TITLE:	Emergency Communication	POLICY #: PAGE:	XVIII-B-10.00 1 of 2
MANUAL	Emergency Management	APPROV. AUTH:	Administrator
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Emergency Communication Policy #: XVIII-B-10.00

POLICY:

The Home will have a communication procedure in place for use during an emergency, including backup/secondary communication methods.

The Home's emergency plan will include a plan to ensure access to reliable communications equipment, including for the purpose of obtaining emergency assistance, at all times, including in the event of a power outage.

PROCEDURE:

A communication team can be set up to act as a relay and liaison during an emergency situation, and will consist of persons who have an understanding of the Home's Incident Management Team's responsibilities.

Communication: Directing Incoming Calls
Make a plan to handle incoming calls, preparing to respond with/to:
- Status updates on emergency/residents
- Offers to help/resources or staff coming from other facilities
- Team members calling to find out work schedule
- Medical information

Consider updating voicemail messaging with responses to frequently asked questions.

Communication: Residents & Family Members
Prepare a telephone tree and have various team members call family members to assure them of their family member's safety and advise them of the Home's plan for the crisis.

Team members calling will:
- Remind family members that in crisis such as severe weather, telephone contact may be lost.
- Advise family members that the team will be focused on providing resident care and protection, so telephone inquiries should be short.
- Advise that you will keep them up to date and ask for several numbers where they can be reached.
- Leave voicemail (where no immediate answer) and advise where family members can call to obtain further information.

The goal is to help family members feel comfortable and confident that you are doing all you can to ensure their loved one's safety.

The communications team will compile a "key point bulletin" for resident and family member communication consisting of these basic elements:

- Type of threat (e.g. ice storm)
- Estimated time and severity of impact
- General outlook at the time
- Expected disruptions to services and routines
- What the Administrator has done and is doing to lessen negative outcomes
- When to expect an updated status report
- What residents and family members can do to help

Prepare announcements that can be made over the public address system, email etc…as appropriate.

Based on the nature of the emergency situation, team members will keep residents informed via various strategies such as daily updates, one to one conversations, printed text of automated call scripts, updates to all residents in the dining room with opportunity for Q&A, Residents' Council meetings, etc.

Communication: Team Members, Volunteers, Students & Support Office
See Fan Out Policies/Templates.

Communication: Alternate Methods
In an emergency, normal means of communication may become unreliable or nonexistent. Methods of communication in a disaster may include:

- Messengers (designated individuals may need to hand deliver important messages in the aftermath of a disaster, once officials have determined that it is safe to leave protective structures)
- Telephones (both cellular and landline if operating)
- Fax machine (if phones are operable)
- Internet or local area networks (if computer systems are operative)

Communication: Provincial Regulatory Authorities
The Administrator or designate will ensure provincial regulatory authorities are kept informed as required in the event of an emergency.

The Incident Manager (RN in Charge) or designate will:

1) Ensure ongoing communication using the methods noted above to residents, substitute decision makers (if any), team members, volunteers, students, caregivers, and the Resident's Council and Circle of Family and Friends, including:
   a. At the beginning of the emergency;
   b. When there is a significant status change throughout the course of the emergency; and
   c. When the emergency is over.