

Neurobehavior HOME Program Semi-Annual Newsletter



Issue 22

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“Disability is not a brave struggle or ‘courage in the face of adversity.’ Disability is an art. It’s an ingenious way to live.”

- Neil Marcus

In this issue

- ⇒ Latest News
- ⇒ Preventing aspiration pneumonia
- ⇒ Getting on the bulls eye board
- ⇒ Disaster preparedness
- ⇒ New Case Manager Split
- ⇒ Recognition Spot
- ⇒ Behavior Management Tip

News & Announcements

New Patient Referrals

HOME has been extremely limited in our ability to take new patient’s into the program because we are in the process of renewing our Medicaid contract. We hope to have a new contract in the next couple of months. We continue to encourage people to make referrals to the HOME Program by calling Medicaid at (801) 538-9151, and we will begin accepting new patients as soon as we are able. Sorry for the inconvenience this has caused.

UNI Hospital Expansion

On August 23, the University Neuropsychiatric Institute opened a new 65 bed wing of their existing mental health hospital. This expansion includes provision for people with special needs, and we are grateful for UNI’s commitment to providing quality mental health services and supporting the most vulnerable members of our society. There is an activity room that is being designed for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders or other sensory issues that is in need of donations for equipment and furniture. If you know of someone that would be interested in making a donation, please contact Josette Dorius at (801) 587-3108.

Promoting a Healthy Lifestyle at HOME

HOME has always believed that the clinical services we provide are only a part of the solution to helping our patients live healthy and happy lives. We like to promote other lifestyle activities that can make a difference to overall wellness including physical, social, and nutritional aspects of life. The following are things that we are or would like to offer in support of this goal:

Walking Group

HOME would like to put together a walking group to meet 1-2 times per week. This would be a group for children and adults as well as their parents and caregivers and would be held outside where people can enjoy fresh air and nice scenery. Walking is an activity that is great for good health and is something that most people can do. People with competitive interests could use this activity to prepare for a 5K run. Please call Becky at (801) 587-7687 to express your interest in this activity.

Monthly Singles Mingle

Many of you have enjoyed our monthly social activity, Singles Mingle. This is an opportunity for adults with disabilities to meet and make friends, enjoy activities, and eat good food. The cost is very low and everyone has a great time. Call Mark at (801) 587-3359 for questions and more information for this and future events.

Relationship Training Course

HOME is getting ready to hold another round of relationship training where adults or adolescents with disabilities can learn about self esteem, social boundaries, and sexual-

Continued on Page 3

Decreasing Choking & Aspiration Pneumonia Related to Dysphagia



Dysphagia (dis-fa' ji-a) is an inability or difficulty in swallowing. It is a serious health concern and can lead to medical problems such as choking and aspiration pneumonia, both of which can be fatal. Aspiration pneumonia occurs when a foreign object such as food particles “go down the wrong pipe” and settle in the lungs, leading to infection.

Swallowing difficulties can affect all ages and populations, not just the elderly.

Difficulties can occur due to texture or thickness of food, poor cough or swallowing reflex, or other abnormalities. Your doctor can give you guidance on how to manage these things or, if necessary, refer you to an Occupational or Speech Therapist who specializes in swallowing problems. It is important for anyone with a swallowing problem or a history of choking or aspiration to have a plan of care with their doctor.

“Difficulty swallowing is a serious medical condition that can lead to severe infections, loss of independence, and even death.”

PREVENTING CHOKING & ASPIRATION PNEUMONIA

There are several things that can be done to prevent choking and aspiration related to dysphagia. The following are some things which can be part of a plan of care:

Keep distractions to minimum while eating: This is especially important if a person has a history of choking as distractions may cause the person to swallow before chewing enough, or keep the person from following specific guidelines given by their doctor that might take some focus. Eating in the car can be especially dangerous for someone who chokes.

Oral Hygiene: Good oral hygiene helps prevent unwelcome bacteria from entering the throat and stomach and will help prevent pneumonia from developing.

Swallowing: Be aware the effects of dysphagia on the individual’s ability to swallow both solids and liquids. Typical treatments for dysphagia include:

Thickening liquids has been shown to be very effective if instructions on the thickening agents are followed consistently.

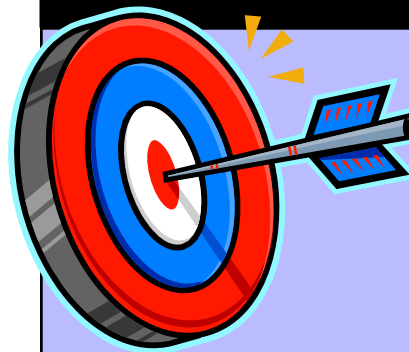
Limiting size of bites to the size that one’s swallowing mechanism can handle.

Certain head positions and postures are more favorable than others, depending on the specific problem found during testing.

