

The Safety Net

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

A Quality Assurance Bulletin

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

FALL PREVENTION CHECKLIST

—LaWanna Bellerive

DDD CENTRAL OFFICE QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT



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Have you ever been dependent on someone else for your care? Many of the individuals we support do, especially when it comes to their safety. Therefore, it is important caregivers recognize potential risks and the need for proper precautions to reduce those risks.

When a person falls, they risk the chance of sustaining a serious injury, reducing their mobility, or decreasing their independence. Support teams can help consumers stay safe by taking a comprehensive look at the consumer's environment, health, and medications when considering potential risks. This should involve looking specifically at the places the consumer has access to and taking into account personal risk factors. Once identified, the team can further clarify the potential risks and develop appropriate interventions. After support teams discuss safety risks and precautions, they may want to consider developing a **FALL PREVENTION CHECKLIST** to place in the consumer's file. The checklist will serve as a ready reminder to be safety minded.

Listed below are domains teams can consider when having discussions regarding potential safety risks:

PLACES THE PERSON HAS ACCESS TO:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bathrooms | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work Areas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hallways & Stairs |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kitchen | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Living Areas | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Porch / Yard / Community |

PERSONAL RISK FACTORS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recent Illness |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Muscle Weakness | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mobility Impairments |

SOME ENVIRONMENTAL INTERVENTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grab Bar in Bathrooms | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Skid Flooring for Bathtubs / Showers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Raised Toilet Seats | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pathways Clear of Obstacles |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secure Rugs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carpets in Good Condition / Not Frayed |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adequate Lighting | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sidewalks / Walking Paths in Good Order |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ramps / Handrails Available & in Good Condition | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Steps / Stairs are Free of Obstacles in Good Condition | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Weeds & Other Lawn Obstacles Removed from Area | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seat Belts / Wheelchair Tie Downs in Good Order & Used | |

PERSONAL INTERVENTIONS MAY LOOK LIKE:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wear Proper Fitting Clothing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proper Shoe Type & Fit |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eyeglasses, if Needed | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness of Recent Medication Changes |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proper Hydration Needs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair Safety Near Curbs & on Ramps |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time of Day Considerations | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bathroom Visit Before Departing into Community |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mobility Equipment (gait belt, walker, wheelchair, Hoyer lift) in Use & in Good Condition | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consumer Understands Proper Use of Mobility Equipment | |

Investing the time in proper planning will prevent most falls. Safe environments will provide opportunities for our consumers to increase their independence and live meaningful lives.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Department prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities, or employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, and disability.

The Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program service or activity. For example, this means if necessary, the Department must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the Department will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program of activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible.

To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy, contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities ADA Coordinator at (602) 542-6825; TTY/TTD Services: 7-1-1.

REMINDER: In the event of any consumer emergencies, CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY!

Abuse Awareness

—Laurie Lockyer
DDD QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER

We have all heard that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Let's not forget that all months of the year are devoted to abuse awareness as society's concern about abuse and abuse prevention comes into great focus. Reports of abuse are prevalent in today's society. Pick up a newspaper. Listen to the evening news or an afternoon talk show on television or the radio.

People with developmental disabilities experience abuse in the same settings as other people: at home, school or work. Abuse or neglect can be at the hands of family members, caregivers, strangers or paid providers. So what can we do? A contracted agency can impact the safety for consumers in several ways such as the following:

