**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**BUREAU OF HUMAN SERVICES LICENSING**

**Personal Care Homes (55 Pa.Code Chapter 2600)**

**Q/A - Regulatory Clarifications – November 2018**

*The clarifications and interpretations below will remain on the Department’s web site until the*

*information is included in the next updated Regulatory Compliance Guide (RCG).*

**Regulation: §2600.85. Sanitation**

*§2600.85(a)- Sanitary conditions shall be maintained.*

**Question**: Representatives of provider associations with personal care home and assisted living residence members have proposed conditions for the use of a house glucometer, as follows:

* House glucometer would be used in situations where a resident is waiting for a prescription for the glucometer to be filled or when a resident without a diagnosis of diabetes requires medical intervention around blood sugar testing;
* House glucometer use would be limited to licensed nursing staff;
* House glucometer would be designed for multiple users, as stated by the manufacturer;

CDC guidelines and manufacturer instructions would be followed for cleaning and storage.

**Answer:**As noted by the Center for Disease Control, there have been multiple infection control breaches in Pennsylvania during provision of care, including blood glucose monitoring. Because of the long incubation period (up to 6 months) and typically asymptomatic course of acute hepatitis B and C infection, it is likely that only a fraction of such outbreaks that occurred have been detected. (<https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/outbreaks/healthcarehepoutbreaktable.htm>

State and federal regulations and national guidelines exist to protect your residents, staff and you. The Department specifically prohibits the use of shared blood glucose testing and insulin administration equipment and supplies. After consultation with the Department of Health, Bureau of Epidemiology, including infection disease specialists, we have determined that the use of a house glucometer, even under the proposed conditions of use, will not be permitted in personal care homes or assisted living residences.

The Department understands the challenges that may occur in serving residents who require blood sugar monitoring; however, it has been determined that the potential risk associated with shared glucometers outweighs any short-term benefit.

The Department offers the following:

* A home or residence may store an unused glucometer to be made available for a specific resident’s use, but going forward, the glucometer must only be used for that specific resident;
* The resident and the resident’s designee, as applicable, should be notified in advance through the resident-home or resident-residence contract or addendum that they will be held responsible for the cost of the glucometer and what the cost is expected to be.

The Department encourages you to review infection control best practices including your policy & procedures around the safe storage and use of medical equipment. Thank you for the continued partnership in serving the residents of Pennsylvania.