

CONSUMER SUPERVISION / ACCOUNTABILITY (RESPITE PROVIDERS)

Introduction

Supervision is assuming responsibility for another person's safety, in order to protect the person from harm or injury. Supervision is sometimes referred to as "accountability."

Supervision for a respite participant is determined by their primary caregiver. Supervision is tailored to each waiver participant's unique needs.

Review questions

Q: What is the purpose of supervision? **A:** *The purpose of supervision is to protect the person from harm or injury.*

Q: What is the difference between "supervision" and "accountability?" **A:** *None- they mean the same thing.*

Supervision plans

A person's supervision needs should be clearly communicated by the primary caregiver. This could be verbally or in written format. Either way it should provide a clear understanding of the person's need for supervision in different circumstances. The supervision information should specify what degree of supervision a person needs in different situations covering day and night activities. For example, the need for supervision may be less if the person is awake in his own home, but greater if the person is out in the community. Some people need more supervision during dining, due to risks for choking for example. Another person may require close monitoring while bathing. A person who can't adjust hot water temperatures may be at risk of being burned in the bath if not closely supervised. A person who has a seizure disorder, or who can not position his own body, may be at risk of drowning in a tub of water. These kinds of considerations go into deciding on the person's level of supervision for each kind of activity.

Review questions

Q: What is a "supervision plan?" **A:** *A "supervision plan" is a clear understanding, either written or verbally communicated to the provider, of how closely a consumer must be supervised under different circumstances.*

Q: Whose responsibility is it to train a respite provider on the consumer's supervision needs? **A:** *The primary caregiver.*

Q: What are some different situations that may require more or less supervision?

A: *Different levels of supervision may be required during dining, bathing, or when the consumer is out in the community rather than at home.*

Balancing choice

The supervision provided must balance the person's need for protection from harm with the person's right to make choices and be as independent as possible. Care providers must try to balance the requirements of supervision with the person's right to privacy, and must respect choices as much as possible within the bounds of the provided supervision.

Review questions

Q: Does supervision ignore the consumer's rights to make choices and have privacy? **A:** *No, supervision must balance the right to make choices and have privacy with the person's need for protection.*

Responsibilities

The primary caregiver is responsible for establishing the required supervision and for training care providers on the needs of the respite participant. The care provider is responsible for making sure he or she understands the requirements for supervision. The care provider is also responsible for maintaining the required supervision, and in some cases documenting that supervision was provided as required.

Review questions

Q: Who is responsible for establishing the required supervision? **A:** *The primary caregiver.*

Q: What are the responsibilities of the care provider? **A:** *The care provider is responsible for (a) making sure he or she understands the requirements for supervision, (b) maintaining the required supervision, and (c) if requested, documenting that supervision was given.*

Conclusion

Care providers must ensure that they have received clear guidance about the degree of monitoring a waiver participant requires in order to protect the participant from harm and injury. Supervision will take into account different activities and situations throughout the day and evening, including bathing and dining, while balancing the person's right to choice and maximum possible independence.