

## Part 3- Educate Your Local Emergency Department About Being on the Spectrum

### Advocating for Yourself or Your Family Member With Autism

- If possible, provide your local hospital with information about your autism before an emergency arises.
- Provide information on:
  - The best way to communicate.
  - Sensory issues.
  - How well you tolerate long waits.
  - If you need a quiet environment.
  - Ways to help you remain calm.
  - Any fears or anxieties.
  - If you want someone (a family member or caregiver) to remain with you.



### Share Information in Advance of Going to the Emergency Department

- Ask your primary care or specialist doctors to share your electronic records.
- Complete the questionnaire (provided below) and give it to the hospital in advance of a potential visit to the emergency department.
- These ways present opportunities to empower individuals with autism, their loved ones, and/or caregivers to:
  - Optimize care in the emergency department.
  - Educate health care providers on the nuances of their condition.
  - Set expectations for the type of treatment to be provided.

Resources: Venkat, A., Migyanka, J., Cramer, R., & McGonigle, J. (2016). An instrument to prepare for acute care of the individual with Autism Spectrum Disorder in the Emergency Department. *Journal Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 46, 2565-2569.