Bottom Line: Difficulty swallowing is a serious medical condition that can lead to severe infections, loss of independence, and even death. If you or someone you care for is having difficulty with swallowing food or liquids, please inform your health care provider *as soon as possible*.

By Katrina Garvey, OTS

Get on the Bulls Eye Board!



The bulls eye board is a notice board in the HOME clinic that highlights patient success stories such as weight loss, special Olympic achievements, job accomplishments,

and just about any other success you could mention. We want to **FILL UP THE BOARD** with your successes! So please bring us your story and pictures (or we can take a picture for you) and talk to your doctor about getting you **ON THE BOARD**. Call Kim with any questions at (801) 585-3413.

Healthy Lifestyle

Continued from Page 1

-ity. This is an often neglected topic in our patient population, and we highly encourage this course for any adult who has not had it. Call Charisse at (801) 585-1960 to enroll in the upcoming or future courses.

In-home Nutrition Education

HOME has worked for several years with a registered dietitian to offer nutritional counseling. More recently, we have been able to offer on-site nutritional guidance in the form of in-services and site specific advice for group homes or families. The dietitian can come out and take a look at menus, shopping lists, and how food might be better managed in the home. Or she can just offer some general dietary education for families and staff. If you would like a visit from our dietitian, call Melissa at (801) 581-3855.

Parent Training Program

HOME is currently working with DSPD to offer a hands on, behaviorally oriented parent training program. This would be a 5-10 week course and would offer parents tools for improving their parenting skills. The ability to offer a class like this is based on interest, so please call Sandy at (801) 585-9778 if this would be of interest to you in the future.

Are You Prepared?

More and more attention is being paid in Utah to preparedness as natural and man made disasters occur around the country.

Caregivers for people with special needs should also spend time thinking about how to prepare, especially with consideration to special needs issues.



Some key things to think about include:

- ⇒ Discuss what an emergency is with your child/client on a developmentally appropriate level.
- ⇒ Develop 72 hour kits for everyone in the home including medications, special dietary needs, and healthcare information; rotate every 6 months.

- ⇒ Obtain medical alert bracelets / tags on shoelaces to identify medical issues or disability (i.e. for nonverbal people).
- ⇒ Determine 2 escape routes out of the home.
- ⇒ Know how to turn off water, gas, and electricity at the main switches.
- ⇒ Sign up for the Special Needs Registry at the website below (or call 211) so emergency services can be aware of your needs.

Be Ready Utah is an excellent web-site that gives general guidance for disaster preparation as well as specific ideas related to people with special needs. Please take a look to get yourself better prepared.

<http://beready.utah.gov/beready/index.html>

New Case Manager Split

HOME has hired a new case manager, Charisse Sagers, as an addition to our case management team. Many of you know Charisse from the front desk. What you may not know is that she graduated a year ago with her bachelors degree in psychology and has been in case management training for the past several months. She is highly capable and looks forward to serving our patients in this new capacity.

The new case management assignments will be as follows:

Charisse Sagers	A - D (801-587-8181)
Mark Lance	E - K (801-587-3359)
Paula Hansen	L - Q (801-585-0218)
Becky Glover	R - Z (801-587-7687)

The letters refer to the first letter of the patient's last name. Melissa Brewer, our nurse case manager, will not have a specific caseload but will take responsibility for certain medical specialty groups and work in conjunction with the case managers and medical team to offer specialized supports for those people.



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Our mission is to optimize the quality of life of the people we serve by providing excellent, compassionate, and integrated health services throughout the lifespan.

We're on the Web
<http://healthcare.utah.edu/home/>

Recognition Spot:

We want to recognize...

Ben Andrus

Ben is a behavior specialist with CTA and has been a fabulous patient advocate and partner with HOME for many years. He is known for always being available for his clients, advocating for behavioral support interventions before medications are used, and offering helpful information during clinic visits.

Thank you, Ben, for your great work.

Behavior Management Tip: Positive Parenting

Principle #1: Behavior Ultimately Responds Better to Positive Consequences

Are you looking for a way to get long term, positive behavior from your children? Take advantage of the many times you see your children doing something you like and attach a positive consequence to the behavior. "Positive consequence can come in the form of a hug, a kiss, a pat on the back, a word of encouragement and praise, a smile, a wink, a token in a jar, or a point on a behavior record, and the list goes on. It is a well established matter of fact that in homes where parents smile at their children, have lots of positive and appropriate physical interactions with their children and talk to their children a lot in pleasant, supportive, non judgmental ways, the frequency of problem behaviors in those families goes down, down, down, and the frequency of pleasant parent-child relationships goes up, up, up."

(By the way, the same principle applies to adults).

- Dr. Glenn Latham, (1990). The Power of Positive Parenting (p. 20-21) P & T ink: North Logan, UT 84341