



# Family Resource Manual

## Welcome to Across Health Home Care

As parents and healthcare professionals, we understand that our children are a special gift from God created with a special purpose. We are honored that you have entrusted us to provide loving care and support to your child and family.

This Family Resource Manual contains important information about Across Health Home Care services. In addition, it includes important resources available to your family. Please keep this packet for future reference. An electronic copy is always available on our website at [www.acrosshealthhomecare.com](http://www.acrosshealthhomecare.com)

We want you to know we are always here for you and your family. A home care staff member is always available to pray for you and your family at any time. Our hope is you and your family are provided peace of mind in every encounter with our team as we deliver the compassionate care your family deserves.

You have a choice when selecting your child's home care company. We sincerely appreciate that you have chosen Across Health Home Care to meet your child's home care needs. We look forward to partnering with you and your family in your child's healthcare journey.

Sincerely,  
Your Home Care Team at Across Health

## Across Health Home Care Contact Information

Across Health Home Care proudly serves the Dallas metroplex and surrounding counties. Please feel free to contact us via phone or email:

Administrator(s): Jessica Reva, Agency Administrator  
Joy Parker, Alternate Agency Administrator  
Supervising Nurse: Jennifer Adams, RN Director of Nursing  
Email: [info@acrosshealthhc.com](mailto:info@acrosshealthhc.com)  
Phone: 972-544-1112  
Address: 640 East Main, Lancaster, Texas 75146  
Hours of Operation: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

If you need to reach us outside of regular business hours, you can reach our on-call staff at 972-544-1112 24 hours a day/7 days a week

Across Health Home Care is not an emergency response system; if you have an emergency call 9-1-1 immediately.

## Across Health Home Care Services

Across Health Home Care provides the following pediatric care for patients ages 0-20:

- Private duty nursing
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech and language therapy
- Respiratory therapy consultation
- Care coordination
- Respite

## Admission Criteria

Across Health Home Care partners with you and your child's doctor to ensure your child's home healthcare needs are met. Admission criteria must be met prior to establishing an ongoing schedule of visits. We will contact your child's doctor following the initial visit(s) to discuss and approve all plans of care established. Across Health Home Care will request an authorization for services from your child's insurance company prior to rendering services.

## Plan of Care and Non-Discrimination Policy

A personalized plan of care is developed by your child's clinician, provider, and you. The plan of care is reviewed and updated as needed, based on your child's changing needs. You will be included in any changes of the plan of care by your Across Health Home Care provider. We maintain compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Our agency does not discriminate in our admission policy with regard to age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, mental or physical handicap or religion.

## Expectations for Across Health Home Care Team

All Across Health Home Care team members agree to demonstrate behaviors which align with our agency mission and values. Staff complete prescreening tests to assess their skills and knowledge for caring for pediatric children with special needs. Staff are educated to the highest level of clinical care protocols and adhere to all regulatory laws and statutes while caring for your child.

All medically related home care is provided in accordance with physician's orders and plan of care that specifies the services and their frequency and duration.

*Background Check/Drug Testing Policy-* Across Health Home Care completes mandatory drug testing and background checks on all staff members prior to their first time working with a patient or entering a patient's home. The method of drug testing the agency utilizes is an oral fluid drug test

This drug test assesses presence of a variety of drugs in oral fluid including: amphetamine, methamphetamines (including MDMA and its metabolite), cocaine (metabolite), marijuana (THC), opiates (codeine, morphine, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, 6-AM, oxycodones (oxycodone, and oxymorphone), and phencyclidine (PCP).

If a manager reasonably suspects an employee is impaired by or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the employee will be tested for substance use. A copy of our agency drug testing policy is also available to you upon request. Please contact our office to request a copy.

*Review of Home Environment* -During the home visit, Across Health Home Care staff will complete a home inspection to evaluate the possibility of any safety hazards. If changes are needed to make the home a safer place for your child's treatment, it is your responsibility as the parent or legally authorized person to make sure that the home environment meets the following suggested standards.

*Payment in the Home/Gifts*- Across Health Home Care team members do not collect payment in the home or transport a patient or family. If you have a billing or transportation concern, please call our office and we will assist you. Team members are prohibited from accepting personal gifts and borrowing from patients and their family.

*Visit Verification*- At the end of every Across Health Home Care visit, staff will ask you to sign confirming their visit. By signing, you agree that all the information is correct. You should never be asked to sign a blank form, or a form that has wrong information or for future visits not completed.

*Supervisory Visits*- Routinely our nursing and therapy directors will observe the practice of care of staff in the home to assist with monitoring the safety and practice of our team members. This is also a time to obtain your feedback of what is working well and what we can do to continue to improve your experience.

*Cell Phone Use by Staff*- Across Health Home Care staff utilize their phones and or tablets for charting in the medical record. While we do not prohibit the personal use of phones by staff periodically during long nursing shifts, the use should be at a minimum and should never interfere with direct patient care. Any concerns on cell phone use by staff should be directed to the nurse supervisor by contacting our office.

## Family Members & Pets

While in your home, our staff is responsible only for the care of your child. Our speech, physical and occupational therapy staff cannot be in the home without a parent, guardian or designated individual at least 18 years of age and of sound mental and physical capabilities present.

We understand that pets are also a part of the family. During home care visits they can sometimes interfere with care delivery. Please keep them free of areas during child therapy visits and direct nursing care procedures.

## Rescheduling and Canceling Appointments

Completing visits according to the plan of care is the best way for your child to achieve their healthcare goals and achieve the best outcomes.

If you are unable to keep a regularly scheduled appointment, please contact the office at 972-544-1112 or your child's therapist directly to request a change to your child's schedule. We will do our very best to accommodate your requests in a timely manner. When scheduled visits are missed, your child's care and progress is placed at risk.

**NOTE:** If there is a pattern of missed or cancelled appointments your child may be discharged from services as we are unable to meet the goals outlined by you and your child's doctor.

## Patient Rights & Responsibilities

Across Health Home Care is required by law to inform you of the patient or legal representative's rights and responsibilities before providing home care services. These rights include the following:

- to be notified, in advance, about the services that are to be furnished, the types (disciplines) of the caregivers who will furnish the care, the frequency of the visits proposed to be furnished, other choices that are available, the consequences of these choices, including the consequences of refusing these services, and the right to refuse services without fear of reprisal or discrimination.
- to be given complete and current information concerning your diagnosis, treatment alternatives, risks and prognosis as required by your physician's legal duty to disclose, in terms and language you can reasonably be expected to understand.
- to be advised, in advance, of any recommended change in the plan of care and to take an active part in any decisions about changes to the plan of care before any changes are made.
- to receive care and services according to a suitable and up-to-date plan, and subject to accepted medical or nursing standards.
- to actively participate in creating, changing and evaluating the plan of care and to be advised, in advance, that they have the right to do so.
- to choose a course of treatment or to refuse a treatment and know what the decision will mean to you.
- to complete an advance directive (example, "living will") for the child as allowed by law and to expect the child's health care providers to comply with any such directive.
- to have the health care provider comply with advance directives in accordance with state law requirement.
- to choose whether or not to participate in research, investigational or experimental studies.
- to the appropriate assessment and management of pain.

- to know that there may be other services available in the community, including other home care providers, and to know where to go for information about these services.
- to confidentiality of personal, financial and medical information and to be advised of the provider's policies and procedures regarding disclosure of such information.
- to expect the home care provider to release information only as required by law or authorized by the client.
- to privacy and security with personal, written, telephone and electronic communications while a patient.
- Home care patients and their formal caregivers have a right to not be discriminated against based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, financial status, source of payment, or type of illness.
- to be treated with courtesy, respect and dignity, including respect for property, personal values, beliefs and culture.
- Both patients and providers have a right to mutual respect, dignity and to be free of verbal, psychological and physical abuse or harassment, and neglect and financial exploitation.
- to be informed, and advised, both orally and in writing, in advance, of receiving care whether services are by Medicare, Medicaid, or any other payer known to the home care provider.
- to receive financial information, orally and in writing of any changes in coverage and, if applicable, the recipient liability for charges as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after the provider becomes aware of the change.
- to have access, upon request, to all bills for services that client has received regardless of whether the bills are paid out-of-pocket or by another party, and also access to clinical records and written information from records
- to be told what to do in the case of an emergency.
- to receive a coordinated transfer and an explanation of the need for the transfer when there will be a change in provider services.
- to choose freely among available providers and to change providers after services have begun
- to reasonable, advance notice of changes in services or charges, including at least 10 days' advance notice of the termination of service including the reason for termination of services

## Patient/Family Responsibility

- Please provide a safe, clean environment for care to be provided.
- Maintain a working phone number and provide us with good contact information
- Please notify us of changes in your child's conditions (e.g. hospitalization, changes in the plan of care, symptoms to be reported).

- Support your child to follow the plan of care.
- Contact us to notify us if the visit schedule needs to be changed.
- Please inform us of the existence of, and any changes made to, advance directives.

## Financial Responsibility

Our relationship is with you, the patient, and not with your insurance carrier. While filing insurance claims is a courtesy that we extend to our patient families, all charges are the patient/parent/guardian responsibility from the date services are rendered, regardless of insurance coverage. We will provide services upon approval and authorization from your insurance carrier. Any charges for services not covered will be discussed with you prior to rendering these services. Prior to, or on admission, you will be informed of all charges for services provided and methods of payment.

Please provide us with the following to help process services for payment:

- Insurance information necessary to file your claim
- Notify our office of any changes or loss of insurance coverage
- Pay all deductible and balance remaining after all insurance is filed

## Advance Directives

An Advance Directive is a written statement of a person's wishes regarding medical treatment, often including a living will, made to ensure those wishes are carried out should the person be unable to communicate them to a doctor.

The steps to exercise your right to decide include the following:

1. Make sure you understand your child's medical treatment options. If you do not understand something, or feel you need more information, ask questions of health care providers. You have the right to an explanation in terms you understand.
2. If you have religious concerns about your decisions, speak to your pastor, rabbi, priest, or spiritual guide. (If you have no such person, most health care facilities either have a chaplain or will arrange a special visit.)
3. Discuss openly with your physician your views and preferences; make sure he or she clearly understands your wishes.

It will be documented in your child's medical record whether or not he or she has an advance directive. If we are provided with a copy of such directive(s), it (they) will be placed in your child's medical record.

Across Health Home Care will provide information to help you understand options; however, home care staff is not permitted to give either medical or legal advice. Such consultation, if needed or desired, should be sought from a qualified physician or lawyer.



## Out-Of-Hospital Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)

In the home setting, an out-of-hospital DNR is the only directive accepted to prevent the initiation of CPR. If you have an out-of-hospital DNR order for your child, you must present a copy to Across Health Home Care to be placed in your child's medical record.

## Complaint/Grievance Procedures

We are here to serve you and your family to provide the highest level of quality and service. We take seriously any patient/family complaints or grievances. We make every effort to resolve any complaints to your satisfaction. All complaints will be handled confidentially. If you have a complaint or grievance, you may:

- Request to speak to the Administrator
- Speak with Across Health Home Care staff during a scheduled visit
- Call the Across Health Home Care office during normal operating hours and discuss your concerns with an Across Health Home Care staff member. request to speak to the Administrator, at your discretion.
- Submit the complaint to Across Health Home Care's office via email, phone, or in writing to:

Across Health Home Care  
640 East Main Street  
Lancaster, Texas 75146  
972-544-1112  
info@acrosshealthhc.com

- Across Health Home Care leadership will review the complaint within 10 days and make every effort to resolve the complaint to your satisfaction within 30 days.
- If you feel your complaint was not resolved by Across Health Home Care, you can contact the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services, DADS' Consumer Rights and Services Division, P.O. Box 149030, Austin, Texas 78714-9030, toll free at 1-800-458-9858. This toll-free line is open 24 hours a day/seven days a week. For privacy complaints you may send a written complaint to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

## Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

Across Health Home Care is committed to protecting the health and wellbeing of children and their families. Across Health Home Care has policies and procedures in place that are designed to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The following information is education to increase your awareness of what is considered abuse, neglect and exploitation.

