

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

KEYSTONE COMMUNITY RESOURCES, INC.

KEYSTONE INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.



Policy Title:
Health

Chapter:

Effective Date:
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Policy Number:

Executive Director

SCOPE:

- Chapter 6400 – Community Homes For Individuals With Mental Retardation

INTRODUCTION:

1. Your role in safeguarding the residents' health and physical care is an important one. Although we have nurses on duty in some locations you are the one most likely to notice physical distress and abnormal physical reaction. These can occur at any time and so it is important that you know the residents in your care as well as some basic first aid information. Illnesses, injuries and accidents, even minor ones, must be documented on an incident report form. In addition, signs and symptoms of an illness should be reported to the nurse-on-duty or physician-on-call for your residence.
2. Often you will be given medical instructions from a nurse or physician; these must be carefully followed. Inability to follow these or to gain a person's cooperation must be reported immediately to the person issuing these instructions.
3. As part of your orientation and annual in-service training you will receive instruction in general first aid by medical personnel. A list of common health problems and helpful information follows Please refer to this section as well as your first aid manual regularly to protect and ensure good health care.
 - **Colds** Colds often have many symptoms, including sore throat, persistent cough, headache, sneezing, and runny nose. For relief of symptoms, allow plenty of rest and encourage the sufferer to drink extra amounts of fluids, especially fruit juices. A cold usually runs its course in ten days; should the symptoms persist; inform the nurse or contact a physician.
 - **Fever** Fever is an elevated body temperature that can be an indication of a disease process taking place in the body. Normal body temperature ranges from 97 degrees to 100 degrees Fahrenheit and can be influenced by age, activity and even weather. If you suspect that a resident is feverish, take his/her temperature. There are four methods for taking

temperatures, each with its own normal temperature reading. The normal reading for rectal method is 99.6 degrees. For ear and oral readings, the normal is 98.6 degrees. A reading of 97.6 degrees is normal for the reading taken under the arm.

- **Constipation** Constipation is an inability or difficulty in passing bowel movements. Often the symptoms are abdominal cramps and an uncomfortable “full” feeling in the lower intestine. Although most people are different in the regularity of their bowel movements, constipation is more severe than simple irregularity. One cause of constipation is improper diet. Constipation can also be caused by ignoring the impulse to defecate, lack of physical exercise, or the limited intake of fluids. Certain medications can also produce constipation, as can tension, stress or certain illnesses. Any severe constipation problem should be referred to a doctor. The doctor may recommend laxatives, enemas or suppositories to treat the problem. These treatments should be used only under a doctor’s care because frequent use of them can lead to chronic constipation. Laxatives should not be given when abdominal pain or other unusual conditions are present.
- **Diarrhea** Diarrhea is a condition characterized by bowel movements which are liquid and unformed. It may be caused by spoiled food, food poisoning, allergies, and some “natural laxative” foods such as prunes, figs, raisins, and bran. It may be accompanied by fever, abdominal cramps, and pain. When dealing with a person who has diarrhea, check the person’s temperature. Report the reading and any other symptoms to a doctor or nurse-on-duty. The practices of good hygiene are important when a resident is suffering from diarrhea. The causes of the condition are sometimes contagious and may spread to other persons.

DISCUSSION: