

# Medication Safety

When you are assisting people with intellectual disabilities in taking medication, you have the responsibility to know the medications you are giving. Being knowledgeable about medication effects and reactions can go a long way in keeping everyone safe. Drugs are powerful substances, and if used improperly, serious side effects can result.

Most effective medications have risks involved. This means medication should not be taken without a need. Reading the instructions provided by the doctor, clinic or pharmacist is very important to proper drug use.

When you and the person you support talk to the doctor, do not be afraid to ask questions or express any concerns you may have about the prescribed medication. Some general questions to ask:

1. What is the name of the drug (brand name and generic) and what is it supposed to do?
2. What illness or condition is this drug used to treat?
3. How do I take this medication and for how long?
4. Is there a time of day I should take this medication to make it more effective or minimize any side effects?
5. Should I stop taking the drug if I do not feel well?
6. Should I take the drug with food or on an empty stomach? Are there any foods or other medications I should avoid while taking this drug?
7. What side effects should I be aware of or concerned about?

Also, if the person you support has ever had a bad reaction to any

medication, mention this to the doctor. The new medication may or may not affect them in a similar way.

Assisting someone with medication requires the knowledge of the medication effects and reactions, as well as observations of these effects and reactions in the person. With proper administration, a medication usually has the desired affect and the person feels better.

### **Medication Logs**

1. Prescription Medications: LCCS delivering direct care services shall maintain medications logs detailing the administration of prescribed medications to the beneficiary. The prescribed medication logs shall be readily available review, and document the following for each administration of a prescribed medication:
  - Name and dosage of the medication administered.
  - Route the medication was administered

- Date and time the medication was administered (recorded at the time of medication administration).
  - Initials of the staff administering or assisting with the administration of the medication.
  - Any side effects or adverse reactions to the medication.
  - Any errors in administering the medication.
2. PRN and Over-the-Counter Medications: LCCS delivering direct care services shall also maintain logs concerning the administration of PRN and over-the-counter medications. The logs for the administration of prescription PRN and over-the-counter medications shall document the following:
- 3.
- How often the medication is used.
  - Date and time each medication was administered (recorded at the time of medication administration).
  - The circumstances in which the medication is used.
  - The symptom for which the medication was used.
  - The effectiveness of the medication.
4. Medication Administration Error Reporting/Charting: Any medication administration errors occurring or discovered shall be recorded in the medication log and immediately

reported to a supervisor. “Medication administration errors” include, but are not limited to, the loss of medication, unavailability of medication, falsification of medication logs, theft of medication, a missed dose, wrong dose, a dose being administered at the wrong time or by the wrong route, the administration of the wrong medication, and the discovery of an unlocked medication lock box that is supposed to be always locked.

- An incident report shall be filed with DHS PASSE Quality Assurance unit and appropriate PASSE, in accordance with Section 300 for any medication administration error that caused or had the potential to cause serious injury or illness to a beneficiary.

5. Required Oversight Documentation: LCCS delivering direct care services shall ensure that supervisory level staff review on at least a monthly basis all beneficiary medication logs to determine if:

- All medications were administered accurately as prescribed.
- The medication is effectively addressing the reason for which it was prescribed.
- Any side effects are noted, reported, and being managed appropriately.