

Hartman's
In-Service Education SourceBook Series



Improving Communication Skills for Better Care



Improving

COMMUNICATION SKILLS for Better Care

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NOTICE TO THE READER

Though the guidelines contained in this text are based on consultations with health care professionals, they should not be considered absolute recommendations. The instructor and readers should follow employer, local, state, and federal guidelines concerning health care practices. These guidelines change, and it is the reader's responsibility to be aware of these changes and of the policies and procedures of her or his health care facility/agency.

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Good communication skills can be the key to providing quality care. When we form trusting relationships with our clients and residents, we can often communicate with them on a more meaningful level. This in turn will enable us as caregivers to provide for the needs and concerns of those persons in our care. As we meet those needs, we not only improve the well-being of every person we care for, but we teach them and their families the fundamentals of good communication.

This in-service focuses on the good communication skills that nursing assistants and home health aides need to have when dealing with both those persons in their care and their fellow health caregivers. Emphasis is placed on understanding verbal and non-verbal communication, the barriers to good communication, and important skills to improve communication. This in-service also spends time on understanding the limitations of the elderly, hard of hearing, visually impaired, and aphasics, and provides suggestions for overcoming those limitations.

We have provided a number of games and activities, as well as lesson plans designed to encourage your aides to interact and enjoy this in-service.

Please note that limited permission is granted to photocopy the handouts for use at the site originally purchasing this in-service. Photocopying other parts of this in-service, including the lesson plan, is expressly prohibited.

To use the handouts, photocopy the number needed for your group. Consider using different colors of paper to organize the different handouts or to make some stand out.

Convert transparency masters to acetates for use with an overhead projector. You can do this by purchasing transparency film at an office supply store and photocopying the transparency masters onto the acetates using a normal copy machine, or you can have a copy company do it for you. If overhead projection is not convenient for your presentation area, you may wish to copy the information from the transparency masters onto a chalkboard or flip chart.

We hope you find this in-service helpful. And, as always, we welcome your comments and suggestions.

Happy Teaching!

Improving Communication Skills for Better Care

Learning Objectives

1. Define verbal and non-verbal communication and describe barriers to good communication.
2. Describe the effects of body language and facial expressions on communication.
3. Discuss important steps to establishing trust between health care givers and the persons in their care.
4. List seven simple skills to improve communication in general.
5. Describe the use of touch as an effective communication tool.
6. List five good communication skills to use with the elderly persons in your care.
7. List important guidelines for communicating with the hard of hearing.
8. List important guidelines for communicating with the visually impaired.
9. List important guidelines for communicating with aphasic clients or residents.
10. Describe the importance of the care plan and demonstrate an understanding of the standard communication forms used in your work.
11. Describe eight observable changes in status to report.
12. Describe a proper telephone message.

Introduction and Assessment

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Tools: Handout Intro 1 Assessment A (pg. 34)
Handout Intro 2 Assessment A Answer Key (pg. 36)
Handout Intro 3 Key Terms (pg. 37)
Handout Intro 4 Note-Taking Worksheet (pg. 38)

Learning Activity: **Assessment and Discussion**

Distribute Handout Intro-1 Assessment A Ask the participants to do the assessment on communication. This may be used as a pre- or a post-test to determine their knowledge base.

Distribute Handout Intro 2 Assessment A Answer Key Review the answers with the participants as a discussion tool.

Distribute Handout Intro 3 Key Terms Review the Key Terms for this in-service with the participants.

Distribute Handout Intro 4 Note-Taking Worksheet Tell the participants to take notes on this worksheet to organize and remember the information in the lecture.

Define verbal and non-verbal communication and describe barriers to good communication

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

Tools: Transparency 1-1 Definition of Communication (pg. 42)
Handout 1-1 How We Communicate (pg. 43)
Transparency 1-2 Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication (pg. 45)
Transparency 1-3 What's Wrong With This Picture? (pg. 46)
Handout 1-2 Factors That Influence Communication (pg. 47)

Learning Activity: **Lecture**

Display Discuss the following definition:

Transparency 1-1

Definition of Communication and Communication is defined in Webster's dictionary as "to give, or give and receive, information, signals, or messages in any way, as by talk, gestures, writing, etc."

Distribute

Handout 1-1

How We Communicate Reviewing the content of Handout 1-1 will assist the group's discussion.

Display

Transparency 1-2

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Verbal Communication:

- Spoken words
- Written words
- Choice of words (including slang or medical terms)

Non-Verbal Communication:

- Tone of Voice
- Body Language
- Facial Expressions
- Mannerisms
- Gestures
- Drawing Pictures
- Touch

Discuss the following points:

- The person who is communicating is called the **SENDER**.
- The person who is listening is called the **RECEIVER**.
- The Sender and the Receiver exchange roles throughout a conversation.