



# FYI FRIDAY

## Healthcare Quality's Facility-Focused Monthly Newsletter



The Healthcare Quality "FYI Friday" newsletter is for the regulated community meant to proactively provide tips and reminders about resources and regulations. View [previous editions](#) on our website.

### Tip 1

## CRCFs: Emergency Procedures/Disaster Preparedness

Did you know that the emergency and disaster evacuation plan submitted to the Department annually is not just for hurricanes? In the event that you have to evacuate due to a disaster or an emergency, the facility should implement the plan submitted and approved by the Department.

Don't forget to rehearse your plan annually with your staff members. For questions regarding your plan, please contact [HQP@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:HQP@dhec.sc.gov).



## Nursing Homes: Smoking Guidance

### Tip 2

Certified nursing facilities must ensure resident environments remain as free of accident hazards as is possible and ensure residents receive adequate supervision to prevent accidents. See [F689](#). Included as accidents are incidents involving residents smoking. Further, such facilities must establish policies regarding policies about smoking. See [F926](#). The [State Operations Manual](#) provides the following guidance on resident smoking:

- Assessment of the resident's capabilities and deficits determines whether or not supervision is required.
- If the facility identifies that the resident needs assistance and supervision for smoking, the facility includes this information in the resident's care plan, and reviews and revises the plan periodically as needed.
- The facility must ensure precautions are taken for the resident's individual safety, as well as the safety of others in the facility.
  - smoking only in designated areas.
  - supervising residents whose assessment and care plans indicate a need for assisted and supervised smoking.
  - limiting the accessibility of matches and lighters by residents who need supervision when smoking for safety reasons.
- Smoking by residents when oxygen is in use is prohibited, and any smoking by others near flammable substances is also problematic.
- Electronic cigarettes – While electronic cigarettes (e-cigs), or vapor pens, are not considered smoking devices, and their heating element does not pose the same dangers of ignition as regular cigarettes, they are not without risk.
  - Facilities have a responsibility to oversee their use and provide supervision to maintain an accident-free environment.
  - Potential health effects for the smoker, such as respiratory illness or lung injury which may present with symptoms of breathing difficulty, shortness of breath, chest pain, mild to moderate gastrointestinal illness, fever or fatigue;
  - Second-hand aerosol exposure;
  - Nicotine overdose by ingestion or contact with the skin; and
  - Explosion or fire caused by the battery.
- Facilities that decide, in accordance with State and local laws, to allow e-cigarette use, should develop and implement policies for safe use of e-cigarettes, along with policies for traditional cigarettes.
  - Policies should include where e-cigarettes can be used and how to handle the devices, batteries and refill cartridges.
- Residents who wish to use e-cigarettes should be assessed for their ability to safely handle the device.
- How facilities balance resident safety with a resident's right to use these devices while also considering the rights of residents who do not want to be exposed to second-hand aerosol.

Additionally, [state licensure regulations](#) include various provisions related to resident smoking in the proximity to areas where oxygen is dispensed, administered, or stored, to include conspicuously posting "No Smoking" signs. See [R.61-17 Sections 1007 and 2201](#).

Please be mindful of these requirements in protecting and promoting the health, safety, and welfare of residents of nursing homes.

### Tip 3

## Report Retainment

#### Did you know that:

**Nursing Homes (701.E)** and **Community Residential Care Facilities (601.E)** have to maintain all serious accident/incident records for six years after a resident stops receiving services at that facility.

A facility shall retain a copy of every serious accident and incident with all of the information provided to the Department and the names, injuries, and treatments associated with each resident, staff, and/or visitor involved. A facility shall retain all serious accident and incident records for six (6) years after the resident stops receiving services.

## Fire & Life Safety: Fire Rated Doors

### Tip 4

#### Regulations and SC Fire Codes require fire-rated doors to be self-closing and positive latching.

Fire-rated doors may not be held open by any device except a listed device that connects to the fire alarm system and releases the door upon fire alarm activation. Fire-rated doors must be inspected at least annually. The annual inspection should verify that the door closes and latches, does not need excessive pressure to open, and there are no excessive gaps of more than 1/8 on the sides and 3/4 at the floor. It should also verify that the door has not been modified, the labels are legible and that all door components work as designed. These inspections should be documented and available upon request during a Fire and Life Safety Inspection or a Life Safety Code Survey.

For more information contact the Division of Fire & Life Safety.