Home Ventilator User's Emergency Preparation Checklist

Reminder to Self: No matter how stable my condition or how well I am doing, a good outcome in an emergency depends upon my taking care of business beforehand.

Completing My Documents

☐ 1. I have completed the Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff and secured on it the signatures and phone numbers of my primary care physician and pulmonologist.

☐ 2. I have read and I understand Treating Neuromuscular Patients Who Use Home Ventilation: Critical Issues, the IVUN briefing for health professionals.

☐ 3. I have given copies of the above documents to my primary care physician and all other health professionals.

Conversation with My Caregiver(s)

☐ 4. I have reviewed the Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff with my caregiver(s) and given each a copy.

☐ 5. To facilitate rapid emergency treatment, my caregiver(s) and I have agreed on who will be my main spokesperson in each of several possible emergency scenarios.

☐ 6. My caregiver(s) and I have talked through what we will do and say in the event of a communication breakdown with health professionals.

Getting Acquainted with Emergency Personnel

☐ 7. If my hospital is small, I have introduced myself to the Emergency Department and given them the Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff and Treating Neuromuscular Patients Who Use Home Ventilation: Critical Issues. If my hospital is large, I have requested that they upload digital copies of these documents into their file on me.

☐ 8. If possible, I have had my home ventilator and, if applicable, CoughAssist® approved in writing by my local hospital for in-hospital use and have attached the documentation to Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff.

☐ 9. If applicable, my caregiver(s) are prepared to administer the CoughAssist® in the absence of available respiratory or nursing staff.

☐ 10. I have given a copy of my Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff to my local fire department to alert them to my condition and unique needs.

☐ 11. I have given a copy of my Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff to my local ambulance/paramedic service and, if possible, cleared my equipment with them for use during transport.
Assuring Backup Power

☐ 12. I have a backup power supply in my home or one that is readily available to me.

☐ 13. I have a backup ventilator readily available for use in an emergency.

☐ 14. I have a manual resuscitator bag at home and carry one with me when I leave home.

Documenting My Wishes

☐ 15. To assure that my wishes are respected I have completed a Medical Power of Attorney (also called Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care) form authorizing another to make medical decisions if I am unable. If this form does not include a section stating the conditions under which I do/do not want to continue medical care, I have also completed a brief Living Will. (Forms for these two documents may vary by state. Search the Internet and/or contact your local library for state-recommended forms.)

☐ 16. I have given the above documents to my physician(s), family and caregiver(s).

Pausing to Consider

☐ 17. I am aware that in general the pulmonologists most skilled in treating persons who use home ventilation due to a neurological condition are those who treat diseases of the muscles rather than those (many pulmonologists) who treat diseases of the lungs. (Check IVUN website and/or the nearest MDA and/or ALS clinic for these specialists.)

☐ 18. My caregiver(s) and I are prepared to seek additional expert opinion on the necessity/timing of a tracheostomy, should that procedure be proposed by physicians not familiar with noninvasive ventilation.

Traveling with Important Documents

☐ 19. I have assembled the following and always carry the packet with me when I leave home.

☐ Patient’s Vital Information for Medical Staff

☐ Treating Neuromuscular Patients Who Use Home Ventilation: Critical Issues

☐ Living Will

☐ Medical Power of Attorney

☐ Insurance Cards

Celebrating Success

☐ 20. I have notified IVUN that I have completed this checklist and would like to be recognized on the IVUN website and in its newsletter for this accomplishment.

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