

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR PATIENTS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Checklist for Practices

PRIORITIZE PATIENTS FOR PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION RELATED TO PREPAREDNESS

- Identify patients with special health care needs for inclusion in panel or registry:
 - Patients who require support for respiratory issues (i.e., oxygen, ventilators, CPAP).
 - Patients who require nutritional support (i.e., gastrostomy, NG, GJ tubes).
 - Patients with access and mobility challenges or who are dependent on assistive technology due to physical disability.
 - Patients with immune suppression.
 - Patients with chronic diseases who have medication requirements (i.e., asthma and COPD, diabetes, end-stage renal disease, HIV infection).
- Plan for targeted communications and outreach to select groups via email/text messaging/patient portal, telephone (collect contact information if necessary) before and during emergencies.
- Create care plans or medical summaries for patients with the following information:
 - Diagnoses.
 - Medications.
 - Relevant past medical history.
 - Allergies.
 - Durable medical equipment requirements.
 - Insurance information, case manager, care coordinator, other service providers.

REVIEW KEY ELEMENTS OF PREPAREDNESS WITH HIGH-RISK PATIENTS (ANNUALLY)

Communications

- Register with local emergency response and utility companies, including:
 - Special needs registries (where available) – planning tool and response prioritization for local government.
 - Enhanced 911 services – information for use by first responders.
 - Utility company priority lists.
 - Emergency notification and early warning systems.
- Maintain an updated emergency contact list (caregivers, family and friends) and a list of people to contact who can help before, during and after emergencies.
- Plan for how to communicate with emergency personnel if communication aids are needed.

Planning

- Have a plan for evacuation and shelter-in-place, including:
 - Alternate living arrangements or locations of shelters for special needs.
 - Plan to bring medications, oxygen, durable medical equipment, caregiver, pet or service animal.
- Plan for fire safety: smoke alarms, escape routes from each room with accommodations for wheelchairs if necessary; inclusion of caregivers, schools, and workplaces in plans.
- Plan for electricity outage: generator, car battery, 12-volt inverter for automobiles.

Medication and Supply Needs

- Have a minimum one week supply of medications, medical supplies, food and water, pet food.
- Plan with DME companies for equipment failure, back-up supplies, loaner equipment.
- Prepare a “go-kit”: contact lists, medicines and supplies, insurance cards, medical information summary, recent photos of family members and pets/service animals, pet supplies. Check your go-kit periodically for items that expire.