*Abuse of a child includes the following acts or omissions by any person:*

- mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning;
- causing or permitting the child to be in a situation in which the child sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning;
- physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident (an unforeseen event that causes or threatens physical injury despite prudent efforts to avoid the risk of injury) or reasonable discipline (correction of behavior that does not result in or risk substantial harm from physical injury) by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory conservator that does not expose the child to a substantial risk of harm;
- failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action (effort that an ordinary and prudent person would take to stop an action from occurring) by another person that results in physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child;
- sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare;
- failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child;
- compelling or encouraging the child to engage in sexual conduct as defined by the Penal Code, §43.01 (This is met whether the child actually engages in sexual conduct or simply faces a substantial risk of doing so);
- causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing the photographing, filming, or depicting of the child if the person knew or should have known that the resulting photograph, film, or depiction of the child is obscene (as defined by the Penal Code) or pornographic (this is met whether or not the child voluntarily participates);
- the current use by a person of a controlled substance as defined by the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 481, in a manner or to the extent that the use results in physical, mental, or emotional injury to a child; or
- causing, expressly permitting, or encouraging a child to use a controlled substance as defined by the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 481.

*Neglect of a child includes:*

- the leaving of a child in a situation where the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child, and a demonstration of an intent not to return by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory conservator of a child;
- placing the child in or failing to remove the child from a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities and that results in bodily injury or a substantial risk of immediate harm to the child;
- the failure to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care for the child, with the failure resulting in or presenting a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or bodily

injury or with the failure resulting in an observable and material impairment to the growth, development, or functioning of the child;

- the failure to provide the child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or health of the child (if the failure results in an observable and material impairment to the child's growth, development or functioning or in a substantial risk of such an observable or material impairment), excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services had been offered and refused; or
- placing a child in or failing to remove the child from a situation in which the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of sexual conduct harmful to the child; or
- the failure by the person responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare to permit the child to return to the child's home without arranging for the necessary care for the child after the child has been absent from the home for any reason, including having been in residential placement or having run away.

*Exploitation is defined as:*

- the illegal or improper act or process of a caretaker, family member or other individual who has an ongoing relationship with the elderly or disabled person using the resources of an elderly or disabled person for monetary or personal benefit, profit, or gain without the informed consent of the elderly or disabled person

### Procedure for Reporting Suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation:

- If you suspect your child or a child is being abused, neglected, or exploited, call the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) at 800-252-5400.
- If any Across Health Home Care employee is suspected of abuse, neglect or exploitation, the employee or contractor will be suspended immediately, and an investigation conducted by Across Health Home Care or the appropriate state agency. If the investigation finds that abuse, neglect or exploitation occurred, the employee or contractor will be terminated and the incident(s) reported to the appropriate state department, licensing board or law enforcement official.

### Across Health Home Care Employee reporting suspected Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation:

- Across Health Home Care team members, who suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation are required by law to report such to the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) at 1-800-252-5400, or through the DFPS secure website at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org); and DADS at 1-800-458-9858 within 48 hours of discovery. Across Health Home Care supervisors will be notified as well.
- Any nurse or other professional who suspects that a patient is a victim of family violence has the legal obligation to provide information in the form of a written notice mandated by the State of Texas. The provision of the completed notices plus documentation of the reason(s) why abuse is suspected will be documented by Across Health Home Care.

- All reports of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation shall be documented by Across Health Home Care to the extent required by Texas law. Documentation shall report only observations and statements by the persons involved. The reporter will not document conclusions or opinions. Copies of reports filed with DFPS or local law enforcement will be tracked and kept by Across Health Home Care.
- Incidents of family/domestic violence may be reported to a local law enforcement agency.

## Notice of Health Information Practices

This Notice describes the practices of how Across Health Home Care may use and disclose patient's Protected Health Information (PHI) to others for treatment, payment, and healthcare operations as described below, and for other purposes allowed or required by law.

