

## Home Health Aides and Patient/Client Medications

Home Health Aides, in Indiana, are certified by the State of Indiana, to assist patient's with personal care, hygiene, grooming, bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, ambulation and light housekeeping. HHA's (home health aides) may also assist with medication reminders, prepare meals, assist with exercise and assist with feeding a patient.

The State of Indiana, dictates what the Scope of Practice is (what HHA's certified to do) that aides are allowed to do. HHA's are not allowed to do anything that is not within that "Scope of Practice".

### Medications:

HHA's in Indiana are not allowed to give, dispense, or administer medication. With a physician's order, Medication's may only be given by a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse. Of course family members and friends may also give the patient their meds. However, a patient's family member/friend, if employed by the agency as an HHA, may NOT give medications to the patient while serving as an HHA of the agency.

If an HHA does give a medication to a patient, it is reportable to the Board of Nursing and if the Board of Nursing finds, on investigation, that the aide did give medications to a patient, the HHA will lose their certification and will no longer be able to be employed as an HHA.

### What HHA's CANNOT do with Medications:

HHA's **cannot dispense a medication**. This includes the following:

- Taking a medication out of a container and handing it to the patient.
- Put it in the patient's mouth.
- Put medication in food or drink
- Crushing the medication and putting in in food or drink.
- Opening capsule's and putting it in food or drink.
- Draw up a solution for injections.

HHA's **cannot administer medications**. This includes:

- Feeding a patient food that has medication in the food or drink.
- Putting eye drops in a patient's eyes ears or nose.
- Putting medication in the mouth of a patient.
- Giving any type of injections.
- Putting solutions or creams, with medication in them, on rashes, wounds, skin break down.
- Insert suppositories or other medications into the rectum.
- Insert or apply vaginal medications.

HHA's **cannot do medications setups** (taking out of one container and putting in another).

## What HHA's CAN do with Medications:

- Remind the patient to take the medications
- Read the medication label to the patient
- Identify the container and bring the bottle or container to the patient
- Bring the patient equipment or supplies they need to self-administer the medication.
- Provide food or water or fluids to take the medication
- Open and close containers
- Position the patient for taking the medication
- Observe the patient taking the medication
- Notify the RNCM or DON of any suspected reactions or difficulties with patient taking the medication
- Clean and store or dispose of special medication equipment after patient use
- Return the medication to storage.

**REMEMBER** – A HHA is Certified by the State of Indiana Board of Nursing and, just as other professions, must practice within the guidelines and mandated “Scope of Practice”. To perform services that are outside of those within that “Scope of Practice” can cause harm to the patient is a terminable offense with the agency.

If you ever have any questions about what you are allowed or not allowed to do while in the patient/client's home, please contact the office immediately.

It is ok to politely tell a client, patient, and/or family member that you are not able to give or administer medication if they are asking you to do so.

Please notify the office if a client, patient, and/or family member is asking you to do something you know you are not supposed to do with medication.

**This information pertains to those who are also working under Medicaid Waiver services as a caregiver for a personal service agency. If you are a caregiver who is not a registered home health aide and are working under an agency, you still must follow the above information.**