Developmental Disabilities Administration
Diane K. Coughlin, Director

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FEB 2 2004

OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE QUALITY
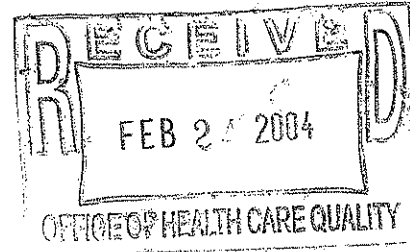
EDUCATIONAL ALERT!!!

TO: All DDA Service Providers

FROM: Diane K. Coughlin, Director
               Developmental Disabilities Administration

DATE: February 13, 2004

SUBJECT: Emergency Medical Situations

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 and facilities operated or licensed by the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) and the Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA).

The MRC has expressed concerns about the ability of agencies to respond in the most expeditious manner when emergency medical situations occur involving the individuals served by the agency. Also concerns have been expressed about the provision of key medical information to emergency and hospital personnel.

Each agency should have in place a protocol to be implemented when addressing an individual's need for emergency medical treatment. Each agency must ensure that all staff are informed of the agency's emergency protocol and trained in the implementation of such protocol.

Additionally each agency must comply with COMAR 10.22.02.13 (C) that states: "On notification of a medical emergency, the licensee shall ensure that the individual's medical information is available and readily accessible to emergency personnel." A complete copy of COMAR 10.22.02.13 is attached to this alert for your review.

Please ensure that this information is shared with appropriate staff. Working together we can reduce and avoid unnecessary complications that may occur during medical emergencies.

cc: Carol Benner
        Bill Dorrill
        Regional Directors
        Gwen Winston