

Arizona Direct Care Worker Competencies (2009)
(rev August 09)

Level II: Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias

Topics

- A. Knowledge of Dementia
- B. Philosophy and Values of Dementia Care
- C. The Role of Caregivers
- D. Transfers and Positioning
- E. Personal Care
- F. Communicating with the Person with Dementia (PWD)
- G. Understanding and Managing Dementia-Related Behaviors
- H. Activity Planning for the PWD
- I. Grief and End-of-Life Issues

Skills

1. Simulate/role-play or describe assistance with ADLs specific to a person with Alzheimer's disease or dementia.
 - a) *Dressing*
 - b) *Grooming, including nail care, oral care, hair care and shaving*
 - c) *Skin care, including the need to observe changes in the skin and to avoid skin irritants*
 - d) *Bathing (tub bath, shower, sponge bath / bed bath), including the "Bathing without a Battle" technique*
 - e) *Toileting needs, including the use of incontinence products, ostomy devices, and assistive devices (raised toilet seat, bathroom supplies, etc.)*
 - f) *Meals and dining (eating, tube feeding, assistive devices)*
2. Describe and/or role-play techniques for positioning and transferring a person
 - a) *Assistance with ambulation / use of gait belt.*
 - b) *Techniques for positioning a person (bed / wheelchair)*
 - c) *Transfer in and out of a wheelchair.*
 - d) *Use of mechanical lift and slide board.*
3. Describe or simulate / role-play the soft approach
4. Demonstrate successful verbal communication with co-workers or team members
5. Demonstrate appropriate written documentation skills in the PWDs record

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A. Knowledge of Dementia

1. Define dementia and Alzheimer’s disease
2. Distinguish between reversible and irreversible dementias
3. Describe the key reason why delirium is considered a reversible dementia
4. Identify the common problems associated with dementia related to behaviors.
5. Describe what effect dementia has on activities of daily living (ADLs) for the PWD
6. Describe how an irreversible dementia, such as Alzheimer’s disease, affects a person’s memory, speech, movement, sleep, and moods.
7. Describe the changes in the brain and the characteristics of the early, moderate, and advanced stages of Alzheimer’s disease
8. Discuss two general considerations in the use of medications in the elderly and specifically for those with dementia
9. List side effects of medications that a direct care worker needs to report to the supervisor.
10. List techniques that can help with pain, inability to sleep, and mood.

B. Philosophy and Values of Dementia Care

1. Explain the purpose of the Alzheimer’s Disease Bill of Rights and provide examples of how to use it.
2. Describe the philosophy and value of dementia care that identifies behavior as an expression of unmet need.
3. State how the direct care worker helps maintain and enhance personhood.
4. Define person-centered care.
5. List ways to maintain and enhance person-centered care to promote physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being within a supportive caregiving environment.
6. Describe what it means to “know the person with dementia” and give examples

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7. Explain how addressing cultural diversity is necessary in caring for persons with dementia
8. Contrast the beliefs about dementia among two distinct and different cultures
9. Give examples of how the direct care worker can provide culturally sensitive care for PWDs

C. The Role of Caregivers

1. Explain why a positive attitude is an important caregiving attribute and essential in caring for the PWD.
2. Explain the importance of teamwork in supporting the care of a person with dementia
3. Describe the importance of good communication with co-workers or team members.
4. Explain the purpose of modeling best practices related to caregiving to other team members
5. List the effects of stress for the direct care worker who is caring for a person with dementia
6. List techniques for coping with stress
7. Explain the role of families as caregivers of a person with dementia
8. Describe the stress that families may feel during caregiving
9. Acknowledge a family caregiver’s feelings and beliefs related to their situation in caring for a person with dementia

D. Communicating with the Person with Dementia

1. List successful *verbal* communication techniques
2. Explain how to introduce yourself to a person with dementia
3. Explain the key attributes of P-E-R-S-O-N (positivity, empathy, respect, sincerity, openness, and nonjudgmental attitude) and the relevance to positive communication skills and corresponding DCW
4. Define validation and give one example of validation

