

Introducing an **ALL NEW**
Orientation Program designed specifically
for you and your nurse aides!

A Professional Development Orientation Module:
"Getting off to a Good Start" for only \$299.00! *(plus S&H)*



In the Know's CNA Orientation Program welcomes new nurse aides to your organization and helps them feel part of the team. Not only will this program help your new employees feel welcome, it will also help motivate your newly hired CNA's to do their best from day one.

With this CNA Orientation Program, you can expect to provide your nursing assistants with:

- Important information about issues such as professionalism, confidentiality, infection control, quality client care and documentation.
- A definition of their role and your expectations of them.
- **SIX** hours of inservice credit.

Thank you for your interest in our new CNA Orientation Program!

We've provided you with a "snapshot" of the Program by including the following:

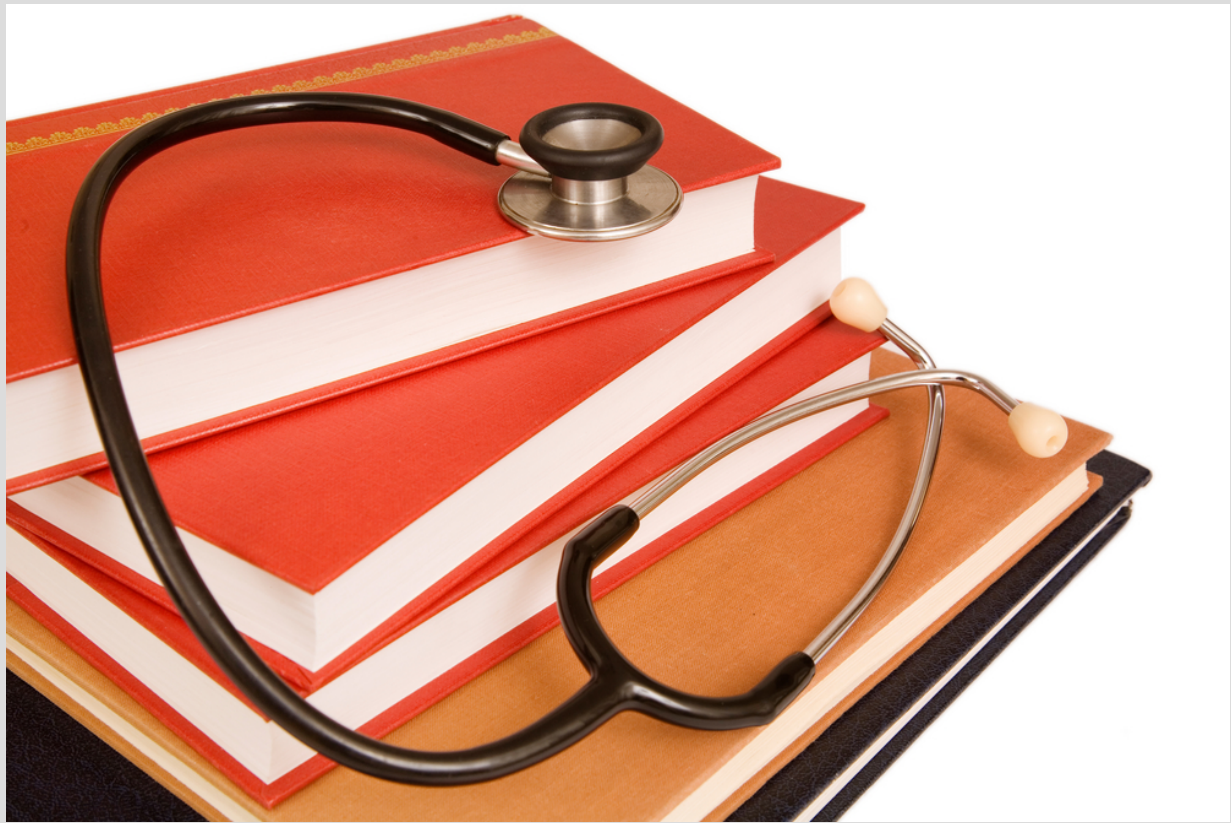
- **Four pages from the Trainer's Toolbox, a collection of teaching tips and tools to use during orientation and beyond.**
- **The first page of the Orientation Instructional Materials which gives an outline of all the covered topics.**
- **The first page of each of the seven orientation lessons—to give you an idea of the writing style and layout of the program.**
- **An order form. You may also order the CNA Orientation Program by visiting our website at:**

