

# The Case of the Resident With a PICC Line

## Improving Skin Care and MDRO Prevention in Long-Term Care



### The Case

A 69-year-old male resident is scheduled to receive a shower. The certified nursing assistant (CNA) notices that the resident has a PICC line through which he's been receiving long-term antibiotic therapy.



### The Challenge

The CNA recognizes that they need to keep the PICC line dressing clean, dry, and intact during the resident's shower. They begin to look for solutions to keep the PICC line dressing from becoming wet during the resident's shower.

### The Error

The CNA finds a plastic grocery sack at the nurse's station and decides to tie this around the PICC line to keep it from getting wet. Unfortunately, the grocery sack does not stay in place, and the PICC line dressing becomes wet. The dressing begins to peel off as the CNA dresses the resident and places him back in his chair.

## Knowledge Check Questions

- 1. How could the CNA have kept the PICC line dressing dry?**
  - A. Use a facility-approved product designed to keep central line dressings clean, dry, and intact during bathing.
  - B. Secure the grocery sack tighter or apply additional grocery sacks for added protection.
  - C. Skip the resident shower until the PICC line is removed.
  - D. All of the above.
- 2. What should the CNA have done when noticing the dressing was wet and peeling?**
  - A. Dry the dressing with clean gauze and secure the dressing with more tape.
  - B. Inform the nurse that the dressing needs to be changed.
  - C. Take the initiative to remove and apply a new dressing.
  - D. Nothing needs to be done. The dressing will dry on its own.

## Rationale for Each Answer

### Rationale for question 1

Wet bandages promote bacterial growth. Wet bandages should be changed immediately by staff trained in performing sterile central line dressing changes.

### Rationale for question 2

A central line catheter dressing covers the entry site of the central line to prevent bacteria from entering the bloodstream. A peeling dressing puts a resident at risk of exposing the entry site, which allows bacteria to enter the body. Central line catheter dressings should be changed immediately when a dressing is peeling. Securing a bandage with tape is not a best practice in this case.

Answers to the Knowledge Check: 1-A; 2-B