

# Medical cards aid during emergencies

Friday, June 19, 2009

By Danielle Sanzone  
The Record

COHOES — A recent medical emergency at the Cohoes Housing Authority was just one example for why the newly-installed medical information cards at the residences were a good idea, said Charles Valenti, the Family Self Sufficiency program coordinator.

The cards, which include information, including the name of next of kin and the residents' medications, were installed about one week ago. They are located near the entrance to the Housing Authority residential unit and are covered by a sticker so the information is not made public.

The hope is that this information will be useful by any medical teams who may enter since a majority of tenants at the Housing Authority are senior citizens or disabled, said Valenti.

“This program is part of a comprehensive approach to improve the welfare of tenants. We care about these people and want to improve their lives and protect their health,” he added.

The cards were put up at no extra charge to the residents. The Housing Authority absorbed the minimal expense of creating and installing them, Valenti said.

The idea for the program came from the executive director at the Watervliet Housing Authority, who has been assisting the city organization in the absence of a Cohoes director.

“We are encouraging residents to fill out the information,” said Valenti. “God forbid there is an emergency, but with this card we will know who to contact. It could save peoples' lives.”

A male resident last week was involved in a medical emergency and he had not yet filled out the card. Officials had to research who his relatives were so he could receive medical help, said Valenti.

The Cohoes Housing Authority has four different sites with 325 units.

The agency also offers English as a second language programming at McDonald Towers and other BOCES activities.

“Ultimately, our goal is that our tenants become self sufficient,” said Valenti. “We want to identify what issues are important to the growth of our residents.”

Danielle Sanzone may be reached at 270-1292 or by email at [dsanzone@troyrecord.com](mailto:dsanzone@troyrecord.com).