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Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Department prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities, or employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, and disability.

The Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program service or activity. For example, this means if necessary, the Department must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the Department will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible.

To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy, contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities ADA Coordinator at (602) 542-0419 or 1-866-229-5553 (outside Maricopa County); TTY/TTD Services: 7-1-1. TTY/TTD Services: 7-1-1.



The Safety Net

A QUALITY ASSURANCE BULLETIN

NOVEMBER IS CHOKING PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH!

Choking is when someone cannot breathe because food, a toy/object or other material is stuck inside of the throat. This blocks the airway and stops the person from getting air into their lungs.

Choking is a serious risk in general and especially for our members. For instance, THE NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL lists choking and suffocation as the third leading cause of death in the home and community settings. Most Division members live and enjoy activities in home and community settings. Conditions such as Cerebral Palsy, Seizures, Autism, Intellectual Disability, and others are common for our members and increase the risk and/or chances of a choking event. With the holiday celebrations during the months of November and December, the risk of a "choking event" is further increased.

—Diane Tasev, R.N.
QUALITY ASSURANCE INVESTIGATIVE NURSE

The Division has declared November **Choking Prevention Awareness Month** in an effort to provide information and resources that will help providers avoid and/or address a choking event. This article gives tips for preventing a choking event as well as information needed to address a choking event if/when it occurs. This is general information not to be used in place of CPR/First Aid training and/or as a substitute for medical care.



PREVENT CHOKING:



Encourage quiet, seated mealtimes
Discourage eating while walking, running, playing, lying down or standing
Assign a specific staff person or caregiver to monitor each meal or snack



Provide plenty of space around members who grab food or objects from others
Choose holiday decorations carefully: avoid tinsel, small ornaments, and items that look like candy
Watch for "pocketing" of food (when a person keeps adding food to their mouth without swallowing)



Do not allow individuals who are at risk for choking or have swallowing issues to eat alone
Discourage eating and drinking while in a moving car
Monitor individuals known to swallow non-food items (batteries, bolts, plastics, etc.)
● **Keep the member's preferred non-food items stored out of sight and out of reach**

The following are some foods that are known to cause choking and should be avoided or served with care:

- **Hard Candy**
- **Hot Dogs/Sausages**
- **Popcorn**
- **Sticky Foods** (marshmallows, fruit roll-ups, peanut butter, gel candy, etc.)
- **Chunks of Peanut Butter**
- **Nuts & Seeds**
- **Chewing Gum**

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHOKING:

- **Universal Sign for Choking:** one or both hands at the neck area; unable to talk or cough
- **Inability to breathe**
- **Forceful coughing, wheezing and difficulty breathing**
- **Lack of alertness or unconsciousness** • **Call 9-1-1 immediately!**
- **Pale or bluish color to lips and/or nails** • **Call 9-1-1 immediately!**

**Call or have someone call 9-1-1 immediately
before any other call or action when choking is suspected!**



DDD FRAUD HOTLINE
1-877-822-5799
"Everyone's Responsibility!"

DCS HOTLINE
1-888-767-2445
Department of Child Safety

APS HOTLINE
1-877-767-2385
Adult Protective Services

HOLIDAY SAFETY

Stay Alert! Be Safe!

Once again the Holiday Season is beginning and finds us in the midst of the biggest shopping days of the year! Many of the individuals we serve also enjoy opportunities for holiday shopping. Their safety, as well as ours, is of primary importance!



—Pauline Selmer
DISTRICT SOUTH
QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER

The mere thought of “shopping” most likely elevates excitement for most of us! Please keep the following brief safety reminders in mind:

PRE-PLANNING:

Prior to departure, staff should review every detail of the trip regarding appropriate supervision, meeting places, security, individuals’ special needs, and emergency contact information.

TRANSPORTATION:

Ensure that vehicles are safe and working properly. Refer to the agency’s maintenance checklist for any additional functioning requirements and safety equipment. Always walk around the vehicle before departing from any location to make certain no one has been overlooked while boarding.

INDIVIDUAL SAFETY:

Review your agency’s safety protocol for events and activities. During the Holidays, crowded parking lots, malls, and shopping centers can be distracting and especially challenging! To ensure everyone’s safety, keep the following in mind:

- Never leave people unattended.
- Never let individuals wander off without staff supervision. Many of the individuals we serve lack “stranger-danger” and other safety skills.
- Upon arrival, make certain no one is left in the vehicle.
- Watch for moving traffic.
- Never leave a vehicle running.
- Always lock your vehicle.

Everyone’s safety is of primary importance! Predators and thieves look for easy targets, especially during the holidays when you may become distracted. In the midst of all the holiday excitement: **Stay Alert! Be Safe!**

FLU SHOT TIME!

Get Vaccinated!

The flu season peaks from October through March and may continue as late as May 2015. Flu activity can circulate year around at lower levels.

Traditional flu vaccines made to protect against three (3) different flu viruses (called “trivalent” vaccines) are available. In addition, flu vaccines made to protect against four (4) different flu viruses (called “quadrivalent” vaccines) are also available.

Different flu vaccines are approved for use with different groups of people. Factors that can determine a person’s suitability for vaccination, or vaccination with a particular vaccine, include a person’s age, health (current and past) and any relevant allergies, including an egg allergy.

Many people do not realize that there can be complications from the flu. The elderly, the young, pregnant women, and people with chronic health conditions are at the highest risk. Complications from the flu include: thousands of hospital admissions yearly, ear or sinus infections, nausea and vomiting, dehydration, worsening of chronic health conditions, pneumonia and death.

Healthy people often do not think they are at risk for the flu and do not get vaccinated. The CDC recommends that everyone six (6) months and older be vaccinated yearly for the flu. You should not get the flu shot if you have a severe allergy to chicken eggs or a history of a severe reaction to a flu vaccination. You cannot get the flu from a flu shot!

This CDC recommendation has been in place since February 24, 2010, when the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted for “universal” flu vaccination in the United States to expand protection against the flu to more people. Contact your medical provider today to arrange a flu vaccination.

Source: CDC.gov

—Annette Lammon-Belcher, R.N.
HEALTHCARE SERVICES MANAGER



FREE DENTAL EVENT SCHEDULED

December 12-13, 2014

The Central Arizona Dental Society Foundation will host a third **DENTAL MISSION OF MERCY (MOM)** event at the Arizona State Fairgrounds in Phoenix on December 12-13, 2014, utilizing 100 portable dental units and 1500 volunteers. Since 2012, these volunteers have provided \$2.7 million in care to 3,699 Arizona citizens. During the 2014 event more than \$1,000,000 in free care is expected to be delivered to more than 2,000 patients. Both children and adults will be seen.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.azmom.org>

FINGERPRINT CLEARANCE CARD WEBSITE

DPS Website Offers Immediate Card Status Verification

The Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) has a public link allowing anyone to check on the current status of a Level One Fingerprint Clearance Application or Card. The site is an excellent employment tool for verifying the current status of a card for applicants already having a Level One fingerprint clearance card. Go to <http://www.azdps.gov/> or

http://webapps.azdps.gov/public_inq_acct/acct/ShowClearanceCardStatus.action

The Division of Developmental Disabilities has declared November

Choking Prevention Awareness Month

A presentation providing general information to prevent and address choking events is available.



Call or email to schedule your on-site presentation today
dtasev@azdes.gov or 602-771-8129

The content of the presentation is not intended as a substitute for CPR/First Aid training and/or medical care.