

NAVIGATING HEALTH SERVICES

COMPETENCIES: COMMUNITY LIVING SKILLS & SUPPORTS;
HEALTH & WELLNESS; PERSON-CENTERED CULTURE



INTRODUCTION

Although receiving health care is a universal experience, each of us have highly specific treatment and intervention needs. As you support an individual with Autism in navigating health services, you can ensure your support is person-centered by fostering self-awareness of his or her medical needs, teaching skills to manage health care, and promoting advocacy for medical needs. The quick assessment provided below can help you learn more about the person you support.

SELF-AWARENESS OF MEDICAL NEEDS

Does the person you support know...

- His or her short-term or ongoing medical needs?
- His or her prescription medications, their purpose, frequency and dosage amounts?
- How to identify his or her symptoms and communicate them to others?
- When he is experiencing a medical emergency and how to get care?
- The difference between an emergency medical situation and a non-emergency medical situation?
- What to ask or share with the physician during an office or hospital visit?

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Does the person you support know...

- His or her doctor(s)' contact information or how to access it?
- How to schedule an appointment?
- How to get to an appointment?
- How to access and provide insurance information at a medical appointment or at the pharmacy?
- How to fill a prescription?
- How to get medical care if his or her doctor's office is closed?
- How to keep a file of medical records at home or digitally.
- How to fill out forms at a doctor's office (demographic, insurance, HIPAA and medical history)?

ADVOCACY

Does the person you support know...

- How to get referrals for other providers or how to coordinate with more than one provider?
- How to request accommodations in a medical environment?
- How to request a waiver form to allow a support person or medical advocate to join him at appointments?

WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW!

- 1 After you have learned more about the individual's self-awareness of her health needs, identify a concrete, achievable strategy you can teach her in order to become more capable in this arena of self-care.
- 2 Repeat the activity above focusing on an organizational skill.
- 3 Repeat the activity above focusing on an advocacy skill.