www.knowingmore.com

or by calling us at:

877-809-5515





GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START!

***A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
ORIENTATION MODULE FOR NURSING ASSISTANTS
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS***

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Inside this Orientation Training Guide:

Info About Your New CNA Orientation Program

Preparing & Planning Your Orientation

Learning Styles

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Teaching Tips!

Rewarding New Employees

Following Up After Orientation

"Quick Look" Answer Keys

Certificate of Completion

Resources

CNA Orientation: Time Well Spent!

OK...you've taken the time to *advertize* for CNA's, *interview* prospective employees and *complete* the entire hiring process. The best thing you can do to make sure that this time hasn't been wasted is to orient your new nursing assistant(s).

A thorough orientation has many benefits—for your workplace, your new employees and you. These benefits include:

- **Reduced anxiety.** By providing new employees with specific guidelines, an orientation helps them know what is expected of them from day one.
- **Increased job satisfaction.** Orientation helps ensure that new employees are well-prepared to perform their assigned duties instead of feeling overwhelmed, stressed out and ready to leave!
- **Time savings for supervisors and co-workers.** A thorough orientation makes new employees self-sufficient sooner—so they don't pull you and your other aides away from



Orienting each new employee is the best way to retain that employee!

your own jobs to answer questions or provide constant assistance.

- **An improved employee retention rate.** Across the nation, turnover of nursing assistants cost healthcare organizations more than \$4 billion every year! However, studies have shown that organizations with a comprehensive orientation can expect to reduce their turnover rate by 50% within two years.

If this orientation keeps just one employee from leaving, the program will have paid for itself.

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More Info on Your New CNA Orientation Program

What's Included?

The “**Getting Off to a Good Start**” Orientation Program contains seven lessons. We picked the seven topics area carefully, based on the experience of our writers (who are all RN’s) and on feedback from our customers.



Obviously, an orientation can’t—and shouldn’t—be the forum for teaching all the clinical skills needed to be a successful nursing assistant. Your new hires should come to you with those basic skills. So, our orientation focuses on:

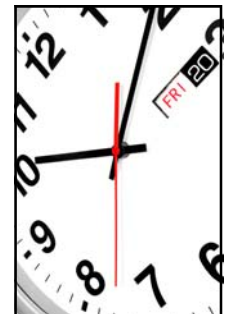
- **Lesson #1: Working as a Nursing Assistant.** This goal of this lesson is to promote professionalism and teamwork among your new nurse aides.
- **Lesson #2: Supporting Patient Rights.** This lesson emphasizes the importance of patient rights, especially confidentiality—the cornerstone of the relationship between healthcare workers and their clients. It also gives them an overview of advance directives and abuse.
- **Lesson #3: Infection Control.** Because nosocomial infections continue to be the most common cause of medical “errors”, your new employees benefit from reviewing handwashing, standard precautions and drug-resistant infections.
- **Lesson #4: Client Care Tips.** This lesson focuses on personal care, nutrition and client safety. By giving new aides nearly *100 tips* for providing great client care, you’ll demonstrate your support of their daily work.
- **Lesson #5: Taking Care of Yourself!** By spending orientation time on employee wellness, you show your new aides that you care about them as people and recognize that

they are your greatest resource. This lesson also covers chemical hazards as required by OSHA.

