



HOW TO WELCOME HEALTH CARE WORKERS INTO YOUR HOME

*Special Health Care Needs Family Partnership
For Families By Families*

As parents of children with complex medical needs, the Missouri Family Partners have had personal experience with health care professionals in their homes. They have created suggestions to help work toward a successful outcome for both family and staff.

Suggestions for Families to Consider

Provide a Clean and Organized Environment:

- Including your child's room.
- Including the bathroom.
- Including the medical supply area so medications and supplies are easily accessible.
- Choose a space in the refrigerator for medications, if needed.
- Provide an area for staff to put their belongings. If necessary, make room in the refrigerator for food and drinks.

Encourage Communication:

- Be respectful in all interactions with staff.
- Train staff on your child's unique needs and familiarize them with how to care for your child. Staff must be comfortable with your child's medical care schedule before you leave them on their own. Your child may also need some time to feel safe and secure with new nursing staff. Answer any and all questions and discuss expectations on both sides. This should take as long as needed to develop a comfort zone for everyone involved.
- Agree on a communication plan for staff and family to share updates. These can include medication schedule and plan of care changes.
- Have a daily update sheet tailored to your child (ex. feeds, restroom use, play time, naps, etc.).
- Make expectations clear.
- Create a "to do" list for staff with your child's medical/personal care needs and daily living activities.
- Make sure staff are comfortable with the care guidelines, medications, feeding schedules, etc.
- Offer staff an opportunity to share their own relevant health information:
 - Ask if they have any environmental allergies (pets, dander, pollen, etc.).
 - Ask if they have health issues (asthma, epilepsy, etc.).
- Provide a list of your child's interests and dislikes so the staff is able to establish a relationship. This will give them something to talk about and help build trust between staff and your child. Have games and toys available that they can use to interact, as play is often a form of therapy.
- Communicate personal preferences. This includes cultural and religious expectations relating to the care of your child.

Be Prepared:

- Have an "Emergency Bag" with essentials within reach at all times.
- Have a visible call list of specialists and pediatricians. Include contacts such as grandparents, age-appropriate siblings and the child's school. Also include non-emergency numbers for the fire and police departments.

Know and Respect Boundaries:

- Staff are there to care for your child with special health care needs, not other children in the home.
 - Staff can fold your child's laundry, but not the whole family's laundry.
 - Staff can clean your child's room, but not the whole house.
 - Staff can wash syringes and clean medical equipment, but not dishes for the entire family.
- Be considerate and avoid putting staff in awkward and uncomfortable situations. Always respect the comfort level of staff.
- Keep pets out of staff's work environment if they are not comfortable with the pet.
- Respect the privacy of staff. Do not ask personal questions that may be invasive. It's expected that any information they trust you with is in strict confidentiality.
- Be flexible and also respect each other's time. Be prompt and dependable.

Remember, every family is different and if it's not a good fit, go with your instincts and make a change!

For More Specific Ideas, Contact Your Family Partner

The Family Partnership works to improve the lives of individuals and families affected by special health care needs. They provide resources and information to empower families to live a good life. The Family Partnership hosts regional and statewide events to benefit families through the development of leadership skills, networking among peers and staying current with trends and issues. Special Health Care Needs employs Family Partners, parents of individuals with special health care needs, and are well equipped to assist in exploring options and solutions for individuals with complex medical conditions. For more information go to Health.Mo.Gov/familypartnership.

Special Health Care Needs (SHCN) provides statewide health care support services, including service coordination, for children and adults with disabilities and chronic illness. State and federal funding support SHCN services. To be eligible for SHCN services, an individual must be a Missouri resident, have a special health care need, and meet medical and financial eligibility when required. There is no fee for applying for these services. SHCN accomplishes its mission in collaboration with families, health care providers and other community, state and national partners. SHCN programs and initiatives include the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program, Family Partnership Initiative, Healthy Children and Youth Program, Medically Fragile Adult Waiver Program, and Adult Brain Injury Program. For more information go to Health.Mo.Gov/shcn.

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