

## Accredited Celebrates Those Who Went Above and Beyond the Call of Duty in Response to Hurricane Irene

Accredited Health Services recently celebrated the dedication, foresight and resourcefulness of its home health aides in preparing for Hurricane Irene, and providing uninterrupted care and calm, consistent services to clients during and after the storm.

"Our home health aides are trained to offer great service in all circumstances and we are so proud of the work they do," explained Melissa Eschert, president of Accredited Health Services. "We want to publicly sing their praises for the extraordinary measures so many of our aides took to make sure their clients were comfortable, safe and calm throughout Hurricane Irene. We believe the compassion and willingness to take the initiative and go the extra mile distinguishes our aides as caregivers with heart and character and we want to thank them for the selfless work they do."



Ramona Cadena had clients in Tenafly, NJ that had recently expanded their caregiving schedule to six twelve-hour shifts each week from 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. This client had another company covering the evening care shift. The Friday before the storm, Ramona's clients let her know

that their night shift aide was not able to cover their shift on Saturday night. Ramona offered to stay until 10:00 p.m. on Saturday so she could prepare dinner, serve her clients, and get them ready for bed before the storm. The clients were so happy to have the extra coverage when they really needed it.

### *Did you know...?*

**Hurricane Irene was the first hurricane to have made landfall in New Jersey since 1903!**

"My wife felt good having Ramona here with us through the storm because she knows her well and they have a lovely rapport," explained the husband. "Ramona went above and beyond the call of duty. She didn't have to be asked to go the extra mile; she anticipated what would be needed to take the best possible care of my wife and I and she delivered it without question and at her own personal sacrifice. Her presence made riding the storm out much easier on all of us and we are grateful."

Ramona went a step further though. Knowing the weather was going to be bad, she brought a portable mattress and an overnight bag so she was prepared to stay overnight if needed.

*continued on page 3...*

## — Plan Ahead For The Next Natural Disaster —

In light of the recent devastation and destruction caused by Hurricane Irene, we felt it important to provide our clients with an emergency “Go Kit” in case they are ever forced to leave their home. This is the time to plan ahead for what you may need to stay safe, healthy, informed, mobile, and independent during a disaster.

### ***Depending on your needs, items for your “Go Kit” may include:***

- Extra eyeglasses, hearing aids if you have them, or have coverage for them.
- Battery charger and extra batteries for hearing aids, motorized wheelchairs, or other battery-operated medical devices.
- Copies of medical prescriptions, doctor’s orders, devices you use.
- Medical alert tags or bracelets or written descriptions of your disability and support needs.
- Medical insurance cards, Medicare/Medicaid cards, physician contact information, list of your allergies and health history.
- A list of the local non-profit or community-based organizations that know you or assist people with needs similar to yours.
- A list of personal contacts-family and friends-that you may need to contact in an emergency.
- If possible, extra medicine, oxygen, insulin, catheters, or other medical supplies you use regularly.
- If you use a motorized wheelchair, have a light weight manual chair available for emergencies. Know the size and weight of your wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.

### ***Did you know...?***

All 21 counties in New Jersey felt the impact of Hurricane Irene

***Another important thing to keep in mind is to plan to maintain your independence before an emergency strikes. This includes:***

- Create a support network to help you plan for an emergency. Consider family, neighbors, friends, people who provide services to you, faith-based and community groups. Tell these people where you keep your emergency supplies.
- Contact your city or county government’s emergency information management office and work with them to use their emergency planning resources.
- If you receive dialysis or other life sustaining medical treatment, identify the location and availability of more than one facility and work with your provider to develop your emergency plan.
- Show others how to operate your wheelchair or other assistive devices.
- Keep contact information for local independent living centers and other disability service organizations in a safe and easy-to-access place. If you provide any organization with information about your needs and what you may require in an emergency, keep that data up to date.
- If you use in-home support services, Meals-on-Wheels, Life Alert or other support services, work with them to personalize emergency preparedness plans to meet your needs so you can keep in touch with them during and after an emergency.
- Work with local transportation and disability services to plan ahead for accessible transportation if you need that for evacuation or other reasons during a disaster.
- Develop back-up plans for personal assistance services, hospice, or other forms of in-home help.

