



Health Care Alert

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION PROVIDING TIPS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH INTELLECTUAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR SUPPORT TEAMS IN ACCESSING HEALTH CARE THROUGH THE MANAGED CARE SYSTEM

Risk Management Corner

Some Like it HOT...HOT...HOT!!!

The above information is adapted from the Heat Safety Policy issued by the City of Philadelphia, Department of Behavioral Health and Mental Retardation Services (MRS). For a complete printable version, call MRS at (215) 685-5900

“Consumers of behavioral health services are especially susceptible to the danger of heat-related illness. Risk factors include a variety of medications including psychotropic medications; substance use; agitation and medical conditions such as obesity and diabetes. Although heat related-illness can occur at any time of the year, it happens more frequently in the summer, particularly during heat waves.”

“Agency staff has an important role in preventing deaths from heat-related illness by implementing preventative measures, understanding which individuals are at highest risk, recognizing symptoms, and obtaining medical attention swiftly when symptoms occur. Based on an analysis of mortality data, it was estimated that at least 270 potential victims have been spared from 1995-2004 because the City of Philadelphia took modest heat safety measures, including a heat safety program.”

“Air conditioning or fans must be available and it is imperative that drinking water be accessible at all times. Any unusual symptoms or rise in body temperature over 100 degrees should be immediately evaluated by a physician. Questions regarding medications should be directed to the prescribing physician.”

Know These Heat Disorder Symptoms

Heat Exhaustion

- Heavy sweating
- Weakness
- skin cold, pale and clammy
- Pulse thready, rapid, weak
- Rapid breathing
- Chills
- Fainting
- Nausea

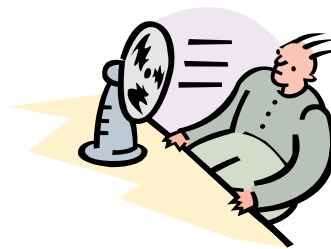
- Vomiting
- Throbbing headache
- visual disturbances

The normal temperature is possible, but it can also rise to 104.9 °F. If not treated, the victim's condition will worsen; body temperature will keep rising, possibly leading to heat stroke.

These symptoms or a rise in body temperature over 100 degrees should be evaluated immediately by a physician. The measures listed below may be used while seeking medical attention.

While contacting medical help:

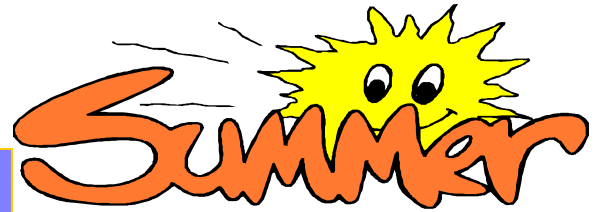
- move the victim to a cooler environment with an air conditioner or fan if possible
- Remove excess clothing
- Reduce body temperature with cool wet cloths
- Check and continue to monitor the person's breathing and pulse
- Give sips of water if not nauseous/vomiting.



Heat Stroke (or sunstroke)

HEAT STROKE IS A SEVERE MEDICAL EMERGENCY. SUMMON EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE OR GET THE VICTIM TO A HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY. DELAY TO A HOSPITAL CAN BE FATAL.

- High body temperature (104.9 + F)
- Rapid, shallow breathing or slow, deep breathing.
- Mental status changes: such as confu-



sion, irritability, combative-ness, slurred speech, unsteadiness

- Possible unconsciousness.

Sweating stops: hot, dry skin indicates a life threatening situation!!!

Brain damage & death can occur in less that 10 minutes unless medical help is immediate!

- While waiting for medical help:
- move the victim to a cooler environment with an air conditioner or fan if possible
- Remove excess clothing
- Reduce body temperature with cool wet cloths
- Do not give fluids if victim refuses or is vomiting or there are changes in the level of consciousness
- Check and continue to monitor the person's breathing and pulse.

Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome

Similar to heat stroke Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome may look initially like heat exhaustion. Mental status changes as occur in heat stroke.

- High blood pressure
- Dizziness

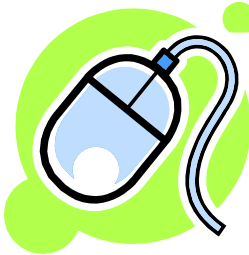
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Health Pages—Help is just a click away...

Health Pages is an online consumer health care service, which publishes reader-friendly information on general health care topics and community-specific comparative information on physicians, hospitals, allied health professionals and health plans.



