

Fridge file could be a lifesaver

Posted By Dave Dale

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Emergency response workers have another tool to help people in distress in their homes with the Link to Life medical information file folder to be kept on refrigerators by a magnetic strip.

The plastic pouch holds vital health and medical information for ambulance, fire and police to find when they come across someone unable to communicate their conditions.

The system was developed by Care Link, a 24-hour medical alarm response division of True Steel Security and Northern Communications.

Kevin Buckland, client satisfaction manager, said the company realized the co-ordinated approach can help anyone regardless of whether they have an alarm system. Care Link donated more than 17,000 for distribution in the Sudbury area and it is now being distributed and co-sponsored by local emergency services agencies, as well as the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit and North Bay and District Hospital. Buckland said some paramedics have said they end up bagging all the medication in a bathroom to help doctors ascertain what prescriptions an unconscious person might take, but there were times it was old and outdated information.

Pat Cliche, of the Northern Injury Prevention Practitioners Network, helped co-ordinate the distribution and participated in a media launch of the life-saving system Tuesday.

Cliche said seniors who receive fall prevention training are being given the folders that come with several data sheets and a window sticker to alert emergency personnel. The Link to Life system also helps people with known medical conditions such as severe allergies, their medical histories and ailments requiring prescription drugs. "When you work in emergency services, the information to save someone's life is information that's on the card," she said, adding that not everyone wears their Medic-alert bracelets.

Cliche said this idea is better than the Vial of Life program where people were keeping similar data cards in a glass tube in the refrigerator, but it was hard to find and unreliable. The file folder is also good for people to take to the emergency department so they have everything handy.

"When people go to the emergency department they're in a crisis," she said.

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