



# Caregiver

THE NEWSLETTER OF DRAKE MEDOX COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

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## Work Place Safety

How to identify Work Place Safety issues:

You may be wondering what, specifically, is a potential work place risk. Many of you have been doing a great job of reporting when you are concerned about the lack of assistive devices in a client's home. For those that are not aware of what may be available to help you care for your client, here are some tips:

1. If your client 'is at risk for falls', is unsteady on their feet, or requires your assistance to help them balance while they are receiving personal care, look for things in the bathroom like grab bars and bath mats. These will aid both you and the client while getting in and out of the tub.
2. If you bath your client, look for hand-held shower nozzles. You will experience strain to your back, over time, if while bathing your client, you are required to scoop water from the bath water to pour over your client while he/she is in the tub.
3. If your client requires significant assistance while walking from room to room, or up and downstairs, look for a walker. Many clients

deteriorate over time, and become more and more dependent on you for balance, which puts you both at risk should the client fall against you, or to the ground.

4. When you clean up the kitchen and/or bathroom floors, make sure there are brooms and mops. DO NOT hand wash a floor.
5. When using transfer devices such as lifts, make sure there is plenty of room to maneuver in, so you are not straining your back to accommodate a lift device in a small space.
6. You may have a client who is very independent and strong-willed, and insists on doing things for themselves, e.g. a complex transfer, with your assistance. Without the proper transfer devices, you are at risk of injury, and need to ask that a Field Supervisor come out to observe the transfer.

While our goal is to enable clients to remain as independent as possible in their own homes, we are not prepared to do so at the risk of injury to you. Please report to your Scheduler when you feel you will be at risk because any of the above is not available to you. Also please remember that, though you may have been with a client for a long time and have become accustomed to assisting your client without benefit of a proper device, other CHW's who are new to the client will likely report that the situation is not conducive to safe care. In this case, you will be asked why it was not reported earlier, as that is the expectation. Remember, the goal is safety for all: you, your co-workers, and the clients. Let's all work together to create a safe work environment.

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

- 1 Work Place Safety
- 2 Reminders for CHW's
- 3 Ambassador Program
- 4 Ambassador Program

### Reminders for all CHW's

- Stat Holiday: 19<sup>th</sup> May, please remember to inform all your clients that don't get 7 day service that they will not be getting service on the Stat Holiday. Please reschedule this visit for your client for another day where possible and advise your scheduler so they can make the change to the computer. If you would like the stat holiday off please inform your scheduler at least 2 weeks before hand.
- Please make sure you remember to hand in Trudy's questionnaire by 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

### Reminder for Regular CHW's

Please make sure that your Vacation Requests are in by Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008.



### Victoria Day

Victoria Day is a Canadian statutory holiday celebrated on the last Monday before or on May 24<sup>th</sup> in honour of both Queen Victoria's birthday and the current reigning Canadian sovereign's birthday.

While Victoria Day is often thought of as a purely Canadian event, it is also celebrated in some parts of Scotland, particularly in Edinburgh and Dundee, as well as in the Cayman Islands, where it is also a public holiday.



### Housekeeping Tips

1. A REMINDER – don't forget that the service you provide INCLUDES CALLING YOUR CLIENT to inform them when you will be coming, and what your name is, for ALL first-time service to clients.
2. When leaving your client's home, do some last minute safety checks. For example, ensure that all stove elements are turned off, refrigerated items are put in fridge, items you have moved while cleaning are put back where you found them, and doors are locked when you leave.
3. Be VERY careful when bathing clients who are quadriplegic or paraplegic and cannot feel the temperature of the water. The skin can be very sensitive to the water temperature, creating potential to burn the skin.
4. DO NOT FLUSH THE TOILET or do any other activity that uses lots of water, e.g., run the clothes washing machine or dishwasher, WHILE THE CLIENT IS BATHING OR SHOWERING. Using lots of water from more than one source in the home may have an effect on the water pressure and temperature in other parts of the home, especially the bathroom tub or shower.
5. Make sure all water spilled in bathroom during personal care, bathing, etc., is wiped up, leaving no puddle water behind. This is extremely dangerous, not just for the client but for other family members who may use the washroom after you have bathed the client.

### *Happy Birthday to:*

Satya B, Violeta C, Cecilia C, Florencia C, Lucia C, Emily C, Betty D, Halina G, Lynn J, Shannon P, Fernanda Q, Sylvia V, Paramjit W, Peggy W, Stella Z,