We create a record of the care and services the patient receives at Across Health Home Care. We understand that the medical information about you/your child's health is personal and we are dedicated to protecting that information.

Across Health Home Care has an electronic health record and will not use or release your PHI without your written authorization, except as described in this Notice of Use and Disclosures. Use or disclosure pursuant to this Notice may include electronic transfer of your PHI.

The information below details the ways in which we may use or disclose patient's health information. We also describe your rights and our obligations as it pertains to any disclosures of health information.

## Your Health Information Rights

You have the right to:

- Request a restriction on certain uses and disclosures of patient information for treatment, payment, healthcare operations and as to disclosures permitted to persons, including family members, involved with your care as required by law
- Privacy and security with personal, written, telephone and electronic communications
- Confidentiality of personal, financial and medical information and to be advised of the provider's policies and procedures regarding disclosure of such information.
- Request that your medical record be amended, we will notify you if we are unable to grant that request
- Expect the home care provider to release information only as required by law or authorized by the client.
- Request communication of your health Information by alternative means, we will let you know if we are able to accommodate that request

- Request a copy of your health records; You may obtain a paper copy of the current notice in our main office at Across Health Home Care or an electronic copy by visiting Across Health Home Care website at [www.acrosshealthhomecare.com](http://www.acrosshealthhomecare.com)
  - Complete an Authorization for Release of Health Information form located at [www.acrosshealthhomecare.com](http://www.acrosshealthhomecare.com) or by contacting our office.
- If you have questions regarding your privacy rights, please call Across Health Home Care office. If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint by contacting Across Health Home Care office at 972-544-1112, by e-mail at [info@acrosshealthhc.com](mailto:info@acrosshealthhc.com), or with the Secretary of Health and Human Services. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

## Our Responsibility to Your Privacy

Across Health Home Care has an electronic health record and will not use or release your PHI without your written authorization, except as described in this Notice for Use and Disclosures of PHI. We commit to the following regarding your privacy rights:

- To maintain the privacy of your health information
- Breach Notification-Subject to certain exceptions under the law, you have the right to be notified in the event that Across Health Home Care, or one of our business associates, discovers an unauthorized acquisition, use or disclosure of protected health information
- Provide you with a notice of our privacy practices and provide you information to contact us with any questions or concerns related to privacy concerns.
- Abide by the terms of the notice in this manual
- Notify you of any changes to this Notice

## Uses and Disclosures of PHI

Across Health Home Care may use and release your PHI for general healthcare operations purposes, including the following:

- *Care Team Communication:* PHI may be shared with treating healthcare providers to the extent necessary to provide treatment and care to the patient. These healthcare providers may include doctors, nurses, technicians, pharmacists, labs, and other healthcare providers who are involved in your care both at Across Health Home Care and at outside healthcare providers.
- *Appointment Reminders:* Across Health may provide you with appointment reminders and inform you of treatment alternatives, benefits, or services related to your healthcare.
- *Payment:* Across Health Home Care may need to share your PHI in connection with payment for services you receive. Across Health Home Care may contact and share information with an insurance company, a government program, or other third parties

to determine eligibility status, obtain prior approval, determine if your health plan will pay for treatment, and to file claims

