Quality Care Senior

The Two-to-Four-Week Pattern Log

A companion worksheet to The Good Day Problem — track what changes, when it happens, and whether it returns to baseline.

Use this log for two to four weeks when changes are gradual or intermittent. Record one episode at a time. Bring the completed log to a primary care appointment or memory evaluation, and let your parent remain part of the conversation.

If symptoms appear suddenly or become severe, do not wait for the log to be complete. Contact a healthcare professional promptly. A warning sign is not a diagnosis — it is a reason to pay attention and seek appropriate medical guidance.

What to record	Questions to answer
Date and time	When did the change begin?
Setting	Where was your parent, and who was present?
What happened	What did you observe without adding a diagnosis or interpretation?
Context	Was your parent tired, stressed, ill, in pain, hungry, or in a noisy or unfamiliar place?
Recent changes	Were there medication, sleep, routine, hearing, vision, or health changes?
Duration	How long did the episode last?
Return to baseline	Did your parent return to their usual level of functioning? If so, when?
Frequency	Has a similar event happened before? How often?
Safety impact	Did the event affect driving, medication routines, cooking, getting lost, or responding to an emergency?

Episode 1 — record one episode per table		
Date & time	Duration	Setting & who was present
What happened	(use neutral descriptions — see the guide below)	
Context	(tired, stressed, ill, in pain, hungry, noisy, unfamiliar place)	
Recent changes	(medication, sleep, routine, hearing, vision, health)	
Return to baseline	Frequency	Safety impact

Write it like this

Marcus placed the keys in the refrigerator and searched for them for five minutes.

Avoid writing this

Marcus was acting irrationally.

After each episode, note what happened next

Did your parent return to their usual level of functioning? How long did that take? Did the change happen once, several times, or on several different days?

Frequency and context matter because an isolated lapse does not tell the same story as a repeated pattern.