



Memorandum

TO: Nursing Home Administrators

FROM: Martin P. Margolies, Chief Executive Officer
Healthcare Quality Strategies, Inc. (HQSI)

DATE: May 10, 2006

RE: National Nursing Home Week

While Healthcare Quality Strategies, Inc., (HQSI) focuses on essential clinical issues to help you achieve objectives of the Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI), we also recognize and support the equally vital, personal aspects of providing healthcare. We value the dedication and compassion your staff demonstrates as they care for residents, and National Nursing Home Week (May 14-20, 2006) provides a terrific opportunity for us to express this appreciation. Please post the enclosed flyer to share our message of gratitude with your staff.

Whenever you need any assistance, please contact us by phone at 1-732-238-5570 or E-mail: Marianne Sagarese, extension 2006 or msagarese@njqio.sdps.org; Anne Sommers, extension 2062 or asommers@njqio.sdps.org; or Dolores Viotti, extension 2117 or dviotti@njqio.sdps.org.

Also enclosed is the May issue of **MENTOR-NHC: Monthly Education, News, and Tips to Optimize Reliability of Nursing Home Care**. This issue focuses on preventing falls and provides tips for reducing residents' risk of falling.



*Recognizes and Values Your
Dedication
and Contributions
to Patients' Quality of Life*

*While we always value
everything you do, we are
taking this special
opportunity during
National Nursing Home
Week (May 14-20, 2006)
to express our appreciation*

MENTOR-NHC

Monthly Education, News, and Tips to Optimize Reliability of Nursing Home Care

May 2006

Safety Tips to Prevent Falls

Falls can result in reduced quality of life, decreased ability to function, increased fear of falling, restriction of activities, serious injuries, and increased risk of death. Although not every fall or injury can be prevented, it is critical to have a systematic process of assessment, intervention, and monitoring to minimize residents' risk of falling. The following tips will help:

Residents' Living Space and Personal Safety

- Remove clutter. Keep a clear path 2 to 3 feet wide around the bed, from the bed to the hall, from the bed to the bathroom, and from the bed to the lounge chair
- Keep the bed wheels locked at all times. Report beds with broken wheel locks
- Remove lightweight furniture. Keep the overbed table across the bed when it is not in use
- Report loose handrails and toilet seats
- Report torn linoleum and loose carpet edges. Wipe up wet spots when you see them
- Report burned out light bulbs
- Keep the call light, water pitcher, glass, and any personal items within arm's length of the resident
- Use footwear with tread on the bottom, a firm shape, and a low, even heel. Use gripper socks when the resident cannot wear safe shoes
- Give proper foot care
- Place anti-slip strips on the floor where the resident exits the bed
- Keep the bedroom night light illuminated at all times

Residents' Transfer and Mobility

- Know which residents need assistance during transfer and walking. Give help when needed.
- Watch all residents closely during the first 2 to 3 weeks after admission and after a health decline or acute illness. Increase assistance during these times

Residents' Transfer and Mobility (continued)

- For most residents, keep the bed in the lowest position at all times. Use a raised toilet seat when ordered
- Dress the resident in easy-to-manage clothing, such as those with elastic bands and Velcro fasteners
- Provide toileting, food, drink, and activity based on the resident's individual schedule
- Check the resident often. Ask volunteers and family to help
- If in use, position the commode next to the bed, on the exit side
- If in use, position canes/walkers next to the bed, on the exit side

Equipment Use

- Check the wheelchair brakes often. Report ones that do not hold the chair firmly in place
- Report all broken or lost parts of wheelchairs, walkers, and canes
- Use all of the seating items that are ordered for the resident
- Report any resident who leans over, slides down, or leans to one side while seated in a wheelchair
- Do not share wheelchairs among residents
- Make sure all equipment is labeled with the resident's name

Psychotropic Drugs

- Know which residents take a benzodiazepine or an antipsychotic
- Watch residents who are on these drugs for side effects, such as confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, changes in gait, loss of balance, and changes in mental status
- Use behavior-management skills to lessen the need for these drugs

Recognize & Celebrate Nursing Home Staff's and Volunteers' Quality of Care, and Residents' Contributions to the Community During National Nursing Home Week, May 14-20



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