**Resident Substance Use & Abuse**

**Policy Statement**

Residents of long-term care services may have current, or histories of substance use and abuse including legal and illegal drugs and alcohol. The State Operations Manual for Medicare and Medicaid providers provides regulations for nursing homes to follow for Substance and Opioid Use Disorders (SUD or OUD). When a resident is identified as using illegal substances or misusing illegal substances, this policy and procedures establishes guidelines for staff to follow.

**Procedures**

All residents admitted to a nursing home are required to have a Level 1 screening according to PASRR requirements, which asks the individual if they have a history of alcohol or substance use disorders. In addition, the resident or their representative provides a psychosocial history to the nursing home which includes if they’ve had a history of legal substance abuse (such as alcohol or prescription medications) and illegal substance use/abuse.

Regardless of history, all residents will be assessed when a potential change of condition is identified which may include the potential for substance use behavioral and/or health changes. These may include but are not limited to:

* A sense of euphoria or feeling high
* Hallucinations
* Paranoia
* Violent behavior
* Difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly
* Altered senses including visual, auditory, and taste perception
* Changes to vital signs
* Changes in coordination

In addition, staff will be educated on potential overdose signs and symptoms and interventions when overdose is suspected **[such as administration of Narcan – use if pharmacy provides Narcan only].** Signs of potential overdose include but are not limited to:

* Lack of responsiveness or loss of consciousness
* Changes to vital signs including lower heart rate, respirations (including respiratory arrest), and body temperature.
* Difficulty breathing
* Seizures

When staff suspect legal substance abuse and/or illegal substance use (either in the nursing home or off-site), staff will implement interventions to ensure that the resident and other residents are safe from potential hazards including the resident’s behaviors and/or hazardous items in the environment.

The resident’s representative (as appropriate) and primary physician will be notified of all concerns identified regarding potential legal and illegal drug use/abuse including signs of potential overdose.

Documentation of all concerns identified will be included in the resident’s record including notification of the resident’s representative (as appropriate), physician and law enforcement (if notified).

If staff suspect that residents possess legal and/or illegal substances that can be misused, the staff shall not search the resident’s personal space unless the resident is informed of the reason for the search and consents to the search. If the resident has illegal substances and/or drug paraphernalia:

* The staff member should not touch the item and report immediately to the charge nurse, Administrator and/or Director of Nursing. If the charge nurse is notified, they will report as soon as possible to the Director of Nursing and/or Administrator.
* The Administrator or Director of Nursing will report the findings to the local law enforcement for further direction.
* Under no circumstances should any staff member act as an arm of the law.
* The interdisciplinary care team shall investigate how the resident obtained the legal and/or illegal substances.
* If it is determined that a visitor may be bringing these substances into the resident, the interdisciplinary care team will discuss the potential need to limit/restrict visitation in accordance with the Visitation policies and procedures.

If the resident has a known substance use disorder, appropriate staff including the Director of Nursing or Social Services shall discuss the concern with the resident’s primary care physician and request a referral to appropriate mental health/substance use counselors and/or treatment. In accordance with federal regulations, the resident and/or representative must agree to appropriate care and treatment. **[enter name]** will assist with arranging appointments including potential telehealth services and transportation as appropriate.

If continued concerns are identified with legal and/or illegal substance use that places the resident, other residents and/or staff at risk for harm **[enter name]** may begin involuntary discharge processes in accordance with the Involuntary Discharge or Transfer policies and procedures.

**Resources:**

Mayo Clinic (Retrieved 2023, Apr. 28). *Drug addiction (substance use disorder).* <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/drug-addiction/symptoms-causes/syc-20365112>.

American Addiction Centers (2023, Mar. 20). *Overdose Symptoms, Risks & Treatments*. <https://americanadditioncenters.org/overdose>.

CMS. (2022, Oct. 24). *State Operations Manual, Appendix PP, F557*. <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/guidanceforlawsandregulations/downloads/appendix-pp-state-operations-manual.pdf>