



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
201 W. Preston Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., Governor – Nelson J. Sabatini, Secretary

EDUCATIONAL ALERT !!!

TO: All DDA Service Providers

FROM: Diane K. Coughlin, Director *Dkc*
Developmental Disabilities Administration

Carol Benner, Director *Carol Benner*
Office of Health Care Quality

SUBJECT: Providing advocacy to ensure that individuals receive proper medical work up and prompt medical care.

DATE: May 15, 2003

The Mortality Review Committee (MRC) was established by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) through legislation effective October 2001. The MRC evaluates causes or factors contributing to deaths of individuals in programs or facilities operated or licensed by the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and the Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA)

The Mortality Review Committee in their current annual report has identified the need of providing advocacy to individuals, especially those who have difficulty communicating, to ensure that they receive proper medical work up and prompt medical care. We are requesting your immediate attention to this concern.

COMAR 10.22.04.02 addresses values to be considered in the development of the IP, and states "The following values shall be considered in the development of the Individual Plan (IP):

- Personal well-being, which includes: (1) Receiving health care services that respond to the individual's need and are consistent with those of the general population:..."

Therefore when addressing the individual's health care services needs, during the developmental of the individual plan, agencies should address:

- The individual's ability to advocate effectively for themselves when making decisions regarding their health care.
- The individual's need for assistance and what level of assistance is needed by the individual when advocating for themselves regarding routine and non routine medical care issues.
- The individual's need for someone other than his/her self to advocate on his/her behalf regarding routine medical care issues and non-routine medical issues.
- If someone other than the individual is to advocate for the individual, what will be the responsibilities of the health care advocate.

Working together we can ensure that the individuals we serve are receiving appropriate medical care. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

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Web Site: www.dhmh.state.md.us