- *Quality Improvement Activities:* Information may be shared to improve the quality
- *Students and Trainees (Students) and Volunteers:* Students and volunteers may have access to your PHI for training, education, and service purposes as they participate in educational programs, training, internships, residency programs, or Across Health volunteer program.
- *Business Associates:* There are some services that Across Health provides through contracts with third party business associates. Examples include transcription agencies and copying services. Your PHI may be disclosed to our business associates to perform the services they have been contracted to perform. To protect your PHI, Across Health requires these business associates to appropriately protect your PHI in compliance with all laws.
- *Continuity of Care:* Once you have been discharged, your information may be shared with other healthcare providers, such as home health agencies and community service agencies, in order to obtain their services on your behalf.
- *Judicial, Administrative and Law enforcement purposes:* Across Health must report certain parts of your PHI to legal officials or authorities, including law enforcement, the court system, or government agencies. Examples include: reporting suspected abuse or neglect, domestic violence, or certain physical injuries, and responding to a court order, subpoena, warrant, or lawsuit request.
- *Public Health/Abuse & Neglect:* Across Health may be required to report certain parts of your PHI to public health authorities. Examples include reporting certain diseases, injuries, and birth or death information. Across Health may also be required to report certain information to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), or information related to child abuse or neglect and domestic violence.
- *Health Oversight Agencies:* Across Health may be required to release certain information to state or federal agencies so they can monitor, investigate, or discipline those who work in the healthcare system.
- *Notification/Disaster Relief:* Across Health may use or release your PHI for disaster relief efforts to coordinate care or notify family and friends of your location or condition in a disaster
- *Organ Procurement Organization:* Across Health may release your PHI to organ procurement organizations or other entities engaged in the procurement or transplantation of organs for the purposes of donation and transplant.
- *Threats to Health or Safety:* Across Health may use and disclose your PHI to the proper authorities if we believe in good faith it is when necessary to prevent a serious threat to the health and safety of the public or another person.
- *Military:* Across Health may release your PHI to the proper requesting authorities if you are a member of the military.
- *Special Government Functions:* Across Health may release your PHI to a correctional institute or law enforcement official if you are under the custody of state or federal law

enforcement officials or incarcerated, for the purpose of providing you with healthcare, to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others, or for the safety and security of the law enforcement official or correctional institute.

- *Workers' Compensation:* Across Health may be required to release your PHI regarding workers' compensation laws

### When We Need your Written Authorization to Disclose PHI

We will not disclose PHI without your written authorization as required by law for the release of psychotherapy notes, photos/marketing purposes, sale of your PHI, HIV/AIDS information, substance abuse treatment records, and deceased patients' records.

If you provide Across Health the authorization to use or release your PHI, you may revoke that authorization at any time; however, Across Health cannot take back information that has already been shared.

## Discharge Planning

Part of our care planning process is to design a plan to prepare your child for discharge of services when care goals are met. Situations may arise, however, which may result in an earlier discharge from home care services. Some examples may include the following:

- Failure to comply with provider's orders
- Frequently missed home care appointments
- Moving outside of Across Health Home Care's service area
- A change in your child's needs to the extent that Across Health Home Care cannot meet those needs in the home
- Failure to uphold the responsibilities as outlined in the Patient's Rights and Responsibilities section of this packet
- An unsafe environment or illegal conduct occurring in your child's home
- Situations that develop affecting your child's welfare
- Non-payment by your child's payer source
- Admission of your child to the hospital for overnight stay
- Parental request that your child be discharged from services

## Preventing Infection for Your Family

The best way to prevent infection for your child and family is by frequently washing hands and/or using hand sanitizer.

To help stop the spread of germs:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands, if you don't have a tissue.
- Put your used tissue in the wastebasket.

- After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose, clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Remind family and friends to wash their hands before interacting with the family
- Please contact Across Health Home Care office if your child is exhibiting any symptoms of illness or any new physician diagnosed illness. We may need to reschedule your appointment.

## Sharp Object Disposal

- Sharp objects include needles, syringes, scissors, knives, staples, glass tubes or bottles, IV catheters, lancets, razor blades, and disposable razors. Place used sharps directly into a clean rigid container with a re-sealable lid. If a container is not provided for you, use a hard plastic or metal container such as a coffee can (reinforce the lid with heavy-duty tape). Never overfill the containers or recap needles once used. DO NOT use glass or clear plastic containers and never put sharps in containers that will be recycled or returned to a store. Seal container with tape and place in the trash can.

## Hazardous Waste Disposal

- Place soiled bandages, disposable pads/sheets and medical gloves, masks and gowns in securely fastened plastic bag before placing them in the garbage can with other trash.

## Home Care Emergency/Disaster Planning Guide

The information below will assist you and your family in preparation and response to a disaster as well as outline what you can expect from Across Health Home Care staff during an emergency. In a disaster or emergency, our staff may be unable to safely travel to your home. If this is the case, Across Health Home Care staff will call you to notify you and reschedule the visit if necessary.