- **Lesson #6: Providing Quality Care.** By focusing on customer service, quality improvement and medical error prevention, this lesson instills a desire for excellence among your new CNA’s.
- **Lesson #7: Writing It All Down!** As every nurse knows, when it comes to client care, if you don’t write it down, you didn’t do it. Devoting time to proper documentation is essential for every new employee.

Why Is the Orientation So Long?

Nurse aides have the least amount of pre-employment training of any other clinical employee. Your CNA’s may come to you with only weeks of clinical schooling. As a result, it is our belief that they require—and deserve—an extensive orientation.



Why Only Six Hours of Inservice Credit?

If you customize the orientation (as we recommend) by adding your workplace policies and procedures, the orientation will take much longer than six hours to complete. However, as you probably know, information is considered an inservice only if employees can take that knowledge with them to *another* workplace. So, time spent reviewing your specific policies or learning how to complete your workplace forms cannot be counted as inservice credit. Even so, starting your new aides off with six hours of inservice credit gives them a terrific head start on their annual hours.

Learning Styles

As a preceptor, it's also important to figure out how a new employee learns best. There are four main types of learners:

Feelers. People who learn best by "*feeling*" like to compare new information to things they learned in the past. They solve problems by relying on their "gut" feelings. A new employee who is a "feeler" would probably learn best by discussing new information with you.

Watchers. People who learn best by "*watching*" like to observe others before they try something new themselves. They solve problems by seeing how other people handle the same problem. A new employee who is a "watcher" would probably learn best by watching videos or demonstrations.



Thinkers. People who learn best by "*thinking*" like to study new information. They solve problems by carefully considering all the options. A new employee who is a "thinker" would probably learn best by reading manuals or self-study packets.



How do you learn best? If you figure out your own learning style, it might help you be more sensitive to the learning needs of others.

Doers. People who learn best by "*doing*" like to perform new tasks. They solve problems by taking action. A new employee who is a "doer" would probably learn best by performing client care—with you watching to make sure it's done right.

If new employees are unable to tell you how they learn best, try to listen for clues. You might hear them say things like, "I feel..." or "I see..." or "I think..." or "Can I do it?"

Visual Aids

Whenever possible, use *visual aids* (such as In the Know's PowerPoint presentation for this Orientation Program) to help new employees learn. Studies show that when people have something to look at while they learn:

- It helps them learn up to 200% *more* information.
- They remember 40% *more* of what they learn.
- It takes up to 35% *less* time to teach them.



The Orientation PowerPoint Companion CD contains over 80 "slides" that highlight important points of each of the seven orientation lessons. It also reminds the learner when to take pre-tests and when it's time for the built-in breaks.

If you have the technology, you can show the PowerPoint presentation on a wall or a screen. If not, it can be displayed on a computer screen. PowerPoint software is NOT necessary. See the next page for detailed instructions on using the PowerPoint Companion CD.

Following Up After Orientation

The success of training has a lot to do with the quality of the material and the quality of the presentation. That's where we've tried to give you a hand. However, it's important to remember that even the best orientation won't help if employees are simply "turned loose" to fend for themselves once the orientation is complete.

So, in addition to showing appreciation for your new employees—as previously discussed—we recommend keeping in close contact with them during their first few months of employment. **Here are some suggestions for doing just that:**

- Provide feedback on a day-to-day basis. If you have specific suggestions that will help your employees perform their jobs better (or more easily), let them know right away.
- Plan informal weekly chats with your CNA's. Pick a private locations and spend a few minutes devoted to discussing their work. It will mean a lot—and may prevent a molehill from becoming a mountain!



- Be specific and timely with your feedback. Avoid making general comments like, "Keep up the good work."

Try imagining that every one of your nurse aides is a *millionaire* and doesn't have to work for you for one minute longer than they want to! It may affect how you communicate with them on a daily basis.

