



Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care
Southeast Region Health Care Quality Unit

Health Care Alert

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION PROVIDING HEALTH CARE TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR SUPPORT TEAMS

Risk Management Corner

Regional Injury Prevention Forum: Focus on Fall Prevention

Falls are the most common cause of non-fatal injuries for adults in the United States. People with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) experience falls and related injuries just like the general population. Based on growing risk management concerns about falls, Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care (PCHC) facilitated a Regional Risk Management Forum focused on fall prevention. The Forum, held on June 17, 2008, was developed in collaboration with the Risk Management Workgroup of the Southeastern PA Office of Developmental Programs and the five County Risk Management representatives from the Southeast Region.

The forum addressed clinical issues, practical strategies to limit falls, and a range of tools and resources for use by individuals and their teams. The panel of presenters included nurses, occupational therapists and managers representing provider agencies, PCHC, and Thomas Jefferson University, College of Health Professions, Occupational Therapy.

Over 60 individuals, representing the five Counties in Southeastern Pennsylvania, participated in the Forum. Participants included provider risk managers, nurses and program managers as well as Administrative Entity (i.e., County) management staff and supports coordinators and supervisors. While the participants were very satisfied with the forum, when surveyed, nearly 100% indicated that they would use strategies that were provided during the Forum.

Since the Forum...

A number of strategies and assessment tools were presented at the Forum. Beginning in July 2008, the Quality Enhancement Support Team (QEST), began using one of the tools, the *Horizon House Fall Risk Assessment*, as part of the routine monitoring process for Pennhurst Class Members. The tool is completed using a consensus process with each person's team; the findings provide the team with immediate information about the person's risk for falls. The findings also are included in the monitoring report prepared for each individual. During the first quarter of FY '08, over 100 Fall Risk Assessments were completed by QEST monitors and findings will be reviewed as the year unfolds.

During September 2008, PCHC staff attempted to contact all participants of the June Forum. The goal of this outreach was to determine if strategies and tools presented at the Forum have been implemented and are useful. Initial results of this effort have been positive and responses will be useful in planning future training and outreach activities.

TRAINING!!! TRAINING!!!! TRAINING!!!!

PCHC provides **FREE** health related trainings for individuals, families, agency staff and administrators, and Supports Coordinators.

For a list of training topics, web based trainings, training request forms, or registration please visit our website at www.pchc.org or contact our education department at 215-546-0300 ext 3206.

Feel free to ask for additional health care topics if you don't see it listed.

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Alzheimer’s Association Delaware Valley

Contributed by Krista McKay, MA, Associate Director of Education

The Alzheimer’s Association Delaware Valley Chapter, serving Southeastern Pennsylvania, South Jersey and Delaware, is the local chapter of the National Alzheimer’s disease and Related Disorders Association.

We are an alliance of family members and professionals dedicated to helping people with Alzheimer’s disease and their families through education, advocacy, and support. With over 170 monthly and weekly affiliated support groups, we provide individuals with dementia and their families with updated information, education in a confidential setting where mutual emotional support and problem solving skills are exchanged.

Each group is run by a trained facilitator whose certification is provided free by Alzheimer’s Association staff. Because of our diverse and growing constituency, the Alzheimer’s Association constantly evaluates and enhances our support group service to include new groups targeting specialized populations, like those caring for persons with Intellectual/ Developmental Disabilities and Dementia.

If you are interested in becoming a facilitator for this type of group, please contact Melissa A. DiSipio, MSA, Assistant Director Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care (PCHC) at (215) 546-0300 (ext. 3636).



Did you know?....

PCHC now has video-conferencing capabilities to make it easier for you to attend meetings and/or trainings.

If you or your agency has video-conferencing equipment, please send a contact person’s information and IPP# to Shani Jackson: sjackson@pmhcc.org.

Keystone Mercy Health Plan Special Needs Unit (SNU) Contact Update:

As of September 15, 2008, Veronica Medina assumed a new position within Keystone Mercy Health Plan (KMHP) Clinical Services Division as the Director of Rapid Response Outreach/ Business Implementation.

PCHC would like to “Thank” Veronica for working as KMHP’s Special Needs Unit Coordinator over the last five years and wish her well in her new role.

KMHP announced that Carolyn Macy, RN, BSN, CCM will begin working as the new Special Needs Unit Coordinator/Supervisor with Keystone Mercy as of October 6, 2008.

Who to call for SNU issues:

During this transition period, provider agencies can contact the Special Care Department: Senior Nurse Case Manager, Mary Jane Gray, RN, BSN, CCM at 215-937-8915 or Senior Manager, Deb Stango, RN, BSN, CCM, at 215-937-5356 for Special Needs inquiries.

Members and family members should directly call the Special Needs Hotline: 800-573-4100 for assistance regarding coordination of physical health care needs. Anyone using Veronica’s old number (215-937-8881) will receive the Special Needs Hotline number.