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## Accredited Celebrates Those continued from cover...

No one asked her to do this – not the client or AHS management. She took the initiative and planned for every possible contingency to make sure her clients were safe and comfortable during the storm. As the winds and rain picked up through the night on Saturday, Ramona offered to set up her portable bed in the living room so her clients would have the peace of mind of knowing that help was there if needed. They gratefully accepted her offer. The next day,

### **Did you know...?**

The filing deadline for FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program is October 31, 2011

the Sunday caregiver was unable to get to the client's house because of storm damage and impassable roads so Ramona stayed until 6:00 p.m. Sunday night when she was relieved by another caregiver.

"I knew the weather would be bad and I just wanted to make sure that my clients were taken care of in case the aide scheduled to relieve me couldn't make it," explained Ramona. "It made me feel better knowing that I had a plan in place just in case. As it turned out, the plan worked out perfectly and anticipating my clients' needs made it easier for all of us to weather the storm."



Jason Hardy is another Accredited aide who went above and beyond to serve his client, Ken Freed, during Hurricane Irene. Mr. Freed, a resident of Bergen County, felt a great sense of relief

when Jason, one of his home health aides, was able to cover for his co-workers who couldn't get to Mr. Freed due to the storm. Mr. Freed

relies heavily on the team AHS has working with him in short shifts (2-3 hours) and he notes

### **Did you know...?**

The final sum of New Jersey's damage due to Hurricane Irene is expected to total in the billions of dollars.

that all of them are skilled, conscientious and reliable. "Jason was able to get to my home and cover several shifts above and beyond his usual schedule so my care was uninterrupted," explained Mr. Freed. "Because I need a lot of assistance, the dedication of the entire team eased the tension of the storm and was a huge relief to me. I appreciate all of them so much." Mr. Freed wanted to also acknowledge Ana Cardenas, Kenia Saltos, Harriet Fryer, Betty Fisher and Miozoty Cuello who provide unwavering service no matter what the weather.

"I was happy to cover the extra shifts for Mr. Freed during the storm," said Jason Hardy. "We are a great team and all of us work together to make sure Mr. Freed not only has the care he needs when he needs it, but also to ensure that he has complete confidence that someone will be there for him no matter what the circumstances."

Kudos to those Accredited Health Service aides who personify the Accredited difference.

### **Did you know...?**

Hurricane Irene left extensive flood and wind damage along its path through the Caribbean, the United States and Canada.

## Word Search

The object of the puzzle is to find the list of hidden words. There are at least 25 words related to homecare. The words may be hidden in any direction: horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards or backwards.

*Did you know...?*

Evidence suggests that exercises like puzzles can help keep the brain fit.

# The Human Body

L	S	A	E	F	R	C	L	S	C	N	N	C	E	R	S	N
N	E	R	H	O	H	E	S	R	T	O	E	S	R	M	J	S
E	S	M	U	S	C	L	E	S	K	S	B	B	L	O	O	D
C	P	S	B	N	E	L	I	V	E	R	R	K	B	U	I	U
K	I	D	N	E	Y	S	H	H	H	E	A	D	O	T	N	L
N	N	O	S	E	E	H	N	S	S	K	I	N	N	H	T	E
T	E	E	T	H	S	A	C	S	F	I	N	G	E	R	S	G
W	R	I	S	T	N	I	S	E	L	U	N	G	S	R	H	S
B	L	A	D	D	E	R	O	S	N	M	H	E	A	R	T	I

ARMS	CELLS	HEART	LUNGS	SKIN
BLADDER	EYES	JOINTS	MOUTH	SPINE
BLOOD	FINGERS	KIDNEYS	MUSCLES	TEETH
BONES	HAIR	LEGS	NECK	TOES
BRAIN	HEAD	LIVER	NOSE	WRIST

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