These protocols cover specific types of special healthcare needs in adult patients.

Adults with special healthcare needs are those who have or are at risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, and emotional conditions that necessitate use of health and related services of a type or amount not usually required by typical adults.

The general approach to adults with special healthcare needs includes the following:

1. Priority is given to the ABCs.
2. Do not be overwhelmed by the machines.
3. Listen to the caregiver.
4. If a nurse is present, rely on their judgment.
5. Remember…the patient’s cognitive level of function may be altered.
6. Assume that the patient can understand exactly what you say.
7. Bring all medications and equipment to the hospital.

Obtaining a history includes asking the parent/caregiver the following:

1. Patient’s normal vital signs.
2. Patient’s actual weight.
3. Developmental level of the patient.
4. Patient’s allergies – include latex.
5. Pertinent medications/therapies.