

December
2014

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH/ DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORTS DIVISION

HEALTH ALERT

Medication Safety in the Family Living Setting

REMEMBER

- Place medications for individuals in a separate, secure area.
- Family living providers are encouraged to keep their personal medications in a locked, secure area which only they may access.
- Any medication – even over the counter medications- can cause possible serious side effects or even death.
- If individual is suspected of ingesting the FL provider's medication, call 911 and Poison Control hotline ASAP (1- 800-222-1222)

For Additional Help: Call the Regional Office for assistance from Nursing or Behavioral Support staff or contact Bureau of Behavioral Supports or Clinical Services.

- Metro: 1- 505-841-5500
- SE: 1-575-624-6100
- SW: 1-575-528-5180
- NE: 1-575-758-5934
- NW: 1-505-863-9937
- BBS: 1-505-841-5532
- CSB: 1-505-841-2848



Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) are at risk for taking medications that do not belong to them. This may be due to lack of safety awareness and behavioral or emotional issues.

This is of particular concern in the Family Living setting where the goal of living with a family must be balanced with the individual's dignity of risk and known safety risk factors.

Recently an individual took medications that belonged to a Family Living provider and unfortunately died from a medication overdose.

This alert is intended to remind Family Living Agencies and Family Living Providers of the importance of storing all medications in the home in a safe manner in order to decrease the risk of accidental or intentional ingestion, overdose and death.

Case Managers and team members are reminded to consider any risk factors and the individual's safety when developing or updating ISPs or making home visits.

Family Living Provider Agencies are encouraged to:

- Review and identify which individuals may be at risk for taking medications due to their known or potential behavioral or cognitive issues and work with the Family Living Providers to assure safe medication storage when making home visits.
- Review the agency Pharmacy Policy and Procedure Manuals with your Pharmacy consultant. Make revisions as needed and implement protocols in Family Living homes that ensure the safe storage of the Family Living Provider's personal and over the counter medications.
- Review which homes may fall under the NMAC 16.19.11 regulations regarding medications in community living homes.

For Family Living Providers:

- Work with your Family Living Provider agency staff and be aware of known or potential risk factors for persons living with you.
- Don't keep your personal or over the counter medications out in a visible area such as kitchen countertops or next to your bed.
- Keep your personal or over the counter medications in an area that is secure and not accessible to the person with I/DD.
- Use Child Proof Caps when possible
- Keep track of your personal or over the counter medications.
- Take an inventory of your personal medications on a routine schedule.
- If you think the individual who lives with you may have taken your medication:
 - Call 911 immediately
 - Call Poison Control Hotline (1- 800-222-1222) immediately.
 - Alert the Family Living agency nurse as soon as possible.