

STEADIER GROUND FIELD CARD

New Confusion in a Patient With Dementia

TRY SAYING

- "Is this how she was yesterday, or is this new?"
Ask whoever was actually there.
- "What day do you think it is?" Listen for wandering attention, not the right answer.
- "I want eyes on this before end of shift."

AVOID SAYING

- "He's just like this, he has dementia." Ends the workup before it starts.
- Charting "confused, baseline" without confirming baseline with anyone.

WORKING NEW CONFUSION

1. Ask last shift or family whether this is new.
2. Check vitals, pulse ox, glucose, last voided, last bowel movement, and the medication list.
3. Screen with your unit's delirium tool if you have one.
4. Document specifics, not just "confused."

Escalate now: new confusion with any drop in vital signs, not just the confusion alone.

Rapid response and delirium protocols: set by your unit, not this page.

find steadier ground

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