



Health & Safety Alert #44-08-09

Transition Issues (Red Flags when changing Providers or Settings)

Our system serves many individuals with very diverse needs. As a result providers of service are selected based on the ability to meet those needs. With any major transition, health and safety needs must be given top priority. Plan ahead for changes in an individual's life that may create a risk. It is important to ask questions to see if a review or assessment should be completed. Some of the changes that readily impact individuals are:

- Changes in caregivers
- Move to a different home
- New medication or system of receiving it
- Death or illness of the caregiver or a loved one
- New roommate or housemate
- Change in supervision
- Change in diet/texture
- Change in services provided to the individual
- Job change
- Change in service coordinator
- New pharmacy provider
- Hospitalization
- Retirement

This alert will focus on situations where individuals change providers or settings. It is critical for providers, county boards, and families to understand the importance of completing thorough transitions. **NOT TENDING TO THE IMPORTANT DETAILS AND POOR COMMUNICATION CAN ULTIMATELY LEAD TO SERIOUS HARM.**

There are **four** important steps in the transition process:

1. Ensuring that the receiving provider, including the direct support professionals, are clearly apprised of and ready to meet the individual's needs.

Direct support professionals who have worked directly with the individual need to be actively involved in the transition process.

This includes but is not limited to:

- A. If the individual receives medication through medication administration, does the receiving provider have an adequate number of staff certified in medication administration, administration of food or medication per gastrostomy, jejunostom tubes and/or administration of insulin?
 - B. If the individual has a behavioral support plan requiring restraint and intervention, have the staff been trained on the restraint required in the BSP prior to serving the individual?
 - C. Is there an adequate number of trained staff to meet the supervision requirement for the individual and others living in the home?
2. The transferring provider must emphasize how they have managed potential health and safety risks; this should also include important historical information about the individual.

Priority Considerations:

- A. Any medical conditions, medications or health related activities such as glucometer checks, blood pressure reading, allergies or special nutritional requirements should be clearly outlined.
 - B. Environmental impact of the new setting on the individual – example, more traffic on the street in this area of town, any access problems presented by the new setting such as a second story if mobility is a concern, etc.
 - C. Mental health or behavioral concerns—develop cheat sheet for staff— including triggers, what works, what makes things worse, etc.
3. The assigned service and support administrator must actively facilitate the transition to the receiving provider or setting. This includes a review of the ISP to assess any new circumstances and determine potential risks. It is important for the SSA to ensure the receiving provider has the current ISP/BSP in sufficient time to train the direct support professionals.

The SSA should be sure any information related to health and safety is clear to all— bolding, highlighting, etc., to help it stand out. It is important that everyone communicate and emphasize problems needing addressed. When concerns are received, the SSA and provider need to ask “Are there immediate steps needed to protect the health and safety of the individual?”

The team should proceed very cautiously on the number of changes during the transition period. Where feasible, numerous changes at once should be limited.

4. The receiving provider must implement the services, monitor for concerns, and notify the county board when there are problems with the transition.

Process Breakdown Points

1. Is the information clearly communicated and clearly understood?
2. Does the new staff know and understand the service plan?
3. Have supervision levels been addressed?
4. Has appropriate training occurred on behavior support plans / interventions etc?
5. Does staff understand the potential problems or risks with their new responsibilities? Has all of the information been shared to properly prepare the receiving team?
6. Does the change create new risks for the individual?
7. Do the county board and agency have a good plan for monitoring services and providing oversight following the transition?
8. Does staff know what to do when problems arise?

Planning well for a transition will reduce the likelihood of any health and safety issues arising.

For more information, please contact the MUI/Registry Unit at (614) 995-3810.

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