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Best Ways To Communicate With Your Residents

Communication is crucial for effectively dealing with people especially when they are relatively powerless and require assistance. In places like personal care homes, assisted living facilities, adult family homes, adult foster homes and residential care facilities, where the owners and administrators need to communicate with their residents, communication in different ways must be employed to get the desired outcome and effective risk management. It is also important to involve the family members of the residents so that they can play a positive role in the care and quality of life of their loved ones.

The best way to communicate with your residents is to schedule regular meetings and dialogues with them and the staff that is involved in their care to effectively resolve the issues that surface. If the family of the resident is out of reach or if the resident is independent and self-sufficient, communicate face to face can help sort out problems easily and effectively. As most residents are physically frail, age related health problems can present a barrier to effective communication.

As an administrator, be aware of their health issues prior to a meeting or a discussion. Be sure to evaluate your surroundings and eliminate any background noise. It is important to articulate your words and speak clearly and maintain eye contact. Use clear and precise questions and sentences and do not be afraid to rephrase or repeat your sentences if you feel that the resident is not be able to develop a clear understanding.

Successful communication tips

Put your concerns in writing

If a serious concern or an issue arises that you believe needs to be addressed and resolved quickly and effectively, putting it into writing is one of the best ways to communicate it to your residents. Sometimes issues addressed verbally can be legitimately forgotten so putting a serious concern into writing can help minimize the risks. If a solution is required, communicate with the family through writing provides a strong proof of urgency and concern.

Use emails for faster communication

If deemed appropriate, using email as a source of communication can effectively speed up the process and potentially speed the resolution of the issue. However, try to regulate your email messages; people do not want spam emails. Sometimes issues can be misinterpreted so it is better to use the old fashioned communicate face to face with the residents and their family members.

9 Must Haves for Resident Safety

1. Secure your rugs so they aren't a trip hazard.
2. Make sure there are handrails on stairwells.
3. Install grab bars in bathroom.
4. Have good lighting in entryways and stairways.
5. Have grabbers available to reach items at unsafe distances.
6. Install and inspect smoke alarms regularly.
7. Get a medical alert system to notify of falls.
8. Properly store and organize medications in locked cabinets.
9. Install non-skid shower mats to prevent slips.

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Signs of Wandering Behavior in Residents

Every 6 in 10 residents suffering from some form of dementia will wander. This is because they are disoriented in some way, and cannot remember who they are or where they live making it difficult for them to find their way back to where they are suppose to be. Catching the early signs before the wandering starts helps prevent the residents in an assisted living facility from becoming injured, lost or suffering from more confusion and distress.

1. Restlessness

If for some reason, a resident in your facility is restless, paces or makes repetitive movements it is a possible sign he or she could become a wanderer. Sometimes a restless behavior is shown by a resident that is trying to go back home or back to a familiar place that may or may not exist.

2. Tries Filling Former Obligations

Sometimes a resident suffering from dementia will wake up in the morning and try to get ready for work and fill former obligations even when he or she does not work anymore. Anytime you see a resident doing this it is time to keep a close eye on them and help inform them kindly they have different obligations. Tell them kindly with care that now they can rest and do other activities within the facility that provide enjoyment.

3. Asks Where Their Love Ones Are

Some residents with dementia ask where their love ones are, and will often try to leave the facility to go find them. This is dangerous because, "wondering where their love ones are," is only a brief thought. They will forget this thought while wondering and become confused and distraught.

4. Appears Lost

Sometimes residents that say they are lost even when they are not can develop a wandering behavior. The feeling of being lost will cause some residents to want to leave the home in hopes they can rid that feeling and feel like they are at home or some place familiar again.

5. Pretends to Move Objects

Sometimes residents that move around objects a lot have a tendency to develop wandering patterns. An example would be a resident that moves around pots and dirt without actually planting seeds or flowers, or is pretending too with invisible pots and soil. Another example is pretending to organize a closet or sweeping the floor to move things out of the way.

"We relish the news of our heroes, forgetting that we are extraordinary to somebody too."

– Helen Hayes

Meet our Team!



Mary Lark
Director of Programs

Mary has 4 years of experience in the insurance industry working with both personal and commercial accounts. She enjoys helping others understand the importance of insurance and the benefits it can provide. When she is not working with her customers, she enjoys spending time with her husband, 3 sons, and 2 dogs as well as cooking and practicing yoga.

Fun Facts About October!

Fact 1- The birthstones for October are Tourmaline and Opal.



Fact 2 -The birth flower for October is the Calendula.

Fact 3 -National Cookie Month, National Chili Month, National Pizza Month, National Desert Month, and Lupus Awareness Month.

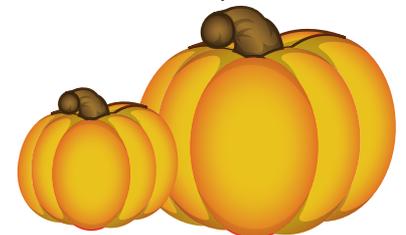
Halloween Games and Activities for Residents

Halloween-themed food is fun, easy to make, and perfect for entertaining your non-diabetic residents. Bake a batch of cupcakes and have your residents decorate them with orange and black icing. You can provide sprinkles and candy corn for decoration as well to make the project festive!

Halloween decorations are a great choice to entertain your residents. Place out different colors of construction paper and have your residents cut out various Halloween shapes, like pumpkins, black cats, or ghosts. Provide them with glue, stickers, glitter, and any other supplies your feel your residents would love. When done you can hang them around the facility as decorations.

Halloween Bingo is a perfect crowd pleaser game! Just use Halloween-themed pictures for each space on the bingo card or use a Halloween-themed word in place of Bingo such as Witch or Ghost. Or you could hold a scary story contest. Have each resident tell their best scary story and in the end have everyone vote on whose was the scariest.

Halloween crafts a creative touch to any Halloween event for your residents. Whether organizing a Halloween party or just entertaining others. Pumpkin painting is a classic Halloween activity for all ages! Just provide different colors of paint along with various brushes and sponges for the paint application. These pumpkins make a perfect decoration for assisted living facilities because they aren't carved, a painted pumpkin will last longer.



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5 Marketing Ideas for your Assisted Living or Personal Care Home

There are a number of ways to begin advertising your personal care or assisted living home. Let's have a quick review of some of them:

Newspaper

Paid advertisement slots are a good way to generate interest as many individuals investigating assisted living facilities still read the newspaper on a regular basis. The other thing that you could do is talk to your local newspaper and ask them to write an article on your facility.

The News

Call a local news station and have a reporter come out to interview residents and to air the experience on the nightly news. Not only will this garner interest from viewers, but will get the residents excited about living there and they will probably spread the word.

Direct Mail

Send out fliers asking families of residents to spread the word. It's important to get the family involved. Would you pay for PR? Offer the families an incentive for any referrals that they make.

Kids Activity Day

Invite children to come and participate in an activity day with the residents. One assisted living home in Massachusetts had a Wii Bowling night every week,

Social Media

Does your facility have a Facebook or LinkedIn page? If so, keep it up to date regularly. If you blog on a regular basis, point your blogs at your homepage by including links throughout.