

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON RECIPIENT AND PCA SAFETY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures to be used to ensure the safety and well-being of service recipients and PCAs.

II. POLICY

Emergency situations will be dealt with in a responsible manner by all employees involved. The following procedures are guidelines for actions to be taken in the event of an emergency. In emergency situations, PCAs must first act to ensure the safety of service recipients, then at first opportunity notify the Qualified Professional. In the event of any emergency situation, the Qualified Professional will ensure that the service recipient's responsible party or designated contact person, and other team members (if applicable) are notified within 24 hours.

When the seriousness of an illness or injury cannot be definitively assessed by the PCA, they will consult with the responsible party, Qualified Professional, or a health care professional.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Illness or injury

1. Upon discovering a situation where a recipient may be experiencing an illness or injury, PCAs will first observe the scene and the recipient to determine if it is safe for PCA to respond. If the situation is safe, the PCA will check the recipient for signs and symptoms of illness or injury. If the scene is not safe, the PCA will call "911."
2. PCAs will observe for signs and symptoms of illness or injury. PCAs will follow the principles of "Check, Call, Care." Signs and symptoms of illness or injury may include but are not limited to:
 - a. Evidence of bleeding, fever, bruising, vomiting, coughing, congestion
 - b. Changes in breathing, heart rate, skin color, bowel/bladder habits, appetite, behavior, mood, sleeping patterns, seizure pattern, consciousness
 - c. Reports of pain, discomfort, dizziness, or itching
 - d. Environmental indications that may have lead to an illness or injury such as broken glass, an empty medicine container, or indications of a fall
3. The PCA with the recipient will determine if an illness or injury is health or life threatening.
4. If unable to determine, the PCA will act with caution and will refer to the illness or injury that may be life threatening section of this procedure.
5. PCAs will respond to illness or injury that is not life threatening by using first aid, as applicable. PCAs will notify the Qualified Professional of any illnesses or injuries that have occurred.
6. PCAs should contact the Qualified Professional or a health care professional to determine further action to be taken and document both the recommendations and actions taken in the program and health documentation, as applicable.
7. Medical care will be sought on behalf of the service recipient if the person is unable to do so and the responsible party is not promptly available.

B. Illness or injury that may be life threatening

1. PCAs will call "911" immediately after discovering if the signs or symptoms of illness or injury could be life threatening. Life threatening means, at a minimum, that a service recipient is likely to die if immediate medical attention is not received.
2. PCAs will report the emergency and any relevant health information to "911" and stay on the line following instructions until directed to hang up.
3. PCAs will give first aid and/or CPR to the extent they are qualified, when it is indicated by their best judgment or by "911", unless the recipient has an advanced directive.

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4. PCAs will provide the paramedics with any relevant facts and medical history.
5. If the individual is transported to a hospital, the Qualified Professional or the PCA will contact the responsible party promptly regarding the situation.

D. Severe weather conditions and natural disasters

1. At the first sign of severe weather or a natural disaster, including but not limited to high winds, heavy snow or rain, or extreme temperatures, PCAs will confirm the location and safety of the service recipient whom they are scheduled to support.
2. PCAs will listen to the radio for current weather conditions.
3. Upon hearing sirens or a take cover warning, PCAs will guide the service recipient to the designated safe area and will also bring a battery operated radio, first aid kit, and flashlight, if available.
4. PCAs will assist the service recipient in staying in the safe area until an all clear is issued through the radio or by other means.
5. If injury or damage occurs, PCAs will notify the Qualified Professional and follow the procedures listed above.

E. Fire

1. PCAs will respond immediately to all fire and smoke detector alarms or signs of fire by evacuating the service recipient from the building and assembling at a designated safe location.
2. PCAs will contain the area of the fire or explosion, if feasible, by closing doors and then will immediately call "911" from a neighbor's telephone or a cell phone to report the fire.
3. PCAs will notify the Qualified Professional.
4. PCAs will ensure that the service recipient does not reenter the home until the police or fire department issue instructions that the home is safe.