Upon admission, each child's needs are assessed to determine how our agency should respond for your child and family during an emergency. For example, if your family may need special assistance for transportation and evacuation assistance, we will assist you in identifying resources to connect you to helpful resources and we will contact your family during an emergency. Across Health Home Care does not serve as an emergency response transport team.

Across Health Home Care will attempt to contact you during a disaster if your child has life sustaining equipment or receives life sustaining medication/nursing services. Home Care services may be interrupted until the area is free from danger and approved for entry by authorities. However, we will partner with you to assist you in ensuring you and your child's safety. This manual provides you tips to maintaining safety during an emergency or disaster.



For children who are considered to have no known immediate medical complications or health outcomes if services are interrupted (i.e. therapy services only) you can expect our office to contact you should any services or visits need to be rescheduled.

Please notify our office should you relocate following an emergency or disaster.

### Survival Tips and Plans for Preparing for a Disaster/Evacuation

- Know what disasters could affect your area, which could call for an evacuation and when to shelter in place. Establish a family meeting place.
- Keep a NOAA Weather Radio tuned to your local emergency station and monitor TV, radio, and follow mobile alert and mobile warnings about severe weather in your area.
- Download the FEMA app, receive weather alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five different locations anywhere in the United States
- Check your emergency supplies. To learn about what to have in an emergency supply kit go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Register now if you will need assistance during an evacuation. You may register by calling 211 and asking for your area's special needs transportation registry. After providing your zip code you will be given the number of your local police station by the 211 operators. Confirm that you have an emergency contact on record with Across Health Home Care. This name and number MUST be in addition to the primary contact person's name and the home phone number.
  - Contact your electric company to alert them if you have a family member on a ventilator. Please inform them you need to be on the high priority list for restoration of power and bypass of rolling electrical outages (brown outs). When you call, make sure you have the following information available:
    - Name of the account holder
    - Account number
    - Address of residence
- Maintain at least a week-long supply of prescription medicines, along with a list of all medications, dosage, and any allergies
- Extra wheelchair batteries (manual wheelchair if possible) and/or oxygen
- A list of the style and serial number of medical devices. Include special instructions for operating your equipment if needed.
- Copies of medical insurance and Medicaid/Insurance cards
- Contact information for doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt.
- Pet food, extra water, collar with ID tag, medical records and other supplies for your pet/service animal
- Have your car ready. Check the gas, tire pressure, oil and water.
- Handheld electronic devices loaded with movies and games (and spare chargers), headphones to decrease auditory distractions, and comfort snacks and toys that meet needs for stimulation.

## During a Disaster

Across Health Home Care will attempt to contact you during a disaster for children who are on life sustaining equipment or are receiving life sustaining medication/nursing services. Services may be interrupted until the area is free from danger and approved for entry by authorities. However, we will partner with you to assist you in ensuring you and your child's safety.

For children who are considered to have no known immediate medical complication or outcome without services (i.e. therapy services) our staff will contact you if any interruption in home care services may occur due to the event.

During some emergency situations it may be best to stay where you are. Below are tips for sheltering in place.

- Stay indoors and away from windows.
- Lock doors, close windows, air vents, fireplace dampers.
- Make sure you have an emergency kit.
- Listen to local television or radio for updates. Conditions may change quickly; be prepared to evacuate. See info on evacuation routes and for transportation assistance call Texas 2-1-1
- Stay inside until public safety officials tell you it is safe to leave.
- Maintain extra supplies (bottled water, batteries/flashlights etc.)

If you are asked to shelter in place because public officials are concerned about harmful debris or contaminants in the air, take these additional precautions:

- Go to an interior room or a room with as few windows as possible.
- Make sure your pets are indoors.
- Turn off fans, air conditioning, and forced air heating systems.
- Seal all windows, doors, and air vents with plastic sheeting and duct tapes

## After a Disaster

As soon as possible, notify your family, friends and Across Health Home Care of your status and where you will be staying. Across Health Home Care will also be contacting you, if possible, immediately after the occurrence.

