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“THE CIRCLE OF SAFETY” ADULT CARE AWARENESS ADVISOR

News and Tips to Make Your Life Easier, Safer and Happier!

For Friends and Clients of PCALIC, LLC

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It Started with a Few People and Spread Like Wildfire

And there was little we could do about the wave of sickness that washed over employees and residents. It started with a couple people and within a few days it spread from the assisted living to the skilled unit. In just over a week's time, at least 50 residents and about 90 percent of the staff at the assisted living facility came down with what's commonly referred to as **Norwalk flu**.

Noroviruses are members of a group of viruses called caliciviruses also known previously as “Norwalk-like viruses.” Infection with norovirus affects the stomach and intestines, causing an illness called gastroenteritis, or “stomach flu.” This “stomach flu” is *not* related to the flu (or influenza), which is a respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus. In addition, noroviruses are not related to bacteria and parasites that can cause gastrointestinal illnesses as reported by the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases Division of Viral Diseases reports.

“Intermittently over the last couple of years there have been small outbreaks within senior living facilities and day care centers,” said Bill Crawford, health officer for the Benzie Lellanau District Health Department. “When people get together with low levels of immunity... it becomes more of a widespread problem.”

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Welcome New Member-Insureds!

Don't Let the Plaintiff Attorney Get a Leg Up.

In a facility in a small city in New York, the plaintiff attorney alleged that our insured failed to develop care plans and failed to properly supervise the plaintiff. It is also alleged the insured failed to conduct a proper evaluation, which would have lead the defendant to the conclusion that the plaintiff was not suited for the level of care the facility was equipped to provide.

This claim started with a resident who sustained a fracture to her right humerus and right femur resulting from a fall. The resident was simply observed sliding down the wall of the facility. The resident was to of used a walker and had been observed earlier in the day using the walker. Due to inadequate documentation, these appear to be the only facts of the incident we have from eye witnesses.

Careful review of the current facts accumulated to date and the experts consulted led to a settlement in the amount of \$175,000 plus expenses of \$20,000.

Had proper documentation and record keeping procedures been implemented in this facility, the expected result of this claim could have been minimized as the defense attorney could have had more fuel for his fire to prepare a stronger defense for this case.

Records are a durable account of what has happened. Courts may place more trust in records than in eyewitnesses. This may be true because documentation is an immediate response, and eyewitness accounts may be told long after the event is fresh in the observer's memory. The record can be the facilities tool in defending against charges of errors and misconduct. In addition to background material, treatment plan, record of treatment interventions, progress notes, critical incident reports and routine information, the record should contain documentation of all unusual events and incidents.

No doubt almost everyone in America has heard horror stories about care facilities. Almost all of the industry's problems can be solved through good risk management practices as stated in an October 28, 2003 report published by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. The following tools were reported as necessary practices for all care facilities:

- Good communication
- Documentation
- Orientation
- Training
- Proper assessments
- Quality assurance.

To learn more about the above tools and proper documentation, please go to the www.pcalic.com website and enter your user name and password to access the many risk management tools available to the member-insureds of PCALIC and PCH Mutual. If you do not have a username and password, please contact your Account Manager at 1-800-673-2558.



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The symptoms of gastroenteritis are nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea accompanied by abdominal cramps. Some people also complain of a headache, fever/chills, and muscle aches. Symptoms usually last for 1 or 2 days.

People can become infected with the virus in several ways, including:

1. Eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with the norovirus
2. Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with norovirus, and then placing their hand in their mouth
3. Having direct contact with another person who is infected and showing symptoms (For example, when caring for someone with the illness, or sharing foods or eating utensils with someone who is ill).

Some steps you can take at your facility to reduce the virus from spreading include cleaning the facility regularly with a disinfectant. Should an episode of the Norwalk Virus erupt, take the following steps:

1. Clean the facility immediately with a disinfectant
2. Cancel all group activities such as nightly movies, and ask residents to stay in their rooms
3. Have staff and residents wash their hands frequently with an antibacterial soap

For more information on the Norwalk Virus check out the following websites: <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/224225-overview> and http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub_norwalk.htm

Save Time, Money, Grief and Relationship

Robert had tripped getting out of the shower. The Nurse's Aid was there a moment ago, but had just left when he asked her to get his eyeglasses he had left on the bedroom dresser. The fall hadn't resulted in any bone breakage but it was later determined that it had caused severe cartilage tearing to his knee and there would be an extended period of rehabilitation.

