The Colors of Safety Across the Continuum of Care initiative is intended to enhance patient safety by standardizing the color-coding of specific alert conditions across acute and long term care settings. This initiative seeks to spread awareness about these standardized identifiers among clinical and non-clinical staff in health care settings as well as to patients, residents, and their families.

The Colors of Safety Across the Continuum of Care is a risk-reduction strategy that strives to:

• ensure accurate and timely identification of patients/residents with certain alert conditions by standardizing the colors used to represent such alert conditions; and

• reduce variation in the clinical setting by:
  > reducing the potential for misidentifying patients (and its associated errors)
  > reducing the time needed to orient staff; and
  > improving staff satisfaction.

The Colors of Safety Across the Continuum of Care will include standardization for the following three alert conditions and colors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alert Condition</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)</td>
<td>Purple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allergies</td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Risk</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations for Participating Organizations and Staff

• Remove patient wristbands that have been applied from another facility.

• For an organization that chooses to use text in addition to color-coding, all labeling for alert conditions should be done electronically or with pre-printed text to avoid the possibility of misinterpretation caused by illegible handwriting, to assist color blind individuals, and to provide a redundant process for proper identification of the condition.

• If there is concern about a patient’s skin integrity or other medical condition, consider using alternative devices instead of color-coded wristbands (e.g., color-coded dots in strategic places or on medical records).

• Educate patients, residents, and family members about this program.

• Verify the accuracy of wristband colors and other means of identifying alert conditions with the medical record and patient, resident, and family members.

• Consider incorporating color-coding into the nursing assessment to confirm or reconfirm alert conditions during hand-offs and for change-of-shift reports.

• Indicate clearly which categories of staff are authorized to place wristbands on patients.