

High Risks Areas for Provider Focus

- There are a number of conditions, behaviors, and social situations that historically present significant risk to people with intellectual disabilities.
- In our community placements and programs the staff members working directly with individuals with intellectual disabilities are the first, critical component to identifying these risks and ensuring that individuals receive prompt medical, behavioral or psychiatric attention. This is no easy task as most staff members are not medically trained, and a number of the individuals being served may have difficulty presenting or describing their symptoms or communicating their concerns.
- Fortunately, the staff members who daily work with people who are intellectually disabled are often very astute at recognizing a new risk factor. This recognition of changes in physical status, behavior or social circumstances can make the difference when it comes to prompt medical attention, behavioral interventions or social supports.
- We encourage all providers to take special care to continuously **assess**, **identify**, and **track** the following high risk areas in individuals who are intellectually disabled. Your attention to any changes in an individual's condition or circumstances can lead to early identification of risk and prompt intervention.
- In the coming months, the DBHDS will provide guidance and training on how providers can assess and track risks. We will post tools and templates on our website that providers can use to assist them to identify and respond to risks.
- We hope all providers will take advantage of this information and incorporate the ideas and strategies into their risk management programs.

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