

What is *Person-Centered Care*?

Person-centered care focuses on the resident and supports each resident in making his/her own choices and having control over his/her life.



Goals of Person-Centered Care:

- ⇒ Value each resident as being one-of-a-kind
- ⇒ Respect each residents' abilities—think about what they *CAN* do, not what they can't do
- ⇒ Support residents to be as independent as possible. Give them a chance to make their own choices.
- ⇒ Honor resident choices, even if they are different from the choices you would make.
- ⇒ Understand residents' need to feel connected, comforted, and involved
- ⇒ Learn what is important to your residents

Relationships—the Key to Prevention

The more you use a person-centered approach, the more residents will trust and relate to you. You'll be more able



to tell if a person has been abused, neglected, or exploited—and less likely to do or say something unkind or hurtful.

Body Language is Important!

Body language (our *non-verbal* communication) says a lot about how we are feeling. Even when we say the right words, our body language might send a different message. Consider the following whenever you communicate with your residents...

- **Posture (how we stand or sit):** Bring your face to the same level as the resident, rather than towering over them when they are sitting or lying down. Try not to fidget or express impatience. Sit or stand with your arms relaxed and focus on the resident.
- **Eye contact:** Keep appropriate eye contact, without staring. It's important to know that in some cultures, making eye contact is considered rude. Getting to know your residents helps you know how to approach them the right way.
- **Facial expressions:** We "say" so much by our facial expressions. For example, rolling our eyes, scowling, or yawning are not ways to encourage someone to keep talking to us. Being aware of our facial expressions shows interest in the other person and that we care.
- **Touch:** This is a powerful way to communicate. Lightly touching a resident's hand expresses concern and affection. But like eye contact, touch must always be appropriate, so it's good to understand a person's culture and what they prefer. It is important to get permission from a resident before touching him or her.

Information obtained from the Royal College of Nursing website: <https://rcni.com/hosted-content/rcn/first-steps/non-verbal-communication>

Our Words Really Matter!

Have you ever found yourself using words or labels to describe a resident, that might sound medical or “institutional?” Compare that with “person-centered language,” which describes a person as an individual, rather than as a diagnosis or a behavior. Let’s compare:

Medical/Institutional

Person-Centered

Instead of saying:

Try saying:

Patient

Resident

Elderly

Older adult

Facility

Home

Non-compliant

Chooses not to

Feeder

Needs assistance with eating

Not their own person

Needs assistance with decisions

Diaper

Incontinence brief

Demented

Living with dementia

Electric chair

Power chair

Diabetic

Person diagnosed with diabetes

Disabled

Person with a disability

Resistant, refuses

Prefers or chooses not to

Toileting

Needs assistance with the restroom

Mentally ill

Has mental health needs

Manipulative

Resourceful

How would you prefer to be described... using medical/institutional language, or person-centered language?!

To Report Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

Of a nursing home resident by a staff member:
Call State of Michigan LARA: (800) 882-6006

Of an older adult living at home, in assisted living, adult foster care, home for the aged, or a nursing home, by anyone who is *not* a staff member:

Call **Adult Protective Services: (855) 444-3911**

If you think a crime has occurred: Call your local police/sheriff department (and LARA)—If

Wishing you good health and joy in 2021! Thank you for all your hard work in caring for vulnerable adults.



For More Information

Long Term Care Ombudsman: (517) 394-3027

Tri-County Office on Aging: (800) 405-9141

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