- If a new employee does 80% of the job correctly and 20% incorrectly, be sure to praise the 80% at the same time as you ask for improvement for the 20%.
- Consider using the enclosed evaluation form with each new employee. We suggest completing it after four and eight weeks. However, remember that forms are just a tool for discussion. Use what each aide tells you as a springboard for helping that person...as well as making adjustments in your orientation of future nursing assistants.

A Follow-Up Evaluation Form

To give you a head start on following up with your new employees, we've enclosed a sample evaluation form. (See a copy of it on the next page.) Please note: this evaluation form is in addition to the Orientation Evaluation found in the CNA Orientation Workbook.

To use the evaluation form, you can make a copy of the next page on a copier or use this preferred method:

- Look on the enclosed Orientation Program CD-ROM for the folder marked "Evaluation".
- Click on the folder and select the PDF named Follow Up Evaluation.
- Once the file is open, you can type in the date and the employee's name before printing or just print out a "blank" version that you can write on later.
- Distribute the evaluation to new employees as desired.
- Schedule a time to discuss the results of the evaluation with each employee. Follow up on the three educational goals discussed during your meetings.



IN THE KNOW

A Professional Development Orientation Module: Getting Off to a Good Start!



Inside this Orientation Program:

Working as a Nursing Assistant

- Professionalism
- Being Assertive
- Team Work

Supporting Patient Rights

- Patient Bill of Rights
- Confidentiality & HIPAA
- Abuse Issues
- Advance Directives

Infection Control

- Handwashing
- Standard Precautions

Client Care Tips

- Bathing Tips
- Dressing & Grooming Tips
- Mouth Care Tips
- Nutrition & Feeding Tips
- Pain Management Tips
- Safety Tips

Taking Care of Yourself

- Stress Management
- Time Management
- Personal Wellness
- A Healthy Back
- Chemical Hazards

Providing Quality Care

- Customer Service
- Cultural Diversity
- Quality Improvement
- Medical Error Prevention

Writing It All Down

- Clinical Documentation
- Plan of Care
- Documentation Tips

It's Day One!

WELCOME! We are so glad to have you joining our team of client care professionals...and we hope you are excited to be here. Of course, starting a new job and going through orientation can be challenging. So, if you feel a bit nervous or anxious today, don't worry! It's normal to feel some anxiety during the first few days of a new job. Even if you've worked as a nursing assistant before, this is a new workplace, with a management staff that has its own way of doing things. You've got to learn the policies and procedures for your new workplace. And, there are many new coworkers and clients for you to meet—and who want to meet you.

The length of time it takes you to adjust to your new job is as individual as you are. Some people can jump right in and feel like they "fit in" immediately. Other people take a little longer to feel comfortable and confident. The important thing is to relax and do the best job you know how to do. Here are some tips that may help:

- **Ask questions!** We want to hear from you! If you have a question or don't know how to do something, please just ask someone. Not only will this prevent mistakes but it will help you get to know your coworkers.
- **Give us feedback.** During the first few days on the job, new employees have a lot of information thrown at them. If you start to feel overwhelmed or just need to take a



Thanks so much for joining our team!

short break, let us know. We want you to feel comfortable and as stress-free as possible.

- **Show us your smile!** We want you to feel relaxed and happy. And remember...if you appear to be relaxed it will put the people around you at ease—whether they are clients or coworkers. (And, if by some chance, you don't feel like smiling, please tell us how we can help.)
- **Keep a positive attitude and an open mind.** If you've worked as a nursing assistant somewhere else, try to avoid comparing that job to this one. Every health care organization does things somewhat differently and it may take some time to "unlearn" old habits. Remember—your life has changed and it will take a bit of time to get used to it.

OK...let's get started!

Working as a Nursing Assistant



As a nursing assistant, you make a valuable contribution to your clients and to your coworkers. This is true whether you work in a nursing home, a hospital, a client's home or some other setting.

For health care employees, being *professional* means acting in a kind, but businesslike manner. It also means that:

- **You have the *knowledge* to do the job you were hired to do.**
- **You have the *skills* to do the job**—including performing tasks and using equipment.
- **You have *empathy* for your clients**—you can put yourself in their shoes and understand how they are feeling.

