

# General Guidelines for Healthcare Coordination

Healthcare coordination is a tool to assure the reasonable health and safety of individuals receiving DD Waiver funded services. The goals of Healthcare coordination are:

1. Assure all team members and medical personnel who work with an individual have current and accurate health information to assure that individuals receive consistent and appropriate medical care.
2. Assure all medical appointments and follow-up needs are conducted in a timely manner.
3. Individuals and those involved in the coordination of healthcare are empowered to manage health and to request assistance from nurses when necessary.
4. Medical support that results in seamless healthcare delivery for individuals across service models.

There are three methods that assure achievement of these goals:

1. Communicate—communicate health information, as necessary to assure adequate and appropriate support across both the DD Waiver system and the medical system.
2. Facilitate—Provide support, as necessary, to assure all necessary scheduling, planning, and communication occurs.
3. Monitor—Observe supports and documentation, check on health status, and review implementation of supports to assure consistent care and implementation.

For quality coordination to occur, these three methods are multi-layered—applying both to the person providing service and to the nurse.

## Guidelines for providing coordination for service providers:

All service providers, regardless of type, have a responsibility in providing coordination in healthcare. While the responsibilities may vary depending on the relative frequency of service provision (i.e. the residential and day service will coordinate healthcare more frequently than a therapist or case manager), the expectations are that all service providers will communicate, facilitate and monitor healthcare to assure that an individual is receiving the supports necessary and that these supports are consistently delivered.

Table 1 below indicates various service provider aspects of the three methods. This is not an exhaustive list, but are frequent occurrences for individuals receiving DD Waiver Supports.

**Table 1 Service Provider Responsibilities**

Communicate	Facilitate	Monitor
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. About upcoming or necessary medical appointments</li><li>2. About the outcome of medical appointments</li><li>3. About necessary follow-up appointments or outcomes</li><li>4. About a change in condition</li><li>5. About any health concerns noticed</li><li>6. About any medications or changes in medication</li><li>7. When an individual's needs appear to not be met</li><li>8. With a nurse when necessary</li><li>9. Regarding any emergent need</li><li>10. Information regarding health conditions to the individual</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Health support planning</li><li>2. Discharge Planning from a facility or provider</li><li>3. Scheduling of appointments</li><li>4. Attendance at appointments</li><li>5. Sharing of information</li><li>6. Any care necessary for the individual</li><li>7. Emergent care when necessary</li><li>8. Filling or ordering prescriptions (if appropriate to the particular provider)</li><li>9. Consistent implementation of medical supports</li><li>10. Provide input and support the development of health or therapy plans</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Implementation of health and other plans</li><li>2. For signs and symptoms of a health condition</li><li>3. Implementation of Discharge plans from hospital</li><li>4. For change in condition</li><li>5. To assure the individual is receiving all medical supports necessary</li><li>6. For any follow-up needs to a medical condition or appointments</li><li>7. For any risks previously identified</li><li>8. For any situation that appears to be an emergent risk to health and safety</li></ol>

It is essential for all team members to work together to assure coordination of healthcare. They must address concerns in a systematic way that assures consistent healthcare information, support, and implementation of interventions. Additionally, the team needs to use agency nurses as resources, and may contact the DDS Regional Office nurses as necessary.

**Guidelines for using Nurses in Healthcare Coordination:**

Nurses are vital resources for adequate healthcare coordination. In many ways, their role is similar to that of the other team members. Nurses also communicate, facilitate and monitor for healthcare coordination. In addition to these three aspects of healthcare coordination, nurses also act as team educators, emergency responders, and conduct phone triage. The nurse is frequently the person with whom the direct care staff in any service model will contact with a health concern or issue. It is in these ways that the

nurse acts as the first resource to the team with health concerns and as an intermediary with the medical supports for the individual.

In regard to the methods to communicate, facilitate, and monitor, Table 2 below represents examples of how **nurses** use these methods in their role as both the primary team resource and the intermediary with the healthcare profession:

**Table 2 Nurse Responsibilities**

Communicate	Facilitate	Monitor
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Answer questions for the team and staff regarding an individual's health needs</li> <li>2. Advise the team on any new health conditions or concerns</li> <li>3. Communicate with physicians regarding health concerns</li> <li>4. Communicate results and treatments to the team</li> <li>5. Communicate signs and symptoms regarding health conditions to the team and staff</li> <li>6. Communicate side effects of medications to the team and staff</li> <li>7. Advise the team on what is needed for individual in response to a health concerns</li> <li>8. Provide training to the team in all aspects of an individual's medical care</li> <li>9. Inform the team of an individual's</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Medical appointments</li> <li>2. Follow-up and laboratory appointments</li> <li>3. Gathering of medical information</li> <li>4. Coordinate and provide training on health needs, medication needs, health risks, signs, symptoms, etc.</li> <li>5. Develop health plans and crisis plans (aka Medical Emergency Response Plans)</li> <li>6. Conduct Nursing Assessments</li> <li>7. Conduct health risk screenings</li> <li>8. Facilitate post hospital care</li> <li>9. Facilitate consistent care between all service providers</li> <li>10. Facilitate any necessary treatments, including those that may be delegated</li> <li>11. Facilitate collaboration in care between service provider and medical providers</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor for medication side effects (including answering questions for direct staff)</li> <li>2. Monitor for the implementation of discharge plans</li> <li>3. Monitor implementation of healthcare plans</li> <li>4. Monitor for health needs</li> <li>5. Monitor for any change in condition</li> <li>6. Monitor for health risks both annually and as needed</li> <li>7. Monitor for the individual level of skill with self-administration of medication</li> <li>8. Monitor for the individual level of competence to guide own health care</li> <li>9. Monitor nursing assessments and determine if another needs to be conducted</li> <li>10. Monitor the effectiveness of healthcare plans and revise as necessary</li> <li>11. Monitor treatment</li> </ol>

<p>specific health needs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Inform the team of individual specific health risks</li> <li>11. Communicate with the Hospital/ER and physicians regarding acute/emergency needs</li> <li>12. Share information with the team regarding any emergency care</li> <li>13. Communicate with the pharmacy regarding any changes that occur in an individual's medication regime</li> <li>14. Provide supplemental communication as needed between the team and the medical supports for the individual</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Assure all aspiration plans are developed and followed</li> <li>13. Facilitate medical response to emergencies and other emergent conditions</li> </ol>	<p>outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Monitor for aspiration and aspiration risk</li> <li>13. Monitor the effectiveness and necessity of healthcare trainings</li> <li>14. Audit individual care and cases</li> </ol>
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Based on all of this information, one can see how the nurse can operate as a resource for the team in many different functions. The nurse is not usually designated as the Healthcare Coordinator, but they do have a role that is essential. The team should use the nurse whenever they have a question or concern that they are uncomfortable in addressing independently.