



CHECKLIST

FOR AGED CARE HOME STAFF TO USE BEFORE CONTACTING a GP

This is to help Residential Aged Care Staff in providing the GP with useful information to assist in decisions regarding care of an acutely unwell patient. It does not replace clinical care protocols within your facility eg: relating to falls, diabetic management etc. The guide may also be useful if you need to ring a Locum, Ambulance or Hospital.

STEP 1:

Does the patient look unwell?

- ❑ Know why GP is being contacted. What is it that is required? Have personal knowledge of the problem.
- ❑ Check resident, symptoms and care needs. **Do not** rely on second-hand information e.g. pain, difficulty breathing, increased confusion.
- ❑ Complete basic set of observations - BP, pulse and temperature. Note pallor, skin condition, changed facial or body movements. Attend BSL if resident is diabetic. A urinalysis in cases of confusion can be helpful.
- ❑ Collect resident's file, check progress notes and Dr's medical note entries. Check date of last GP visit.
- ❑ Collect Medication chart Ensure Allergies and Sensitivities noted.
- ❑ Check Advance Care Directive or Advance Care Planning of the Resident care wish documentation.
- ❑ Decide on **urgency**: ring the GP **or** wait until the GP is available in-hours **or** call Locum **or** discuss with Hospital ED **or** ring Ambulance.

STEP 2:

Before ringing the Doctor, have in front of you:

- ❑ **Drug chart** including **allergies**.
- ❑ **Patient notes** (with documented vital signs assessment- **Step 1**)

Tell the Doctor

- ❑ **Who you are** (name and title eg: RN, EN, AIN / PCA) and **Name of resident.**
- ❑ **Main reason** for ringing eg: change in cognitive state/ alertness, chest pain, abdominal pain, vomiting, resident had a fall, suspected UTI palliative care, family request, etc.
- ❑ **How long** problem has been present and is it **recurrent?**
- ❑ **Who assessed** the Resident (name and title) and what **time?**
- ❑ **Describe General Assessment (Step 1)**
- ❑ **Who** requested the Doctor to be called (ACH staff/Resident/family)
- ❑ **What action** has been taken already eg: Pain relief, Anginine etc.
- ❑ **Have a pen** and notes in front of you to record GP's advice and any orders.
- ❑ **Have a second** member of staff with you to check your understanding of orders given if possible.

STEP 3

After the telephone call, document...

- ❑ Name and telephone number of GP / Locum and time of call.
- ❑ Whether GP / Locum will attend and the date and time Dr is expected.
- ❑ Ensure that notes and Medication charts are out ready for GP to access.

... AND IMPLEMENT

- ❑ **Immediate action / instructions** eg: medication order, monitor Resident, call Locum, call Ambulance, etc.
- ❑ **Contact family** as required.