

## EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN NHC MARYLAND HEIGHTS RESIDENT / RESPONSIBLE PARTY GUIDE

This guide briefly explains the Emergency Preparedness Program in place at NHC Maryland Heights.

The Emergency Preparedness Program, which includes an Emergency Operations Plan, is a comprehensive approach to meeting the health and safety needs of our resident population and provides our staff with guidance on how to respond to emergency situations that could impact the operation of the facility, such as natural or man-made disasters.

This guide details expectations of residents and their families during an emergency event at the facility or a community disaster.

This guide also provides families or responsible parties with alternate methods to contact the facility during a disaster when normal means of communications (telephones) may be inoperable.

### **Communications during a disaster or emergency event**

Staff members will communicate in person with residents when there is an emergency or disaster.

Typically normal telephone communications will occur between the facility and resident family members or responsible parties when there is an emergency that impacts the operations of the facility.

In the event of a disaster or other event that causes the loss of normal telephone communications, the facility may make alternative arrangements to contact resident families or responsible parties through the use of cell phones or other means.

If telephone communications (normal and cell) are inoperable, the facility may share information relative to the status of the facility or disaster on its webpage at <http://nhcmarylandheights.com/>. If you have given your email to the facility for newsletter, we can send an email.

The facility may contact the news media (radio & TV) and issue a press release relative to the facility status or other relevant information.

### **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

- A details plan containing emergency procedures (reviewed and revised on an annual basis) that the staff follow for various emergencies.
- Staff are trained each year on the Emergency Operations Plan and on Fire Procedures.

- Fire Drills are conducted on a regular basis at varying times to ensure the fire alarm system is operations and to evaluate staff response upon alarm activation.
- Disaster Drills are conducted twice per year to evaluate staff knowledge, response, and competence.

## **IN EVENT OF DISASTER**

### **Incident Command**

- The Leadership team will establish a Command Center for more serious incidents to provide guidance to staff and to communicate with emergency responders and agencies.
- Information and direction will be provided to residents and families as soon as possible – please be patient.
- The safety of the residents and staff will be a priority.

### **Sheltering in Place**

- In many incidents it may be safer to shelter in place, remaining in the building following the direction of staff.
- The facility maintains emergency supplies consisting of food, water, and other supplies in the building.
- When power is lost, we have hand-held emergency generators that will provide limited power to critical areas, i.e. portable lights in hall, phone.

### **If Forced to Evacuate the Building**

- Evacuation of a healthcare facility is rare; however, the facility is prepared to do so if necessary, for the safety of the residents.
- The decision to evacuate all or part of the building comes from the Command Center depending on the disaster.
- Residents and families will be notified of the evacuation as soon as practical. Often times families may be able to take a resident home for a few days, or until the emergency is over.
- If the facility is forced to relocate or evacuate residents the release or sharing of resident information with other healthcare facilities and emergency agencies may be done as permitted by law.

### **How we will Evacuate**

- **Emergency Packet** Residents will be prepared for evacuation by assigned staff. The emergency packet is sent with the resident to the receiving center. The emergency packet includes:

1. Identification information.
2. Reasonable party contact information.
3. Identification bracelet.
4. Code status and current orders from the physician.

All information is updated quarterly with care plans and significant changes.

- **Emergency Bags**
  1. Personal Clothing, i.e. Shirts, pants, dresses, gowns/pajamas, shoes, slippers, socks.
  2. Incontinent supplies
  3. Personal grooming supplies
  4. Dental supplies, dentures
  5. Hearing aids, eye glasses
  6. Skin Break down prevention aids
  7. Other needed supplies

Typically, these items are placed in a labeled bag and accompany the resident to the evacuation destination.

- Residents will be moved in small groups to an internal staging area prior to being transported to other receiving facilities. NHC Maryland Heights has arrangements with Gateway Ambulance, and our own bus as well as mutual aid agreements for transportation.
- Evacuation sites for relocation of residents are prearranged by contract. They include NHC St. Charles, Villages of St. Peters, Lake St. Charles Retirement center, NHC Town and Country, NHC Kennett, Osage Rehabilitation Health Care, Springfield Health and Rehabilitation, Macon Healthcare, NHC West Plains, and NHC Joplin. We will use the closest and non-affected facilities first.
- It may be necessary to place a band containing certain personal information on the resident's wrist during an evacuation.
- Identification Wristband
  1. Resident's Full name and date of birth.
  2. Food, Medication, Allergies
  3. Critical Diagnoses (Dementia, epilepsy)
  4. Name Contact for responsible party
- Medical Wristband
  1. Residents Name and birth date
  2. Facility name and contact information
  3. Diet order (thickened, Regular, Pureed, Mechanical)
  4. Other special needs (falls, wondering, skin concerns)
- A Resident Evacuation Form will be completed by staff and accompany the resident along with the Medical File/Chart.

## **FIRE PROCEDURES**

- Staff receive Fire Safety Training on hire and annually.
- This "hands on" training includes:
  - What to do if they discover a fire
  - How to rescue a resident
  - Evacuation of the fire area
- The fire procedures are reviewed and revised on a regular basis.

- Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis.

#### **If you Discover a Fire in your Room**

- Get out of your room immediately. Do not take time to remove personal belongings or pets.
- Shut the door to your room.
- Activate the fire alarm by pulling the pull station located in the corridor at the exit door.
- Evacuate via the nearest safe exit door.

#### **If you Hear the Fire Alarm but the Fire is NOT in your Room**

- Stay in your room.
- Keep the door closed!
- Close all windows and turn off the air conditioner / heating unit.
- Wait for instructions from staff or the Fire Department.

#### **Important Notes for Residents**

- If you encounter smoke while in your room and the fire is not in your room, stuff wet towels under the door and wait by an open window. Open the window only far enough so you can wave a towel or clothing to alert the Fire Department of your location.
- Follow instructions of staff and firefighters.

#### **Visitors & Families**

- Staff monitoring entrances will not allow any visitors into the facility until an “All Clear” has been heard. Please remain outside the facility.
- Visitors in waiting or other open areas will be escorted to a safe area by the staff of the particular department and asked to remain there until an “All Clear” has been heard or they are further directed by staff or firefighters.
- Visitors in public areas will be asked to remain there until an “All Clear” has been heard or they are further directed by staff or firefighters.
- Visitors with residents will be asked to remain with them until an “All Clear” has been heard or they are further directed by staff or firefighters.

#### **What you can do to help during any type of emergency**

- Remain in your room with the door closed and follow the direction of staff or emergency responders.
- Be Patient.