

Manitoba Developmental Centre

Effective Date: June 1, 2010	TITLE: COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILY/ SUPPORT NETWORK	POLICY NO. V-03
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OBJECTIVE: Residents will be supported in maintaining communication with their family/support network through telephone calls, mail, and electronic/digital communication.

POLICY: Communication with the residents' families/ support networks is supported and encouraged. Questions and concerns will be addressed within the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Personal Health Information Act guidelines. The Substitute Decision Maker (SDM) for personal care will be consulted and a signed consent will be obtained prior to using electronic communication. This signed consent will be scanned and filed in the electronic health record. Information regarding other residents will not be shared with families or others. Staff should refer to the electronic health record to determine what information can be shared and with whom.

- Telephone – Residents have the right to make and receive telephone calls. Residents who are unable to use a handheld receiver will have access to a speaker phone.
- Mail – Residents have the right to receive and send mail to/from their family/support network. Residents who have the ability to open their own mail will be encouraged to do so.
- Email – Residents have the right to send and receive emails from their families/support networks.
- Audio-Visual Electronic Communication – Residents have the right to contact family and friends via peer-to-peer electronic communication using a personal computer.

All modes of communication will be conducted in a confidential manner. Residents who require assistance to maintain communication with family and support network will have staff assistance with the process.

PROCEDURE:

Telephone Communications

- All outgoing and incoming telephone calls will be noted on the electronic health record under Monitor Social Contact.

Mail

- Social mail received will be presented to the resident.
- The service provider must sign his/her name and position on the written correspondence when assistance is provided.
- All mail correspondence will be noted on the electronic health record under Monitor Social Contact and retained for the resident's enjoyment.

Email

- The service provider must sign his/her name and position in the email correspondence when assistance is provided. All emails must have the confidentiality notice listed beneath each message as follows:
"**Confidentiality Notice:** This e-mail message (including any attachments) is confidential and may also be privileged, and all rights to privilege are expressly claimed and not waived. Any use, dissemination, distribution, copying or disclosure of this message and any attachments, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the intended recipient is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you are not the intended recipient, please return to sender."
- Personal health information is not to be included in "social" emails.
- All service providers participating in correspondence through emails must read and follow MDC Policy I-10 Electronic Network Usage and sign form A-98 (signed forms are to be sent to Human Resources).
- Email accounts will be set up by designated service providers who will ensure log-on names and passwords are kept in a secured area.
- All efforts should be made to have the resident attend with the staff for sending emails and residents

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should have as much input as possible into the email message. If it is not feasible for the resident to attend, staff may compile the message with the resident's input prior to sending the email.

- Emails sent or received are to be printed or saved to the resident's email account.
- Pictures sent to the resident's email account will be saved to the resident's email account and may be printed off on the public access work station. If coloured photos are required, a CD may be ordered from Materials Management and the pictures downloaded to the CD and printed offsite. All email correspondence will be noted in the electronic record under Monitor Social Contact.
- If a resident passes away or moves, the pictures saved on their email account can be transferred to a CD to be included in their personal belongings.

Audio-Visual Electronic Communication

- Ensure a dedicated quiet room is utilized.
- Before first session, be sure that the person initiating the session is fully aware of any body cues (if individual is non-verbal) to make sure that both parties are able to interact efficiently.
- Ensure privacy. Only members participating in the peer-to-peer electronic communication session at hand should be present in the room.
- Audio-Visual Electronic Communication In Session" signs should be created to avoid walk-ins while session is in progress.
- Equipment concerns will be reported to the Residential Coordinator (or designate) for prompt resolution.
- Residential Coordinator (or designate) to ensure the laptops are stored when not in use in a locked but readily accessible room.

Other Forms of Communication

- Residents whose personal resources allow will be encouraged to use other forms of communication with approval from their SDM for personal care/property.

Changes to Contact Information

- Any changes to Next of Kin contact information should be forwarded to Health Information Services by email or interdepartmental mail. Health Information Services will update the electronic health record and email Social Services Worker, who will update the Residential Coordinator and SDM for personal care if applicable. Residential Coordinator will print off a new Individual Profile to reflect the change in contact information.

REFERENCES:

MDC Policies I-10 Electronic Networks Usage, I-30 Retention & Disposal of Records, II-35 Confidentially, I-37 Standards for Service Delivery and Recording/Entries in Health Record, IV-30 Photographing and/or Recording of Residents, Staff and Areas of the MDC
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Personal Health Information Act
Residents' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities
Council on Accreditation (COA) Standard CA-DDS 6