



REMINDER

Recognizing Change in Status

Description of Issue and Importance

Everyone experiences periods of illness. Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) are no different. However, they may have difficulty communicating how they feel or when something is different. People we support count on us to identify changes in the areas of **eating, drinking, sleeping, communication, daily routine, appearance, behavior, general manner or mood, or physical health** and to respond to those changes appropriately.

Recommended Action and Prevention Strategy

- Even little changes in the areas listed may be a clue that something is wrong:
 - Eating
 - Drinking
 - Sleeping
 - Communication
 - Daily routine
 - Appearance
 - Behavior
 - General manner or mood
 - Physical health
- Recognizing and responding to a change in status means the individual is taken care of as soon as possible, e.g., the nurse/physician is contacted for further direction, individual is taken to the emergency room, 911 is called.

- Early identification of changes in these areas can save an individual's life.
- Don't assume any change in these areas is insignificant or too minor to note and report.
- Persons who know the individual well can best identify a subtle, but perhaps significant, change in these areas.

Related Resources

"Change in Status" Fact Sheet series, "Responding to Change in Status" Reminder, "Signs and Symptoms Indicating a Change in Status" Fact Sheet

References

American Medical Directors Association. Acute change of condition: Frequency asked questions. Retrieved 10/22/2015 from: <http://www.cpgnews.org/ACC/askexperts.cfm>

AMDA Clinical Practice Guideline: Acute change of condition. Assisted Living Consultation, 22-24 (March/April 2005). Retrieved 10/22/2015 from: https://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/files/Acute_Change_in_Condition_Reference.pdf

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