- Have a policy of zero tolerance for abuse, neglect or exploitation that begins with and is supported by upper management.
- Screen all potential employees by following all prescribed hiring practices.
- Train all staff on what constitutes abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Encourage reporting requirements.
- Develop a newsletter with articles written by employees that focus on various topics related to consumer support, safe practices, and employee leadership.
- Promote a safe climate within units and organizations that allow employees to report to management any concerns they have.
- Ensure staff are oriented to the person they are working with so they are able to recognize signs of concern. There are some indicators that are clear signs something is wrong, while some indicators are more subtle and require careful observation. As we interact with a person with a developmental disability, we should be paying close attention to how they look and act.
- Work closely with Adult Protective Services (APS), Child Protective Services (CPS) or the Police to fully investigate allegations of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The Division addresses the problem of abuse, neglect and exploitation by careful tracking of all incidents of alleged abuse, neglect or exploitation. Monitoring of residential settings to ensure hiring practices were followed, policies are in place, and employees are aware of their responsibility to report abuse, neglect or exploitation. Our support coordinators maintain contact with consumers/families and are another mechanism of oversight for our consumers. We also trend incidents to see if any one agency, person, or systems issues is identified. The Division recognizes APS, CPS, and the police have the lead on investigating complaints; however, when systems issues are identified that may have contributed to the incident, the Division will further investigate and request a corrective action plan from an agency or provider if systems issues are substantiated, regardless of the outcome of the APS, CPS, or police findings.

Abuse Awareness and Prevention is Everyone's Responsibility!

CLARIFICATION: Confidentiality Article

The Winter 2010 issue of this publication included an article on "Confidentiality" which has raised some concern and a request for clarification. The article states that over the past few years, the Division has experienced an increase in the number of reported incidents involving the misuse of camera phones and the unauthorized dissemination of client information. Realizing that HIPAA protected health information (PHI) needs to stay with the employee and not shared with ANYONE else, i.e., family, friends, and other employees, requires clarification. HIPAA requirements, agency policy, and professional discretion must always be adhered to with regard to PHI. **It is understood that PHI is shared among agency staff only as required in the course of one's duties.**



 is presented by Division of Developmental Disabilities' Central Office Quality Assurance Unit. Articles are researched and compiled by Quality Assurance staff and Division Managers. Any questions or feedback? Please contact Steven Stencil at SStencil@azdes.gov or 602-817-6700.

Have You Had Your Shots?

—Annette Lammon-Belcher, R.N.
DDD HEALTHCARE SERVICES MANAGER

We all have heard that babies need to get their baby shots. Did you know that there are recommendations for vaccinations for children, teenagers and adults? Besides the flu shot every year, there are recommendations for vaccines for many other preventable diseases. Some of the diseases include tetanus, whooping cough, diphtheria, hepatitis, chickenpox, some forms of meningitis, and some types of bacterial pneumonia.



A vaccine record or a shots book should be kept for a history of your immunizations, including the type of vaccine, dosage, date, and the name of the health services provider. It is important to always keep your shots record with you. You never know when you may need to change primary care providers.

How do you know which vaccines are needed? When you visit your primary care doctor for an annual check-up, you should review your vaccination record with him/her. At that time your shots history can be reviewed and recommendations given for any needed vaccinations. Most vaccinations are covered by insurance. The clinic can verify the coverage.

PREVIOUS ISSUES OF *The Safety Net* ARE AVAILABLE ON THE DIVISION'S WEBSITE: www.azdes.gov/ddd and click on "News & Events"

Be Alert!

—LaWanna Bellerive
DDD CENTRAL OFFICE QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT

HAVE FUN THIS SPRING & SUMMER WHILE OBSERVING THE FOLLOWING SAFETY TIPS:



DRINK plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

Watch for signs of heat stress and heat stroke: thirst, cramps, fatigue, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, headaches, and fever. Take lots of water with you on summer activities with consumers for hydration, especially in case the vehicle breaks down. Make certain that those with alone time have adequate access to water, i.e., portable water containers or bottles similar to what any jogger would wear or carry.



Use SUNSCREEN to prevent sunburn.

Select a sunscreen with a SPF rating of 15 (or higher) which offers maximum protection against the sun's UVA and UVB rays. Apply 30 minutes before going outside and reapply every two (2) hours -- or more often -- if swimming or perspiring heavily. Wear hats, sunglasses, and use umbrellas to provide extra protection.



Observe WATER SAFETY.

Provide continuous supervision for children and vulnerable adults around swimming pools and other bodies of water. Make certain you have the appropriate water safety equipment readily available for use.



DO NOT LEAVE a child or vulnerable adult alone in a vehicle.

During and following all summer activities, make certain your group and vehicle are regularly checked to make certain no one is unknowingly left behind in the vehicle.