FEEDING ASSISTANT TRAINING
SESSION #4

Vanderbilt Center for Quality Aging & Qsource
Presenter

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- Assistant Professor
- Vanderbilt University School of Nursing
- Research Interests: quality of life and quality of care in long-term care; dementia care
1. Highlight the importance of good communication

2. Discuss the different ways staff and residents communicate (verbal v. non-verbal)

3. Provide specific strategies for communicating with residents with sensory impairments

4. Explain how dementia influences communication

5. FOCUS philosophy for communicating
What is communication?

What images or words come to mind when you think about communication?

How do you define communication?

Think of a good and bad example.

A means of exchanging information and connecting to one another
Clear Communication w/ Residents

- Why is it so important?
  - It’s essential to provide residents with good, quality care

- What prevents good communication between staff and residents?
  - Talking too fast
  - Changing the subject
  - Clichés and false assurances
  - Insensitivity
  - Sensory impairment
Being an Active Listener

- Be attentive
- Show interest & ask clarifying questions
- Avoid interruptions and distractions
- Restate what the resident has said to check understanding
Verbal v. Non-verbal Communication

**VERBAL**

- Spoken word including word choice, tone, and speed
- May be a challenge for some residents

**NON-VERBAL**

- Body language including:
  - Posture
  - Eye Contact
  - Hand movements
  - Facial expressions
  - Touch
Positive Verbal Communication

- Speak on the resident’s “good” side
- Use the resident’s proper name
- Utilize a friendly tone
- Be patient
  - Speak slowly
  - Use short sentences or one step commands
  - Allow time for resident to process and respond
- Repeat statements as originally made
Positive Non-Verbal Communication

- Approach slowly and calmly
- Do not approach from behind
- Face the resident while speaking
- Make eye contact
- Smile, nod, move hands
Verbal v. Non-Verbal Communication Video

Identify 2 non-verbal communication techniques.

Was the staff actively listening?

How could the communication be better?
Communication & Sensory Impairments

**VISION IMPAIRED**

- Identify yourself by name and title
- Position yourself close to resident in good lighting
- Use talk and touch
- Inform resident before you leave

**HEARING IMPAIRED**

- Speak
  - Slowly and clearly
  - At a lower pitch
  - At a slightly higher volume
- Keep conversations short and directed to a single topic
## Communication & Sensory Impairments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aphasia</th>
<th>Cognitive/Understanding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep conversations short</td>
<td>Use simple words, sentences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask yes/no questions</td>
<td>Give 1 step instructions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage resident to point/nod</td>
<td>Focus on 1 topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give resident plenty of time to respond</td>
<td>Use gestures to reinforce your verbal communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraphrase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoid frustrated body language</td>
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What is dementia?

Dementia can impact the parts of the brain related to:
- Memory
- Language (speech & comprehension)
- Concentration
- Orientation
- Judgment
- Sequencing
FOCUS Technique

- F - Face to Face
- O - Orient
- C - Continue
- U - Unstick
- S - Structure
FOCUS: Face to Face

- Face the patient directly
- Smile
- Talk before you touch
- Maintain eye contact
- Speak in soothing tones
FOCUS: Orient

- Guide the conversation
- Redirect
- Allow plenty of time to respond
- Use visual aids
FOCUS: Continue the Same Topic

- Short attention span/ loss of interest in food in front of them
- If they refuse, offer them something else
- Use verbal reminders
- Try to stay with the resident
FOCUS: Unstick

- Residents may have difficulty finding the right words
- Be patient and respectful, not corrective, when they get the words wrong
- Ask them to point to what they want
FOCUS: Structure Your Question

- Sentences: short, simple, direct
- Provide only 2 choices at a time
- Example: “Do you want peas or potatoes?”
Communication & Dementia

How does the person with dementia interpret the staff’s communication in this video?
Communication Session Summary

- Key points
  - Good communication is important
  - Communication involves active listening
  - Communication is both verbal and nonverbal
  - Special techniques help communication for residents with sensory impairment or dementia
Next Session and Contact Us

- Recording of this session will be available via atom Alliance’s Learning On Demand (http://atomalliance.org/webinars/on-demand-webinars/feeding-assistance-webinar-series/)

- Next live webinar scheduled for: July 20th at 2PM CST/ 3PM EST

- In the meantime, if you have questions or comment, contact us at:
  
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  Email: centerforqualityaging@Vanderbilt.edu
  Fax: 615-322-1754