



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Sent on Behalf of DES/DDD

QUALITY MANAGEMENT BULLETIN - MAY 2023

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors and Providers

Transmittal Date - 05/02/2023

Hello Colleagues,

Welcome to the May 2023 Quality Management bulletin.

First of all, let me introduce myself. My name is Dr. Farah Lokey, and I am the Quality Management Medical Director. I'm also new to the Division. I come to you from the pediatric clinical world and have been a physician for almost 20 years. I am happy to be part of the DDD and hope to continue to collaborate with you to make the lives, health and overall well-being of the people we support better everyday.

We also have a new Deputy Chief Quality Officer, Jeffrey West. He started with the Division as a QMU Investigative Nurse and most recently served as the Quality Management Manager. As a Registered Nurse for almost 30 years and a program leader for 20, he brings a varied background to the team.

I am hoping to continue using these bulletins to periodically offer resources, advice, and instructions that will forward our cause. Today's bulletin focuses on medical nurse helplines available to all of the members.

As you may be aware, many incidents are reported that relate to accidental injuries, as well as self-injurious behaviors. Some of the greatest challenges are head injuries, whether accidental or self-inflicted, as are bites inflicted by or upon the people we support. The clinical world regularly uses some protocols that help with evaluating these injuries and determining next steps. My hope is the following resources will assist in the quick evaluation of these and other injuries and give caregivers a place to call for help making treatment decisions.

Nurse Lines

The nurse lines are available to members through their health insurance plans. The nurses working these lines can help you decide what to do next when dealing with injuries; for instance, the nurses could help with worries about whether an injury should be escalated to an urgent care and/or emergency room. They can give advice on how to monitor a member's injury, simple treatments that may help, and what to watch for in terms of worsening symptoms. Using these resources may be another step toward decreasing severity of injuries and give caregivers a place to find quick, helpful advice. These nurse lines may be a good addition to existing procedures at your facilities.

The following is information about the nurse lines:

- When calling, please have the member's name, date of birth and AHCCCS ID number available.
- If you are a guardian who needs to speak for the member, you may file a release of information (ROI) with the health plan, and the nurses on the help line will be able to look that up.
- If you are a caregiver or DSP, please identify yourself as one so they understand your relationship

with the member. If the member is able, they may give verbal consent. I have been reassured by our subcontracted health plans that the nurses can speak to non-guardians and those with no release of information on a per-call basis. Thus, identifying oneself would be appreciated.

Please encourage the people we support who can speak for themselves to call the nurse helplines for medical advice, if appropriate.

Contact information for nurse lines

- Mercy Care Nurse Line: 1-800-624-3879, choose insurance plan, state other options, then state “nurse line,” and you will be transferred
- United Healthcare Community Plan Nurse Line: 1-877-440-0255 (direct line)
- Tribal Health Plan Members Helpline: 480-267-7267 (direct line)

We want your feedback!

Please take the next few months to use these lines. We will be sending out a survey to assess whether you found these nurse lines helpful and what improvements they can make to improve your experience.

Again our hope is this extra resource will help with decreasing the severity and outcomes of the medical incidents that occur with the people we support and give caregivers a good resource for quick medical advice.

In addition, the member’s Primary Care or other medical specialist should also have an after hours or triage line in their offices that you may utilize.

Care plans

In regard to chronic self-injurious behaviors—such as chronic head banging—we suggest the member’s primary care provider or specialist develop a care plan. The plan should give instructions on what to do when the member behaves in a self-injurious manner, what monitoring steps are needed, and when the situation should be escalated to an urgent care or emergency room.

This will give your caregivers more information to make informed decisions about the care of the member. This will also be valuable information to add to an incident report when it occurs.

Thank you for continuing to care for the members, and we appreciate your continued collaboration. Please reach out with questions and comments prior to the survey going out, if needed.

Contact information for our department can be directed through our district personnel via the following emails

- District Central - DDDCentralIR@azdes.gov
- District East - DDDEastIR@azdes.gov
- District North - DDDDistrictNorthIncidentReports@azdes.gov
- District South - DDD2IR@azdes.gov
- District West - DDDWestIR@azdes.gov