Consumers can search their national database of over 500,000 physicians and compare doctors in any specialty according to their experience, hospital affiliations, office services and fees. Health

Pages also incorporates the provider directories of over 300 managed care plans into its physician super directory, which allows consumers to determine what plans each doctor is affiliated with. The library of articles on such topics as prostate cancer, managed care, Medigap insurance policies, weight loss centers or maternity care are applicable nationwide. What differs from city to city is the comparative provider information.

The information within the Health Pages comes from a variety of sources, including state departments of health and insurance, federal and state health data organizations, and professional licensing boards. Health Pages receives provider

directories from over 300 managed care plans nationwide. Physicians, hospitals, and health plans are also surveyed. All data is verified through multiple check points, and physician updates are validated through a security code procedure.



www.healthpages.com

Reference: Health Pages
A service of ProAct Technologies Corp.

Up 2 the minute info...

What is Hospice?

Hospice is supportive care for individuals, family members, support staff, and housemates. It is referred to as "holistic care," meeting the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of an individual who has been diagnosed as "terminally ill" and dying. Hospice Care includes the support of an interdisciplinary team, which consists of physicians, pain management nurses, social workers, home health aides, clergy, bereavement counselors and hospice volunteers.

It is very important to understand that hospice is not a place, but a state of being and can be performed in a number of places, such as in a:

- Hospital—for patients that can no longer benefit from curative care
- Home, CLA, or ICF—for patients to have a familiar environment and to eliminate invasive procedures

Grief counseling and bereavement counseling is available for the individual, team members, family members and/or housemates during and after the hospice care experience.

Respite care can be provided for someone that receives hospice care in a home environment. The patient is transferred to a skilled or interme-



diated care facility for a short period of time after which the patient returns home. While this particular service may not be applicable in a community residential setting, respite care can provide family and caregivers relief in the daily care of the individual.

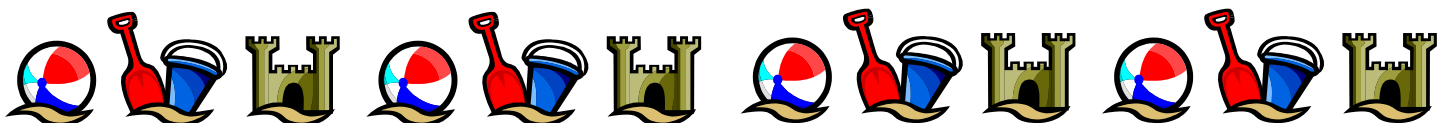
Medicare will pay for a number of services regarding hospice, such as:

- Nursing care
- Physician's services

- Medical equipment
- Medical supplies
- Drugs for symptom control or pain relief
- Home health aide and homemaker services
- Physical and Occupational therapy

Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care (PCHC) is collaborating with Keystone Hospice, a hospice care facility in Philadelphia to ensure that the Special Needs Community is aware of changes in state and federal laws regarding hospice and palliative care. PCHC and Keystone are working together to produce a new hospice training and booklet which will be available in the Fall 2007. The training and booklet will include such topics as "How to be with a dying person," "What you should expect when someone is dying" and "What are your choices when selecting hospice care," etc. All material will be presented in "person-centered" style and address the complex issues of supporting the dying needs of an individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Reference: www.keystonecare.com



Look Great...Feel Great!

Would you like to help an individual with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities drop some extra pounds for the summer?

Here is a great opportunity to join Weight Watchers this summer at a discount rate and start dropping those extra pounds. If someone you support is a current member of Health Partners or Senior Partners they can take advantage of a discount rate.

Here's how it works!

An individual or advocate can call member ser-



vices and tell them they would like to sign up to the Weight Watchers weight loss program. Within fifteen to twenty days, you will receive informa-

tion on how the program works, a brochure of the locations of the meetings in your area, along with 10 coupons. Members use one coupon per week for ten weeks with a \$2 co-payment at each meeting. To receive another set of coupons you must lose 2 pounds in the first 8 weeks of every cycle or maintain your goal weight to receive another book of coupons.

So if they're ready to take the plunge with looking great and feeling great call Health Partners today to get started. They can be reached at 215-651-9600.

