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- . Provider and/or Recipient Name
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**SUBJECT: IHSS HOMECARE WORKER AND RECIPIENT –
UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS NOTIFICATION**

Dear IHSS Homecare Worker or IHSS Recipient:

The Department of Adult and Aging Services, In-Home Supportive Services Program (IHSS) wants to inform and educate you on appropriate methods that you as an IHSS homecare worker or recipient should use daily to prevent exposure to germs, viruses, bacteria, and communicable diseases such as AIDS-related conditions and hepatitis.

Enclosed is an important publication describing Universal Precautions, which you should be using to protect yourself. As a homecare worker you may work with IHSS clients who have contagious diseases. It is important to protect yourself against infection. Likewise, if you have a contagious illness, it is important to protect those around you from exposure to infection.

Please read the enclosed Universal Precautions flyer carefully and keep it handy so you can refer to it often. Universal Precautions help protect IHSS recipients, IHSS homecare workers, their family members, friends and others from infection. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

IHSS PROGRAM STAFF

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Attachment: Universal Precautions for Homecare Workers Flyer, eff: May 2005

The informational content in the enclosed flyer and this transmittal letter will be reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is NOT a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional

Universal Precautions for Homecare Workers



The Department of
Adult & Aging Services

In-Home Supportive Services
(Effective Date: May 27, 2005)

What are Universal Precautions?

Universal Precautions are guidelines you can follow to prevent the spread of infection, including influenza and other airborne diseases. And it simply means using precautions when handling blood and other body fluids of **ALL** persons regardless of one's knowledge of whether or not the person is infected with a specific communicable disease. Using these Universal Precautions will protect you from communicable diseases such as HIV infection, Hepatitis B & C. Being aware of Universal Precautions guidelines will protect you and result in fewer illnesses for you and the IHSS consumers you provide care for.

What precautions must I take in caring for someone?

1. Wash your hands with soap and running water at regular times during your workday. Common infectious diseases may be contracted from dirt and waste encountered in the workplace. Promptly remove another person's blood and body wastes from your skin by washing with soap and running water. Wash your hands before and after preparing food, performing personal care and housecleaning tasks, and after physical contact with your consumer.
2. Avoid punctures with objects that contain blood of others.
3. Handle **ALL** fluid discharges from another person's body particularly urine, vaginal secretions, mucous, or blood, wearing protective equipment, including mask, gloves, gown and eye protection. Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and running water when you are finished.
4. Carefully dispose of trash that contains body wastes and sharp objects. Use special containers with plastic liners for disposal of refuse that contains blood or for any body spills that may contain blood.
5. Wash soiled laundry in a washer set on **HOT**, and dry them in a dryer at **HIGH** heat.
6. For disposal of sharp objects such as razors, use containers that cannot be broken or penetrated. Do not bend, break or recap needles. Handle diabetes lancets with caution to avoid needle sticks.
7. Clean surfaces that have blood or body fluids containing blood in them with a 1:10 solution of bleach and water mixed fresh daily. Wash dishes/utensils in hot, soapy water. Rinse in very hot water and let them air dry.

Have a vaccination for protection from Hepatitis B if you are a homecare worker.