After a disaster, traditional methods of communication such as landlines and cellular networks may not be available. Text messages are the best means of communication after a disaster. A text message will go through easier than a call and does not tie up cellular lines needed by emergency responders. .

If you are injured, call 911 if phones are accessible and you are able.

Across Health Home Care services will be resumed as soon as the area is free from immediate danger, and as soon as health care workers can safely reach you.

## Important Resources for Emergency Planning

2-1-1 Texas

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

Special Needs-Transportation Registry – Call 211

[www.211texas.org/211/](http://www.211texas.org/211/)

If you need help with transportation, finances, equipment, counseling, support groups, employment, etc., the best place to start is by dialing 2-1-1 on your telephone. 2-1-1 is an information and referral source for any city within the State of Texas. When you dial 2-1-1, you will talk to a trained resource specialist who has access to database listings of many health and human services in Texas.

You may be able to get help with: rent and utility assistance, food, emergency shelters, where to get employment help, medical and mental health assistance, help with transportation, and trained suicide intervention counseling. You can also get information on affordable child care, information about caring for an aging relative, or help recovering from a disaster.

Information and referral is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year. Information can be provided in over 90 different languages.

Texas Division of Emergency Management  
Location: Texas Department of Public Safety  
5805 North Lamar Blvd.  
Austin, Texas 78752-4422  
Mail: P O Box 4087  
Austin, Texas 78773-0001  
[www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem)

**Texas Evacuation Routes**

[www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/hurricane.htm](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/hurricane.htm)

Ready.gov

<http://www.ready.gov/>

FEMA

1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

<http://www.fema.gov>

American Red Cross

Service Areas/Offices:

<http://www.redcross.org/local/northtexas/locations>

Safe & Well:

<https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/>

## Resources to Support You and Your Family! RightNow Media

You are receiving free access to a huge, streaming, online, access-on-any-device library of over 5,000 faith-based videos on marriage, parenting, leadership and more.

With content for all ages and stages of life, additional family members can set up their own accounts as well.

Your participation and use of this free faith-based resource is completely voluntary and our hope is to minister to your family by providing access to videos designed to enrich, encourage, and equip you. Stream content about marriage, finances, mental health, plus a huge library of kids shows.

You will receive an email with access to stream this information from our staff.

## Our agency has an added benefit for all of our patients and families. Additional Community Resource Information

A Hand to Hold	(855) 424-6428 Ext.3 <a href="http://www.handtohold.org">www.handtohold.org</a>
Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline	(800) 422-4453 <a href="http://www.childhelp.org">http://www.childhelp.org</a>
Children with AIDS Project of America	(800) 866-2437 <a href="http://www.aidskids.org">www.aidskids.org</a>
Connections -Special Needs Kids Directory	(888) 596-6366 <a href="http://www.specialneedskidsdirectory.com">www.specialneedskidsdirectory.com</a>
Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)	(800) 628-5115 <a href="http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/index.shtml#eci">www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis/index.shtml#eci</a>
Family Voices	(800) 835-5669 <a href="http://www.familyvoices.org">www.familyvoices.org</a>
Housing Services	(214) 828-4244
La Leche League	(800) 525-3243 <a href="http://www.llli.org">www.llli.org</a>
Make-A-Wish Foundation of America	(800) 722-9474 <a href="http://www.wish.org">www.wish.org</a>
March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation	(914) 997-4488 <a href="http://www.marchofdimes.com">www.marchofdimes.com</a>

Medical Transportation Program	(877) 633-8747 <a href="http://www.texashealthsteps.com">www.texashealthsteps.com</a>
Texas Health Steps	(877) 847-8377 <a href="http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/thsteps/default.shtm">www.dshs.state.tx.us/thsteps/default.shtm</a>
Texas Parent to Parent	(866) 896-6001 <a href="http://www.txp2p.org">www.txp2p.org</a>
Traditional Medicaid	(800) 925-9126 <a href="http://www.tmhp.com">www.tmhp.com</a>