Shady Glen where Robert was a resident, upon learning of the accident, reviewed his medical records which disclosed Robert's Doctor's notation that Robert was to have help at all times in bathing and dressing. Although the Aid had been in attendance, there had been a momentary absence.

Robert's family, upon learning of the accident, visited their Attorney to discuss the possibility of filing a lawsuit against Shady Glen on Robert's behalf. They were told that these suits were normally handled with the Attorney receiving anywhere from one-third (1/3) to Forty Percent (40%) of any money recovered and that it could easily take one to three years before the case came to trial. Fortunately, at the time Robert became a resident of Shady Glen, he signed a Mediation Agreement, which allowed him to take his case before a disinterested third party (the Mediator) who would listen to both sides and make a recommendation that would help bring this to a satisfactory conclusion for both parties.

Robert immediately took advantage of the opportunity made available through Mediation; a third party Mediator was agreed upon by Robert and Shady Glen and an early date was set for the meeting. Robert's family decided to have an Attorney present although that wasn't required and Robert and his family could have presented his complaint.

Within a few months, the Mediation meeting was held with each party having an opportunity to tell the Mediator its side of the story. The meeting was held in the Mediator's office and Robert felt comfortable in discussing his injuries away from the formal, cold and often-times uncomfortable court environment. Robert's attorney was with him, but because there was no necessity of a long drawn out Court fight, the attorney's fees were substantially less; meaning a greater amount of any recovery would belong to Robert.

After patiently and attentively listening to both Robert and Shady Glen's explanation of what had happened and visiting with each side individually and then together, the Mediator made a recommendation as to an amount Shady Glen should pay Robert as compensation. Since this was Non-Binding Mediation, neither Robert nor Shady Glen was required to accept the Mediator's finding.

However, after careful consideration, both sides realized that the fairness in the compensation recommended, together with the savings in aggravation, time, costs and fees, made their acceptance the wisest thing to do. Robert left the meeting fully satisfied that he had, in the most expeditious manner possible, been given an opportunity to tell his story and had been fairly compensated. He continued to reside, as a resident, at Shady Glen and became one of their strongest supporters.

If you're interested in saving time, money, grief and relationships with your residents and their family members should an incident occur that results in a dispute at your community, check-out the Mediation section under risk management exclusive to member-insureds of PCALIC and PCH Mutual at the website, www.pcalic.com or request a Mediation Kit by calling Kathi Fuhrman at 1-800-673-2558 extension 113 and simply giving her your policy number.

Thank You! Thank You!

We would like to thank the following for referring their fellow friends and family to PCALIC for a quote:

Jenny Kim,
Seasons of Life AFH, WA
Pearl Walker, Walker Lake
Breeze, GA
Andrea Streeter, A Helping
Hand CLA, GA



Remember: Each individual that refers someone to us for a quote will receive a \$5 Gift Card to Starbucks! This is a perfect way to enjoy your coffee on us.

Important Dates to Remember:



February 14th - Valentine's Day

February 16th - President's Day

March 8th - Daylight Savings Begins

March 17th - St. Patrick's Day

WELCOME!

We would like to welcome some of our recent new insureds:

Seasons of Life AFH, Washington

Care Home at the Meadows, Washington

Sunview Care Home, Washington

Grace Manor & Grace Cottage, Washington

Valley Vista ICS, Inc, Arizona

Autumn House, Montana

Sunnyville AFH, Washington

Joyful Personal Care Home, Georgia

Dennis Frank, Washington

Avalon AFH, Washington

KRRAM-Z II, North Carolina

Senior Enterprises, Washington

Ly Houy Ngor, Washington

Kyoung Lee, Washington

Maria Tulare, Washington

Perla Dameron, Washington

Diane Dobbs, Georgia

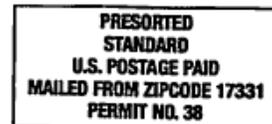
McCoy Assisted Living, Colorado

Congratulations!!!

Home Suite Home of Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin won the Wii Game System. Congratulations and we hope you enjoy it!



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Return Service Requested



Very good quote, and very affordable. Quick response to our questions. Easy to work with. I Love PCALIC.

- Baljeet Hans, Sahara AFH

The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams

Eleanor Roosevelt



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Out page 3 and see how many individuals received free coffee just for talking about us!