Since no two people are alike, we all demonstrate our professionalism in different ways. However, there are certain qualities that supervisors look for when they are assessing someone's professionalism. These qualities include being:

- Helpful
- Patient
- Pleasant
- Cooperative
- Hardworking
- Enthusiastic
- Cheerful
- Friendly
- Loyal
- Efficient
- Reliable
- Dedicated
- Honest
- Careful
- Productive
- Dependable
- Punctual



Can your learners name at least ten of these qualities?

Tips for Maintaining Your Professionalism

- Remember, you probably spend more waking hours with your coworkers and your clients than with your family! If you don't bring a positive attitude to your workplace, you are wasting a big part of your life being unhappy. And, keep in mind, that happiness is contagious! If you come to work happy and you spread those good feelings around, they will rub off on your clients, their families and your coworkers.
- Don't forget to say "please" and "thank you" to both clients and coworkers. These simple manners are a basic part of professional communication.
- Try to keep your personal feelings about other people to yourself, and *refuse to listen to gossip*. You'll be seen as a professional and have a happier workplace!
- If your supervisor asks you to do more tasks than you can finish in one day, be sure to ask which task is top priority. Then, finish that task first.
- Wear an alarm wristwatch. Then, if you want to complete a task in 45 minutes, set the alarm for 30 minutes and check your progress. Can you finish your task in 15 more minutes?
- Think of every day as an opportunity to learn something new. And, the more you know, the more time you'll be able to save during your work day. (Be sure to let your supervisor know what topics you'd like to know more about.)
- Have fun at work! Bring your sense of humor to work with you every day. If a situation starts to upset you, try to see the lighter side of it. Share a funny story with your clients and coworkers, or sing a silly song while you work. Don't wait for someone else to make work fun. Take charge and do it yourself. Remember, time flies when you're having fun!
- Tell yourself that you refuse to do less than excellent work! To do this, you may need to brush up on some old skills and/or learn some new ones. You'll probably make mistakes along the way. That's okay. Just try to figure out why they happened and what you could have done differently. Learn from your mistakes and keep going...always aiming for 100% quality!

The Patient Bill of Rights

Rights are very important to Americans. Our country was founded on the belief that every individual is entitled to certain rights—like *life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness*. And, we don't lose our rights just because we get sick, need home care or move into a nursing home or assisted living facility. Wherever we go, our rights go with us!



However, when people become *patients*, it's common for them to feel like they are powerless over what happens to them. That's why it's so important for your patients to learn about their

health care rights. This helps them to:

- Know they will be treated as individuals.
- Understand they can make their own medical decisions.
- Realize that they do have power because of the important role they play in their own health.

While there are a few differences between the rights of a hospital patient, a nursing home or assisted living resident and a home care client, you'll find that the basic list of health care rights is the same for everyone. Be sure you know the list of patient rights for *your* workplace.

Tips for Supporting Patient Rights

- Listen to your patients when they tell you what they need. Remember that each patient is different—even if they have the same health problems. Make an effort to treat every patient as an *individual*.
 - Make it a habit to explain what you are going to do with a patient—*before* you do it! For example, explain to Mr. Wilson that you're going to help him change position in bed—*before* you pull down his blanket and sheet!
 - Put your own needs aside during the work day. Your job is to put your patients' needs first. By doing this, you'll be protecting their health care rights—and showing your patients that you are truly concerned about them.
 - Encourage your patients to tell you or your supervisor about a complaint first—so that you have a chance to make things better. (But, remember, all patients have the right to take their complaint to the state if they are unhappy with how your workplace handles the situation.)
 - For patients who don't speak English, try communicating with pictures. Cut out magazine photos of personal care items like a toothbrush, a comb, a brush, shampoo, a bathtub, etc. Have your patients point to the items they want you to help them with next.
 - Encourage independence in your patients by letting them make decisions about their care every day.
 - Never threaten your patients to get them to cooperate. For example, it's wrong to say, "*If you don't take a bath right now, you can't watch TV this afternoon*".
 - Don't force care on a patient even if you know the patient will be better off. For example, you can't force a patient to eat his lunch even if you are worried that he has been losing too much weight lately. (But be sure to document the fact that the patient refuses to eat.)
 - Make sure you speak up for patients who can't—*or won't*—speak up for themselves. Because you spend so much time with your patients, you have the opportunity to notice if their needs are being met. They are counting on you!
-

