

Basic Caregiving Guidelines

FEA members hire and supervise their own caregivers. As the employer/client, the FEA member is recommended to provide their employee/caregiver with basic caregiving information. This document is intended for that purpose.



Confidentiality & HIPAA

Confidentiality

Employees/caregivers will provide assistance to their employer/client in the privacy of the employer/client's home. To adequately provide care supports the employee/caregiver will be privy to personal information about the employer/client, including information about health conditions, personal cares and living arrangements. In order to maintain a good relationship the employee/caregiver is expected to respect the necessity to keep all personal information confidential.

Confidential means to be kept private. To assure that confidentiality is maintained, the caregiver/employee should follow these guidelines:

1. Never share information about the employer/client with the employer/client's family or friends unless requested by the employer/client.
2. Never share information about their employer/client with the employee/caregiver's family, friends, or other members of the community.
3. You guard information about your clients all the time, even in the privacy of your own home.
4. Keep information away from anyone who does not have the right to see it and never discuss diagnosis or cares with someone who is not a part of their health care system

Confidentiality can be broken by:

- Talking in front of a client where others might overhear
- Talking to co-workers, other clients, family members, etc
- Records left in a public place

Caregiver/employees are expected to practice good professional boundaries at all times this includes keeping personal information regarding themselves and the employer/client **PRIVATE!**

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) Privacy Rule

The HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) was finalized on August 14th, 2002. This legal act ensures that personal medical information that is shared with doctors, hospitals and others (**caregivers**) who provide and pay for healthcare is protected. It is the first-ever comprehensive federal protection guideline for the privacy of health information.



Basically, the Privacy Rule does the following:

- Imposes restrictions on the use and disclosure of personal health information.
- Gives the consumer of healthcare greater access to their medical records.
- Gives the consumer of healthcare greater protection of their medical records.

When a consumer of healthcare gives personal health information to a covered entity, that information becomes PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION or PHI. It includes:

- Any health information used or disclosed by a covered entity in any form, verbally, recorded, on paper, electronically, or other media OR
- Any personal health information that contains information that connects the consumer of healthcare to the information. Examples of information that might connect personal health information to the consumer include: the consumer of healthcare name or address, social security or other identification numbers, past, present, or future physical or mental health or conditions, the provision of healthcare to the individual, documentation of personal care, billing information etc.

The disclosure of PHI is permitted:

- For treatment, payment, and healthcare operations
- With authorization or agreement from the consumer of healthcare

Best Practices:

- Get authorization from you client before giving out any information
- Think of your clients medical information as something they own
- Be careful of messages or discussions that you have
- Never leave charts, papers or computers screen available for others to see
- Be careful with what you say

Breaching Privacy and confidentiality could lead to fines, violations, and/or jail time.

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