Dementia and Alzheimer’s Disease: Functional Assessment Tool Workgroup

As a result of the “Dementia and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD)” training sponsored by Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care (PCHC) and co-presented with the Alzheimer’s Association, Delaware Valley Chapter last April, a group is forming to research and develop a functional assessment tool geared towards people with I/DD. The purpose of this workgroup is to produce an initial checklist which can be used to help detect when someone you support may be affected by dementia or Alzheimer’s Disease. Most assessment tools used by the medical profession are geared towards the general population. Join this workgroup and help us create an assessment tool all inclusive for people with I/DD.

Your participation is needed! If you have an interest in this area and are willing to become a part of this workgroup, please contact Melissa DiSipio, Assistant Director @PCHC: mdisipio@pmhcc.org. Monthly meetings will be held over the next nine months. People may contribute in person or remotely. All feedback is welcome!



Influenza (Flu) Update 2008 – 2009

The flu season is fast approaching, and it's time to get your yearly flu vaccine. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC,) many manufacturers have already started shipping this year's supply of flu vaccine, so it should be available soon in your physician's office. The earlier in the season you get the vaccine, the better protection you will have. The vaccine is available either as an injection, or as a nasal spray. Ask your physician which form is right for you.

Why should I get the flu vaccine?

According to the CDC, every year in the United States, on average:

- 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu
- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications
- About 36,000 people die from the flu

I got the flu vaccine last year. Why do I need to get it again?

The flu vaccine changes every year, targets the three strains of flu virus that are expected to be the strongest that year, and is effective through one flu season only.

Who Should Get Vaccinated?

Anyone who wants to reduce their risk of getting the flu should get the flu vaccine. However, the CDC has made recommendations about those in higher risk groups who should receive the flu vaccine yearly. These include:

- Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday
- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - a. Health care workers
 - b. Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
 - c. Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

According to the CDC, people who should not receive the flu vaccine include:

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination
- People who developed [Guillain-Barré syndrome \(GBS\)](#) within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccine
- Children less than 6 months of age (influenza vaccine is not approved for this age group), and
- People who have a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever (they should wait until they recover to get vaccinated)

Please speak to your physician if you have any questions about the flu or the flu vaccine. For additional information on facts about influenza and the flu vaccine, and what to do if you get the flu, the link below will lead you to a CDC site providing comprehensive flu information.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>



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.

PCHC would like to thank everyone who participated in the 3RD ANNUAL STAY HEALTHY FAIR, which was held on September 19, 2008 at the Holiday Inn Stadium. There were more than 25 vendors and over 150 participants.

PCHC appreciates the commitment and hard work of Southeast Region ODP and County offices, community health care providers, dental providers, provider agencies, staff, and more importantly the individuals. This event would not have been a success without you!





NURSING RECOGNITION AWARDS

On May 9th (during National Nurses' Week), Developmental Disabilities Nurses in the Southeast Region of Pennsylvania were recognized for their hard work, advocacy, dedication, and leadership in this specialty nursing field. Over 100 people were in attendance and received recognition from their employers as well as SE Region Commonwealth and County officials. Nurses were also recognized for their years of service to this specialty – some having been a nurse in this field for over 30 years. The *General Guidelines for Nurses in Community Residential Programs Supporting People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities* were distributed along with a short presentation of the history and work that resulted in these Guidelines.

Four nurses received formal awards as follows:

Leadership Award – Karen Ng – Access Services
Dedicated Service Award – Gerry Allerton – Salvation Army, Growth Horizons
Advocacy Award – John Gavin – INTERAC
Advocacy Award – Barbara Haney – Growth Horizons

In addition to the four award winners above, eighteen other nurses were nominated for awards as follows:

Nursing Leadership Award Nominees

Roseanne Amelio – Northwestern Human Services
Margaret Brosz – Woods Services
Miguel Cumba – PATH
Katie Knecht – Impact Systems
Hawa Sarnor – KenCCID
Carol Thomas – Don Guanella Village

Dedicated Service Award Nominees

Mary Finerty – Allegheny Valley School
Jennifer Grosscup – Northwestern Human Services
Lorraine Hartl – Indian Creek Foundation
Barbara Klatt – Woods Services
Kelly Luber – Gertrude A. Barber Center
Lorrie Skelley - CADES

Advocacy Award Nominees

Terri Affatato – PATH
Nancy Prochorenko – Woods Services
Kristina Reilly – KenCrest Services
Patti Smith – TAIG
Mary Jane Stein – Northwestern Human Services
Joanne Thum – UCPA



Congratulations to the nominees, winners and all the Nurses who work daily to help keep the people we support healthy and safe!

Special thanks to those who judged the nominations to arrive at the award winners:

Margaret (Peg) Minehart, MD, Medical Director of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health/Mental Retardation Services
Victoria (Tori) Rudy, RN, Department of Health
William (Bill) Schoppe, Clinical Director, PATH



Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care

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