No Pass Zone protocol. Post flyers in high-traffic areas (e.g., lobby, time clock, employee lounge, message boards, nursing stations). Give a copy of the flyer to each resident—include it in admission packets—and share the flyer during care plan meetings. Reassure all residents that staff are being trained on how to answer call lights so they are not apprehensive when someone other than nursing comes in the room to answer their call light.

Train Staff

Train all staff and managers on every shift, including clinical and non-clinical staff, so everyone understands their role in the No Pass Zone protocol. Provide a handout of “Do’s and Don’ts” to guide non-clinical staff on how to respond to call lights safely. Include demonstrations of how residents use call lights and how to answer them, especially for staff who may not have prior experience. Consider creating a pledge document for all staff to sign voluntarily after training. The pledge confirms their commitment to stop and respond to call lights whenever they see one.

Monitor and Reinforce

Tracking progress is essential to ensure the No Pass Zone protocol is making a real impact. Leadership and department heads should lead by example by consistently responding to call lights and modeling the expected behavior. Provide real-time coaching and feedback to reinforce accountability and encourage improvement. Continue recording call light response times discreetly, comparing results to baseline, and looking for trends in improved response times. Use your same methodology for this data collection as you did for the baseline (different shifts, all nursing units, various days of the week) so that the data presents a true “before and after” picture for improvement purposes. Share results with staff to celebrate successes, identify areas for additional support, and keep the team focused.

Sustainability

Keep the momentum going with regular communication and recognition. Share call light response time progress at staff meetings and ask for feedback and ideas. Talk about results at resident council meetings and get input from residents and families on their satisfaction with call light response times. This feedback ensures the protocol stays focused on resident needs. Recognize staff who follow the No Pass Zone by sharing positive stories and thanking individuals who go above and beyond. Consider offering small incentives or rewards if possible. Remind staff that this is not a one-time project, but an ongoing protocol to improve safety and teamwork. Keep the culture strong by offering continuing education, regular reminders, and strong leadership support so that the No Pass Zone becomes part of everyday care.