

COMMUNITY LIVING DURHAM NORTH
“DO NOT RESUSCITATE” ORDERS

Policy No: B-12 (Service Delivery)

Effective Date: April 27, 2009

Rationale:

To provide a clear statement to employees regarding the agency’s expectations.

To provide a clear statement to everyone associated with CLDN regarding the agency’s direction and philosophy.

Policy Statement:

Community Living Durham North promotes and sustains life. First Aid/CPR training is mandatory and employees are expected to perform heroic life-saving measures.

At the same time, should a supported person, or his lawful substitute decision maker, sign a *Do Not Resuscitate Confirmation Form*, along with the person’s physician, then the agency will maintain that form on file and make it available to Emergency Medical Responders on appropriate occasions. The order, however, directs the actions of nurses, paramedics, police and fire fighters. It does not constrain CLDN or its staff who are, as stated, expected to perform life-saving CPR.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
for the Board of Directors

COMMUNITY LIVING DURHAM NORTH

“DO NOT RESUSCITATE” ORDERS

Procedure No: B-12-1

Effective Date: April 27, 2009

Definitions - DNR Orders & Palliative Care Plans

- A “Do Not Resuscitate” order is different from a “Palliative Care Plan for Expected Death.” In the latter case, death is imminent and medicine cannot alter the prognosis without employing heroic measures that the person or his substitute decision makers have declined (for reasons typically related to quality of life considerations, pain management, etc).
- A “Palliative Care Plan for Expected Death” typically includes a specific plan of care designed to keep the person comfortable and pain free. See *B-17 Death of a Person Receiving Residential Care* for details concerning the planned provision of palliative care in our residential services.
- A “Do Not Resuscitate” order, by contrast, can be put into place for a variety of reasons, even when death is not imminent, and it involves no change to the person’s day to day care because his state of health may be quite stable. Basically, a DNR means that a decision has been made, in advance, by the person or by his substitute decision maker, if the heart stops beating, and breathing stops, Emergency Medical Responders should not attempt to resuscitate the person by initiating basic or advanced CPR. It does not rule out other kinds of medical treatment, but in the context of a DNR various other life saving procedures, including surgical interventions, might be deemed to be heroic and be eliminated from consideration on this account.

Procedure No: B-12-2

Effective Date: April 27, 2009

CLDN’s Position with Respect to DNR Orders

- “Do Not Resuscitate” orders can be put in place for a variety of reasons. The physician’s clinical opinion might be that “CPR will almost certainly not benefit the patient.” But usually there are considerations in play related to age or to a quality of life that is perceived to be compromised. Because DNR orders can lead to death where death was neither imminent nor inevitable, they are controversial in a way that Palliative Care Plans are not.
- Community Living Durham North will not receive a DNR order from a family member and attempt to convey it to medical personnel. Nor will it liaise between a physician and a

substitute decision maker (including the Public Guardian and Trustee) with a view to putting a DNR order in place.

- While it will not be a decision made by CLDN, or by any of its staff, “Do Not Resuscitate” may yet be the decision reached by the person and his physician, or between the family/medical trustee/physician.
- In this case, the agency will maintain the Order on file and make it available to Emergency Medical Responders on appropriate occasions. Note, however, that CLDN employees are not constrained by the order and are expected to perform life-saving CPR.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Executive Director