Handwashing Basics

Handwashing is the most basic—and most important—infection control measure for every healthcare worker. But, believe it or not, only about half of all healthcare workers wash their hands regularly during client care...and most of them don't do a good enough job.



What could be hard about handwashing? A little soap and water is all it takes, right? Well...yes and no. You can do a good job with just soap and water, but it's important to follow the handwashing procedure for your workplace. In addition, keep these helpful tips in mind:

- Don't touch or examine a client without washing your hands first. Hands should be washed immediately *before* you come into contact with a client, and again immediately *after*.
- Make sure to wash the *entire* surface area of your hands and wrists, including in between each finger. Many people forget to wash the tops of their hands. This skin is more sensitive than the palms of your hands, so be sure to get it clean without rubbing too hard!
- Most of the germs on your hands are hiding *under* and *around* your fingernails. Be sure to scrub your nails well when you wash your hands.
- Artificial nails are difficult to clean with proper handwashing. It's best to avoid them if you are providing patient care.
- Jewelry on your fingers and wrists can serve as a nest for germs. Think about leaving your rings at home and sliding your watch above your wrist when you wash your hands.
- Washing your hands with plain soap removes the "top layer" of germs, but you need to use antimicrobial soap to get at the stubborn germs.
- Germs are removed when you rub your soapy hands together—it's the *rubbing* that is important. Soap alone won't get rid of the germs.
- Turning off the faucet with a dry paper towel helps prevent new germs from getting on your clean hands.
- Rinsing all the soap off your hands is very important. The water will carry away the germs that you have loosened by rubbing your hands together.
- Don't forget to dry your hands after you wash them. Much of the bacteria is removed by the heat of a dryer, or they are simply wiped off with a dry towel. If you only shake your hands in the air, it is likely that there are still lots of tiny microorganisms all over your hands.
- Encourage your clients to wash their hands on a regular basis, if they are able. If your clients keep up with their own hygiene, it is less likely that they will become sick.
- Waterless hand sanitizers are now being used at many healthcare facilities. If your workplace provides a waterless sanitizer, be sure to use it according to your workplace policy.

- Follow your workplace policy for washing your hands...or for using waterless hand cleaner.
- Don't make the mistake of thinking that wearing gloves takes the place of washing your hands!



Tips for Bathing Your Clients

People who become dependent on others for their personal care may feel:

- Old and useless.
- Ashamed.
- Scared about how much more of their independence they might have to give up.

It's your job to make bathing your clients a safe, efficient process—while respecting their privacy and feelings. Bathing clients requires patience, strength, compassion and skill. **Here are some tips that you may find useful:**