For more information go to www.weightwatchers.com

Coming Soon! (Fall 2007) A new publication by PCHC



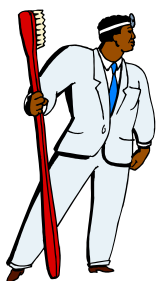
“Wheelchair Guide”

This publication will be a guide to explain the different types of wheelchairs and how to obtain the most appropriate one needed. It will provide tips regarding maintenance, repairs, and recommendations for keeping proper documentation for a wheelchair.

This guide will:

- Review specific processes to obtain new wheelchair

- Display comparison between using a wheelchair clinic vs. not using one
- Offer an overview of insurance and coordination
- Explain basic maintenance and repair issues
- Explain proper positioning
- Provide documentation tips



Pennsylvania Dental Summit 2007

“Resource Coalition for the Future of Dental Services”

A statewide Dental Summit was held Friday, June 22nd in Mechanicsburg, PA. Dentists, health care providers, Residential provider agencies, HCQUs, policy makers and concerned advocates gathered together to discuss access to appropriate dental services for the people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This group talked about the challenges facing dental providers and consumers across Pennsylvania.

Kevin Casey, the Deputy Secretary of the Office Developmental Programs (ODP) and Dr. Paul

Westerberg, the Executive Dental Consultant for the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) both shared their knowledge of this pertinent issue and support for the summit.

Key issues that were addressed included:

- Outreach to increase Medical Assistance providers
- Training for Dental Providers in the area of Special Needs
- Connecting level of need to level of care
- Dental Chair to Home Care
- Mentoring new dentists (including students)

- How to share and access resources (electronically)

Recommendations were collected in each of the key areas and will be distributed in a report to Office of Developmental Programs (ODP), Office of Medical Assistance Programs (OMAP) and Department of Public Welfare (DPW). Excited participants from across the state provided valuable input and ideas to help increase access to dental care for individuals with special needs. A statewide workgroup will be formed to review the recommendations and develop action steps which will hopefully result in a positive change for dental care services.

Some Like it HOT continued from cover

- rapid pulse & breathing
- Incontinence
- Tremors, slow, irregular or spasmodic movements of the limbs, facial muscles and eyes
- Difficulty swallowing, speaking, loss of voice and seizures
- **Fever and/or severe muscle rigidity.**

*8-20% of cases will result in death.

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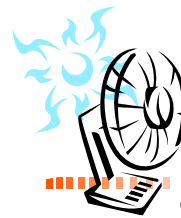
While waiting for medical help:

- move the victim to a cooler environment with an air conditioner or fan if possible
- Remove excess clothing
- Reduce body temperature with cool wet clothes
- Do not give fluids if victim refuses or is vomiting or there are changes in the level of consciousness
- Check and continue to monitor the person's breathing and pulse.

Tips on keeping cooler & healthier during summer heat waves

Drink lots of water

Eight glasses a day will keep a person hydrated. Avoid coffee or alcohol, they cause the body to lose water.



Stay air-conditioned

If a person doesn't have air conditioning, seek out a favorite community location such as a friend's house, the mall or movies. If someone can't get out, remind them to stay on a lower floor where it's cooler and open the windows.

Dress cool

Wear loose, light-colored clothing and a hat during peak sunlight. Use sun block of SPF 30 or greater.

Call a neighbor

Check on individuals who live independently twice a day during heat waves.

Know the signs of heat stroke

If someone experiences high fever, flushed face, throbbing headache, confusion, little or no perspiration, rapid pulse—Seek Medical Help!

Reminder

It's Finally Here!

PCHC proudly announces the inception of web-based training!

It's easy to find and use. Visit the PCHC website: www.pchc.org and click on the **TRAINING** link and then connect to an additional link to access on-line training.

The current on-line training topics include:

- Oral Hygiene
- Durable Medical Equipment (DME) & Wheelchairs
- Communicating the Psychiatrist
- Team Review Form

Check back for additional training topics being added soon!

Please call the PCHC Training Hotline 215-546-0300 extension 3367 with any questions.

The information presented to you is to increase your awareness of health conditions. It is not intended to replace medical advice. Please seek the advice of a physician for any health related concerns.



Save the Date!!!

SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

FROM 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care
is having a

Stay Healthy Fair

AT

Radisson Hotel Philadelphia NE
2400 Old Lincoln Highway, Trevose, PA 19053

There will be many "interactive" sessions and activities geared towards promoting "healthy lifestyles" for individuals and their caregivers.



Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care

123 S. Broad Street ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19109 ♦ 215-546-0300 ♦ fax 215-790-4976

PCHC is a core program of PMHCC, Inc.