

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**BUREAU OF HUMAN SERVICES LICENSING**  
**Community Homes for Individuals with Mental Retardation**  
(55 Pa.Code Chapter 6400)

**Q/A - Regulatory Clarifications – December 2014**

*The clarifications and interpretations below will remain on the Department's web site until the information is included in the next updated Regulatory Compliance Guide (RCG).*

**Regulation: § 6400.46(h)-(i) – Staff Training**

*§ 6400.46(h) - Program specialists and direct service workers and at least one person in a vehicle while individuals are being transported by the home, shall be trained before working with individuals in first aid techniques.*

*§ 6400.46(i) Program specialists, direct service workers and drivers of and aides in vehicles shall be trained within 6 months after the day of initial employment and annually thereafter, by an individual certified as a trainer by a hospital or other recognized health care organization, in first aid, Heimlich techniques and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.*

**Question:** Does the regulation at § 6400.46(h) require first aid training to be done by a recognized healthcare organization?

**ANSWER:** No. First aid training as per § 6400.46(h) can be done by the home. The first aid training must be in person, and include facility-specific instructions (such as location of the first aid kit, contents of first aid kit; etc.).

**Regulation: § 6400.110 – Smoke Detectors and Fire Alarms**

*§ 6400.110(f) - If one or more individuals or staff persons are not able to hear the smoke detector or fire alarm system, all smoke detectors and fire alarms shall be equipped so that each person with a hearing impairment will be alerted in the event of a fire.*

**Question:** Must each room in a home serving an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing have a detection system (such as a signaling device) in place?

**ANSWER:** Yes. The detection system must be equipped so that an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing is alerted in any room of the house that is accessible to individuals. Each individual in the home must be alerted to the fire alarm at all times while awake or sleeping – individuals who are

unable to hear the smoke detector or fire alarm must have the same notice as a person who is able to hear.

Acceptable signaling devices include:

- Strobe lights approved by Underwriters Laboratories, have a single intensity of 75cd or higher, and have a flash rate of 1-3 flashes per second. If an individual or staff person is unable to hear the smoke detector or fire alarm system, then all of the detectors and the alarm system in all areas of the home accessible to the particular individual must be equipped with a strobe light.
- A personal body device that vibrates when the alarm sounds.
- A pillow that vibrates when the alarm sounds (for use when sleeping)
- Hearing dogs

It is not acceptable for a staff person to alert an individual in lieu of a signaling device.

An individual's needs may differ based on the degree of their impairment and the specific situation. For example, an individual may be able to hear a fire alarm during the day when using a hearing aid, but not while asleep when the hearing aid is removed. Therefore, a combination of the devices may be appropriate based on each individual's needs.

**Regulation:      § 6400.161(a) – Storage of Medications, § 6400.162(a) - Labeling of Medications, § 6400.167(b) - Administration of Prescription Medications and Injections**

*§ 6400.161(a) - Prescription and nonprescription medications shall be kept in their original containers, except for medications of individuals who self-administer medications and keep the medications in personal daily or weekly dispensing containers.*

*§ 6400.162(a) - The original container for prescription medications shall be labeled with a pharmaceutical label that includes the individual's name, the name of the medication, the date the prescription was issued, the prescribed dose and the name of the prescribing physician.*

*§ 6400.167(b) - Prescription medications and injections shall be administered according to the directions specified by a licensed physician, certified nurse practitioner or licensed physician's assistant.*

**Question:** How should a home process a new order for a medication that has already been prescribed (such as a change in dosage or frequency)?

**ANSWER:** The prescriber faxes the new order to the home, the home then updates the Medication Administration Record (MAR) and places a sticker on the medication container reading "New Orders – See MAR", leaving the original label still visible.