- Encourage the client to assist with the bath as much as possible—even if it means the bath takes a little longer. It's important to support your client's ability to be independent.
- A full bath may not be ordered for each of your clients every day. However, a person's face, underarms, buttocks and genital area should be washed daily.
- Never give a tub bath unless it is ordered in the client's plan of care. Tub baths have a high risk for client falls, burns and chills.
- If you work in clients' homes—and have access to a cordless or cell phone—consider keeping it in the bathroom during bath time. You'll be able to call for help if you and/or the client falls down.
- Before you start the bathing process, tell your client exactly what you are going to be doing so he or she knows what to expect.
- Encourage clients to use the toilet *before* bathing since warm water may trigger the need to urinate.
- Be sure to close doors, pull curtains and pull down blinds to show respect for your client's privacy during bath time.
- Keep the bathroom well-lit and well-ventilated during bath time. (If the room becomes too hot, you client may become faint.)
- Take this opportunity to look over the whole body, making note of any areas of redness, rashes, bed sores, moles or other skin changes.
- Use a mild soap for bathing your clients. (HINT: For clients with dry skin, apply soap to the face, underarms, genital areas, hands and feet. Clean the rest of the body with warm water only.)
- Always clean a client's perineal area from front to back to avoid spreading germs from the anal area to the urinary area. (Use a separate, clean washcloth for this part of the bath.)
- Empty the tub before you help your client out of it. Getting out of an *empty* tub is easier than getting out of a filled one.
- Let your supervisor know if you feel a bath is ordered too often or too seldom for a specific client. In addition, be sure to report if your client needs a different kind of bath. For example, a client who is getting stronger may be able to switch from a sponge bath to a shower. Or, a client who is getting weaker may need to stop taking tub baths.
- Take your clients' suggestions and feelings into consideration. As much as possible, stick to the same bathing routines that your clients had *before* they needed your help.
- Praise your clients when they participate in their own personal care. For example, "*Your arm seems stronger today. You were able to scrub your back by yourself.*"

Bathing is the #1 most time-consuming task for all caregivers. Make the most of this time by checking your client's body for changes and by making pleasant conversation.

Handling the Stress of a New Job

Being under stress is common in today's busy world...and starting a new job certainly qualifies as stressful! In addition, you may be feeling stressed because you are:



- Dealing with challenges in your personal life.
- Trying to do too much in too little time.
- Consuming too much caffeine on a regular basis.
- Worrying about things that you can't control.
- Focusing on *other* people's needs, but not your own.

No matter what the source of stress, it's important to learn how to deal with it effectively. Too much stress can be harmful to your health—contributing to conditions such as heart disease, ulcers and cancer. To manage the stress in your life, try practicing these four skills:

1. Awareness

Try to figure out the things that make you feel stressed, the way you feel—physically and emotionally—when you are under stress and the

way you behave when you're stressed out. If you skip this step, you'll have a hard time managing your stress.

2. Acceptance

Practice dealing with problems by keeping them in perspective. Ask yourself, "*Can I do anything about this situation?*" and "*What advice would I give a friend who was in this same situation?*" While it can be hard to smile when things are going wrong, it's easier to deal with stress when you have a positive attitude.

3. Coping

Learning to cope with daily stress is an important skill. Some people find that exercise—such as a brisk walk, a swim or even dancing—is a great way to "blow off steam". Taking a few moments to relax and breathe *deeply* can also help.

4. Action

Work on taking control of your stress by making a plan. Think of ways that you can change your life to make your days go more smoothly. By changing your daily routine or giving up a bad habit, you'll be taking positive steps to lower your levels of stress.

Watch Out for the Symptoms of Stress! (Fill in the Blanks!)

Physical Symptoms

- Tight **neck** and shoulders
- Pounding **heart**
- Fatigue
- Eyestrain
- Constipation or **diarrhea**
- Headache
- High **blood** pressure
- Upset stomach

Emotional Symptoms

- Depression
- Anger
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- **Low** self-esteem
- Apathy
- Impatience
- Feeling that you can't **cope**

Behavioral Symptoms

- Overeating
- Change in **sleep** habits
- Forgetfulness
- Negative attitude
- **Increased** smoking or drinking
- Reckless **driving**
- Drug use
- Acting out with violence



Your learners need to fill in each word that is underlined and in bold.

Giving Good Customer Service...to Clients and Coworkers

Health care is a very personal business that focuses on *service*, not on things. For example, if Mrs. Lincoln spends money on a toaster, what does she get? Hopefully, she gets a toaster that works! But, if Mrs. Lincoln spends money on a nursing assistant, what does she get? She is buying the *services* of a trained health care worker.



