

Create a Back Up Plan for COVID-19

CREATE A PERSONAL SUPPORT NETWORK: Your network can be roommates, relatives, neighbors, friends, and co-workers. They are people you trust and who can help. They should know you, your capabilities and needs and be able to provide help quickly. Try to include a minimum of three people in your network; not one.

COMPLETE A PERSONAL ASSESSMENT: What can you do for yourself? What help do you need? Make a list of your needs and resources for meeting them. Consider: Bowel and Bladder Management, Personal Care, Transportation, Groceries and Supplies. Meals on Wheels may be an option for Veterans over the age of 60.

ENSURE ACCESS TO HELP: Keep a phone and/or medical alert system close by to help in an emergency. A medical alert system can be ordered by your provider.

EDUCATE: Inform those who may need to assist you in an emergency on how to operate necessary equipment and perform necessary care. The Spinal Cord Injury and Disorders (SCI/D) Clinic and Home Care staff are available to assist with training via telephone or VA Video Connect during office hours.

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANTS (PCAs)

- o Personal care attendants from an agency? Do they have back up caregivers?
- o Private PCAs? Discuss plans for cross-coverage between caregivers

SAFETY:

- o Limit caregivers and family visiting the home.
- o Focus on protective hygiene and encourage your caregivers to do the same. Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub (at least 60% alcohol). Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- o Maintain social distancing, keep distance of 6 feet whenever possible and avoid contact with anyone who is sick, coughing or sneezing
- o Inform your healthcare team right away if you are sick. If you have new or unexplained cough, difficulty breathing, or fever seek medical help and call the VA Call Center at 1-603-624-4366 x3199 before you visit.
- o For emergencies call 911
- o For essential community services (example: food, water, and shelter) call 211

STAY CONNECTED IN DIFFERENT WAYS

- o Stay in touch with family and friends by phone, text, Facetime, Skype or email.
- o Maintaining relationships helps to manage feelings of anxiety and promotes mental health self-care.

Please know that the Manchester VA SCI Clinic is here to support you during this difficult time. If you need medical advice, prescription renewal, or appointment information, please use Secure Messaging or call the SCI Clinic at 603-624-4366 x6434 or x2120. Please be sure to include a call back number, in addition to your name and last 4 of your social security number, in your message. Please visit <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/> for more COVID-19 resources.

If you are experiencing any issues with caregivers or access to resources because of COVID-19, please call 603 624 4366 x6434 or x2120. After hours please call the call center at 603-624-4366 x3199.