

Evaluating Safety in the Home or Environment

Some Considerations

- Does consumer need adaptive equipment to assure accessibility in the home and community? Initiate a physical therapy referral.
- Help consumer prevent falls by assessing the living environment. Check for cables, cords, or throw rugs that can be tripped over. Is there a need for grab bars next to the toilet or tub, non-slip mat in the tub, a shower chair? Is there adequate lighting?
- Can public transportation still be safely accessed? Or, is there a need for door-to-door transportation?
- Have emergency procedures been reviewed? Has consumer practiced an emergency evacuation?
- Post emergency telephone numbers by the phone, i.e., for property owner or property manager, IL worker, service coordinator, family members, fire, police, and 911.
- Teach consumer how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches, or designate someone to do this.
- Teach consumer how to use the fire extinguisher, if appropriate. Make sure he/she knows where the fire extinguisher is located.
- Make sure that there are working smoke detectors in the home and that the batteries are replaced when the clocks are turned an hour ahead or back twice a year.
- Make sure that there is a first aid kit for the home and that the consumer knows how to use it.
- Help consumer to form friendships with the neighbors. Let the neighbors know how they can help the consumer in case of an emergency.
- Does consumer need a referral to a meal delivery program or IHSS for help with meal preparation?
- Does consumer need more care? Initiate a nursing referral to have consumer level of care assessed; request increase in IHSS hours or IL hours.
- Has confidential information in consumer's home been secured, especially if there are roommates or outside help coming into the home?
- Does consumer need a "Vial-of-Life" magnetic case that can be attached to the outside of the refrigerator (to store pertinent medical information in)? Aging and Independence

Services (AIS) and senior centers can provide one.

- Advise consumer not to give out personal and confidential information over the phone, through the mail, or over the internet.
- Be sure that consumer destroys or shreds mail with personal information before discarding trash.
- Ask consumer to deposit out-going mail at local Post Office instead in an unsecured mailbox.
- Can consumer telephone for help? Do they need phone adaptations such as a speaker phone with remote control, speed dialing, large numbers on buttons?