If those services are provided to Mrs. Lincoln as ordered, on time and with a smile, then that's good customer service. Mrs. Lincoln will probably feel that she has spent her money wisely.

When people receive medical services, they may not understand all the "technical" parts of their care. For example, Mr. Dawson may not understand why he's hooked up to a monitor or how his medicines work. But, he will understand that his nursing assistant brought him an extra pillow and helped him comb his hair before his wife's visit.

So, remember. You don't have to be a doctor or know how to operate fancy machines to help people feel better. All you have to do is give great customer service!

So, who are your customers? A customer is anyone who *expects* something from you or who has *needs* that must be met by you. This includes two main groups of customers:

1. **Internal Customers:** These are your coworkers (including every employee at your workplace).
2. **External Customers:** This group includes every one else you come into contact with at work...such as your clients, their family members, and visitors to your workplace. Even a neighbor who asks you about your work is a *potential* customer!



Whether you are dealing with an *internal* or an *external* customer, your goals are the same:

- To deliver what you **promise**—and to not make promises that you can't keep.
- To treat each customer as an **individual**.
- To take care of problems **quickly**.
- To gain the customer's **trust**.
- To put yourself in your customer's **shoes**.
- To look and act like a **professional** healthcare worker.

Your learners need to fill in the blanks.

Facts about Customer Service

- Poor service is the number one reason that American companies lose business. *(And when a company loses business, it has less money for things like salary raises and other employee benefits!)*
- 96% of unhappy customers don't complain to you. However, they'll tell up to twenty of their friends and family members about the problem! *(Think about it...if you have a problem at work, who are you most likely to tell? Your boss or a friend? Most of us keep quiet at work...)*
- While dissatisfied customers tell about 20 people, satisfied customers only tell five people. *(It's true.)*

We all seem to talk about negative experiences more than positive ones.)

- 90% of unhappy customers will move on quietly—to a new health care organization. *(For example, Susan dislikes her job. Instead of trying to talk to her coworkers and make things better at work, she'll probably just quit and find a new job.)*
- It costs up to ten times more to attract a new client than it does to keep an existing one. *(This goes for you and your coworkers, too. It costs a lot more to hire and train new employees than it does to keep "old" ones happy.)*

The Importance of Clinical Documentation

Most health care workers are required to write about their daily work with clients. Clinical documentation is important because it:

- Allows members of the health care team to communicate with each other so that they can work together to keep clients safe and healthy.
- Serves as legal evidence that you have performed your job as ordered.
- Provides a place to record changes in the client's care plan.
- Helps health care organizations meet the requirements for licensure and/or accreditation.
- Keeps a record of the services provided to each client so that your workplace may receive payment.

Remember...

Your documentation may be read by a number of different people, including:



- Your coworkers and supervisors
- State and/or JCAHO surveyors
- Quality improvement personnel
- Medicare and insurance company reviewers
- Researchers
- Lawyers and judges

What Should You Include in Your Report?

Whether you are writing it down or giving an oral account to someone, your report should include the following information:

Observations

- Observations are the facts and events that you notice as you go about your daily work.

Daily Measurements

- You may be ordered to record your client's:
 - Vital signs.
 - Weight
 - Intake and Output
 - Blood sugar level

Safety Issues

- This includes measures you took to ensure a client's safety and any concerns you have about possible safety hazards in the client's environment.

Client Statements & Complaints

- Document—in their *exact* words—any pertinent statements your clients make about how they are feeling. This may include statements about pain, appetite or emotions.
- Be sure to report complaints. (Again, use the client's exact words.) Complaints help your workplace improve client care and/or find new ways to meet a client's needs.

Unusual Events

- Report anything out of the ordinary that happens while you are with a client. For example, be sure to document if a client refuses care or if the heat in the client's room doesn't work. (Notify your supervisor as soon as possible, too.)



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