# Depression Screening & Follow-Up
# Quick Reference: Documentation that Counts

*If it's not captured discretely, it may not count.*

**The 10-second why**

Screening and follow-up are most likely to count when an approved tool is used, the score is captured in a structured field, and positive screens have timely follow-up documented.

Using the built-in tool protects work already done by making results visible for care teams and quality reporting.

## The 3-Step Play: Screen, Capture, Follow Up

**MY2026 reminders:** Screen Jan 1–Dec 1; follow up within 30 days if positive. Positive = tool score at/above cutoff (e.g., PHQ-9 ≥10). Use an approved tool for the member's age/measure.
*PROMIS Emotional Distress—Depression—Short Form is allowable for adults 18+ under DSF-E, PND-E, and PDS-E.

**1) Ask It**

PHQ-2, PHQ-9, PROMISE, Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale, or other approved tool

**2) Record It (don't free-text it)**

Type or select the score in the **Screening / Flowsheet / Questionnaire** tool so it files as a discrete result (not only in the note; not scanned.)

**3) Finish It**

**File / sign / accept** so it becomes a reportable result.

**If positive: Screen → Act → Document → Follow up within 30 days**

**Assess safety** (as appropriate)
**Add diagnosis** when clinically supported
**Treat and/or refer** (therapy, psychiatry, etc.)
**Plan follow-up** + document type and date

## Quick check: Will it COUNT?

Confirm the screening result and any required follow-up are captured discretely and on time.

| YES — Discrete (it will count) | NO — Not discrete (may not count) |
|---|---|
| • Approved tool completed in the built-in screening workflow<br>• Numeric score appears in a structured field<br>• Result is filed/saved/signed/accepted (finalized)<br>• Appears in a data view (e.g., Results / Flowsheets / Health Maintenance)<br>• If positive: follow-up type/date documented in a structured plan or order when available | • Score only typed in free text<br>• Follow-up only mentioned in narrative notes<br>• PHQ scanned/uploaded as PDF/image only<br>• Score placed in comments fields<br>• Questionnaire left unsigned/unfiled |

**Final reminder:** Built-in screening + discrete score + documented follow-up = easier to find, easier to count.