

Caring for Residents Living with Dementia

Nursing Home In-service

Strategies

Using easy to understand words

Listening

Expressions

Body Language

Use easy to understand words

When discussing needs or providing choices to residents with cognitive impairment –use small sentences and few choices so they can process their responses.

Allow time-wait for their response. If it appears after your first attempt, they do not understand-restate your words with an understanding tone.

Tone and facial expressions assist in providing quality care.

Listening

Consider slowing down when speaking and then providing a long pause to receive the residents feedback.

Active listening requires you clearing your mind of other distractions before interacting with a resident. Every attempt they make to communicate is valuable and we want to hear what they have to say.

Exercises in listening

Expressions

Facial expressions while speaking can make or break communication. Having an open and receptive spirit will allow your face to display kindness and understanding.

When residents living with dementia are expressing themselves to staff watch their facial features to denote happiness, sadness, frustration, or anger when attempting to communicate. This can hold clues to pain as well.

Body Language

Focus on your body language becoming more relaxed and less rigid, it immediately places our residents at ease.

Non-verbal cues are critical to pick up on when communicating with residents living with dementia. This may be the only form of communication they have left.

What are some non-verbal cues you have seen and responded to this week?

How can we do a better job of understanding our residents?

Resources

[Nursing Home Resources | Physicians in Oklahoma \(ouhealth.com\)](#)

