

NURSING MANUAL

POLICY: NMM010

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MISSING RESIDENT - SEARCH PROCEDURE

PURPOSE:

To establish detailed procedures for the search and recovery of missing residents.

POLICY:

Immediate steps - described in detail below - shall be taken to locate missing residents as quickly as possible, including timely communication with staff, family and outside agencies.

PROCEDURE:

1. The RN or RPN on the resident's home area shall **determine that a resident is truly missing** after considering the time last seen, who they were with and what the resident was doing (determined by questioning staff and other residents.) Consider the following possibilities. The resident could be:
 - i. Out with family or friends (check sign out book,)
 - ii. At a medical appointment,
 - iii. Attending a program either inside or out of the building (check with Activation staff,)
 - iv. At an appointment with the hairdresser,
 - v. In the Chapel, or
 - vi. Visiting with another resident within the building (ask known friends/acquaintances re: whereabouts of resident.)
2. Once it is determined with reasonable certainty that the resident is truly missing, the Charge Nurse shall **prepare for and initiate the search by:**
 - i. Categorizing the resident as Priority 1 or Priority 2 Missing Resident
 - **PRIORITY ONE** – Resident is absent from the home without prior notification to staff, has cognitive and/or health deficits and/or may cause harm to themselves or others. Considered to be at significant risk.
 - **PRIORITY TWO** - Resident is ambulatory and is not likely to cause harm to themselves or others. Considered to be at minimal risk,
** Note: in the event of multiple missing residents, Priority 1 residents will take precedence over Priority 2 residents
 - ii. Calling other home areas to see if the resident has wandered to these locations,
 - iii. Announcing a 'Code Yellow' over the PA system, as per Emergency Color Codes Policy FEE 003
 - iv. Organizing search teams in an organized fashion,
 - v. Distributing flashlights and floor plans as necessary
 - vi. Instructing staff to report back to the Charge Nurse when the resident is found,
 - vii. Beginning the search on the resident's home unit – remembering to check in closets, behind doors, under beds, in bathrooms, in tub rooms/linen rooms, etc.
 - viii. If not found on the home unit, beginning a similar search in the entire home - *always maintaining adequate staff on each home unit to care for the remaining residents.*
 - ix. Moving on to 'Step 3' (Notifications) if the resident is not found by this time, and organizing/performing searches of the grounds and surrounding streets (again, *always maintaining the safety of the residents that remain in the building – i.e., by having 1 – 2 staff leave the building, maximum.*)

Note: Use the 'Missing Resident Search Checklist' (NMM011) to ensure all steps above have been completed.

3. The Charge Nurse shall **notify the following parties:**
 - i. Resident's family/POA – ask where the resident may be headed & garner any further important information,
 - ii. Administrator and Director of Care (the DRC will initiate a Critical Incident Report when appropriate,)
 - iii. Police via 911 – use 'Missing Resident Information Form' and resident's chart to provide info as requested,
 - iv. Ministry of Health (unless the DRC is in the building, in which case they will contact the Ministry.)

****NOTE:** unless the charge nurse feels the resident is (or could be) in immediate danger, it is preferred that the Administrator or Director of Care is called to discuss the situation before calling police; charge staff always retain the right to call police first based on professional judgment, but whenever possible/safe, one of the above-mentioned individuals should be called before the police.

4. If the resident remains unfound for more than 1 hour, complete the 'Missing Resident Information' form (at the end of this document, to supply police and other authorities with a greater amount of information on the resident.
5. Once the resident is located, the Charge Nurse shall:
 - i. Confirm it is the resident being sought through visual confirmation by two parties and/or verbal confirmation using information only the resident would know (e.g., "What's your birth date, what is your sister's name,")
 - ii. Announce "Code Yellow, all clear, Code Yellow, all clear" over the PA system,
 - iii. Notify all personnel contacted in 'Step 3' above that the resident has been located,
 - iv. Complete an 'Incident Report,'
 - v. Perform all necessary documentation in progress notes (and elsewhere, as required,)
 - vi. If resident is admitted to hospital:
 - Communicate with hospital emergency staff,
 - Transfer any required documentation,
 - Ensure that family notification is done and recorded in progress notes,
 - Advise staff of resident's status,
 - Advise resident's attending physician,
 - vii. If resident is returned to home:
 - Check vital signs and record,
 - Assess need for medical attention by performing a full body examination,
 - Assess resident's mental state and need for continuous observation, reassurance or presence of family,
 - Instruct staff to conduct frequent checks on resident, if appropriate/necessary,
 - Transfer resident if appropriate for care or security needs, if required,
 - viii. If resident is deceased:
 - Liaise with police as required and perform usual death-related tasks (incl. contacting the Office of the Coroner) remembering that autopsy will likely be performed.

This policy also appears in Emergency Plans Manual.

MISSING RESIDENT INFORMATION

Name_____ Sex_____

Commonly known as / answers to_____

Date of Birth _____

Height_____ Weight _____

Language usually spoken_____

Other Languages_____

Time last seen_____

Physical description (include clothing)

Disposition_____

Urgent Health Concerns_____

Next of Kin_____

Copy of Photograph: