
GREATER NEW YORK HEALTH CARE FACILITIES ASSOCIATION

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Memo 25-20

To: Administrator, DNS, Medical Director, Director of Engineering, All Department Heads and QA Committee

From: GNYHCFA Team

Date: June 20, 2025

Re: Heat Advisory

With the impending arrival of summer and predicted high temperatures this week, NYSDOH released a Health Advisory, attached, related to “**Adverse Health Effects from Extreme Temperatures and High Humidity Across New York State.**” Highlights include:

- Immediately test all generators involved in supplying power to areas for patient care and in accordance with program regulations. Ensure that you have sufficient generator fuel on hand to cover at least the period of extreme heat.
- **If you experience cooling equipment malfunctions during normal business hours, immediately contact your service contractor and make sure to inform your NYSDOH Regional Office program. For malfunctions that occur nights, weekends or holidays, after contacting your contractor, be sure to contact the NYSDOH Duty Officer at 1-866-881-2809 and inform them of the problem.** In a situation where air conditioning equipment has failed, individual room temperatures should be frequently monitored.
- **In the event of extreme heat facilities may activate their Incident Command System and document activities to meet the requirements of an emergency preparedness drill/exercise.**
- If facilities need assistance and have exhausted all normal channels of assistance through vendors or contractors, they should contact their County Office of Emergency Management as a backup for assistance and resources.
- Check all doors/windows are sealed correctly during use of cooling systems and draw curtains or shades to limit sunlight. Encourage residents to sit away from the windows and direct sun.
- Review emergency evacuation plans and ensure that they are up to date.
- Facilities should encourage residents to stay indoors unless necessary

to go outdoors during the extreme heat. If residents do go outdoors ensure they have a beverage, preferably water, with them. Residents should wear a hat or cap or carry an umbrella to shield them from the sun when outdoors. Know the whereabouts of all residents to ensure they are not exposed to the heat for long periods.

- Frequently offer cold fluids/beverages to patients and residents to avoid heat illness.
- If you have homeless patients ready to be discharged during the high heat conditions, please follow your standard policy and procedure to ensure a safe and appropriate discharge for the individual and work with appropriate partner organizations to ensure that they have transport to available housing or emergency shelter/cooling center.
- Nursing homes may also experience individuals seeking shelter from the heat, and should review their plans regarding reception and treatment of such individuals per 10 NYCRR 415.26

Please post/share this information and provide staff and resident education on heat emergencies. GNYHCFA advises your facility reviews policies and procedures for the prevention of heat emergencies. Additionally, please be sure to:

- Alert staff to monitor residents for the signs and symptoms of heat illness. Notify the physician of such observations and obtain medical services, if needed.
- Review resident medications and identify those that may cause residents to become more susceptible to heat and sunlight.
- Assure that facility policies and procedures for heat emergency situations are current, complete, and known to all staff.
- Monitor temperatures on nursing units, particularly on hot, humid days.
- Use air circulating and air-cooling equipment (window fans, floor fans, mechanical ventilation systems and air conditioners) to achieve and maintain air movement and air cooling within the facility, especially in resident rooms and resident use areas.
- Monitor choice of resident's clothing to ensure they are appropriate in extreme temperatures and are not too heavy or vapor impermeable.
- Protect against temperature elevations within the facility by closing window blinds and shades on sun exposed walls; opening windows on shaded walls; and turning off heat generating devices, such as lights in the daytime.
- Assure, through active encouragement and assistance, when necessary, that residents maintain adequate fluid intake, e.g., water and fruit juices.
- Adjust menus as needed, incorporating items such as cold plates, salads, etc. Consult with your dietician.
- Encourage residents not to lie or sit in direct sunlight, e.g., if outside, encourage residents to sit in shaded areas. Use sunscreen, as necessary.

Please contact the Association if you have any further questions.