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5. Describe how to show dignity and respect to the PWD
6. Describe methods of enhancing independence and preventing an individual from losing abilities.
7. Explain why the effects of an impaired brain for a PWD requires simple verbal and soft approaches rather than complex communication skills and a rational approach
8. Give examples of short, simple sentences, yes/no questions, and word cues
9. Explain why not rushing a response is an important communication skill
10. Explain the importance of nonverbal communication with a PWD, for example, use of eye contact, visual cues, eliminating background noise, touching gently, and waving goodbye as essential strategies
11. Identify behaviors and non-verbal gestures a PWD may use to express frustration and stress
12. Define anticipation of need, redirection, engagement, and distraction and give examples
13. Explain how to redirect and distract during stressful situations
14. *Describe and demonstrate/ role-play the soft approach*
15. *Describe appropriate written documentation skills in the PWDs record*

E. Understanding and Managing Dementia-Related Behaviors

1. Identify and describe at least five different kinds of common dementia-related behaviors for the PWD
2. Describe what could trigger dementia-related behaviors for the PWD, for example, pain, overstimulation, or understimulation.
3. Describe the importance of preventing dementia-related behaviors in caring for the PWD
4. Explain why a direct care worker should intervene when the PWD demonstrates common behavioral concerns
5. List the key principles for promoting comfort and safety in caring for the PWD

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6. Describe how a person with dementia could demonstrate unmet needs.
7. Describe techniques to use when dementia-related behaviors arise, for example, the soft approach, anticipating needs, engagement and distraction.
8. Describe how “knowing the person” can lessen the opportunity for dementia-related behavior.
9. Describe the importance of problem-solving and exploring different solutions to dementia-related behavior
10. Describe the symptoms and behavior changes evident with possible delirium
11. Describe why it is important to recognize and report possible delirium

F. Transfers and Positioning

1. Identify and describe common assistive devices, including gait belt, walkers and wheelchairs.
2. Explain the importance of proper transfer skills and the safe use of assistive devices.
3. Identify the four stages of pressure ulcers
4. Explain the importance of repositioning and list techniques for promoting skin integrity and eliminating pressure ulcers.
5. Describe how the frequency of repositioning can impact skin integrity and promote comfort
6. Describe the use of a mechanical lift and a slide board.
7. Describe and role-play techniques for positioning and transferring a person
 - a) *Assistance with ambulation / use of gait belt.*
 - b) *Techniques for positioning a person (bed / wheelchair)*
 - c) *Transfer in and out of a wheelchair.*
8. Describe the optimal seated position for a PWD.

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G. Personal Care

1. Identify and explain the relationship between a person’s service plan and the DCW role when providing assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs).
2. Describe how the DCW can provide meaningful ADLs that are not just tasks, for example, giving a massage while applying skin lotion.
3. Give examples of techniques that can be used to preserve dignity and privacy while providing personal care.
4. Give examples of techniques that can be used to promote independence and respect a person’s preferences.
5. Give examples of specific challenges of providing ADLs for PWDs as it related to varying stages of the disease.
6. Describe what you would record and report to your supervisor (e.g. changes in behavior, safety concerns, pain, change in skin integrity and more) related to personal care or a change in the PWDs condition
7. Simulate/role-play or describe assistance with ADLs specific to a person with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia.
 - a) *Dressing*
 - b) *Grooming, including nail care, oral care, hair care and shaving*
 - c) *Skin care, including the need to observe changes in the skin and to avoid skin irritants*
 - d) *Bathing (tub bath, shower, sponge bath / bed bath), including the “Bathing without a Battle” technique*
 - e) *Toileting needs, including the use of incontinence products, ostomy devices, and assistive devices (raised toilet seats, bathroom supplies, etc.)*
 - f) *Meals and dining (eating, tube feeding, assistive devices)*

H. Activity Planning for the PWD

1. Identify the benefits of activities
2. Identify at least three key principles for creating meaningful activities

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3. Explain how activities make up a person’s daily experience
4. Explain how ADLs (activities of daily living) (e.g. bathing, eating, grooming, toileting, dressing) can be both comfortable and meaningful for the PWD
5. Describe the role of the direct service worker in facilitating activity planning for the PWD
6. Identify at least four types of activities the PWD might enjoy
7. Describe how to plan appropriate activities that are person-centered and meaningful
8. Describe how to incorporate a person’s preferred lifestyle and personal choices (e.g. interests, hobbies, preferences) into daily activities
9. Describe how to create a positive effect on the environment and increase opportunities for meaningful activities
10. Describe the circumstances under which different activities can be provided at each stage of the progression of dementia that show respect, dignity, and recognition of personhood
11. Explain how to create a balance between sensory-calming and sensory-stimulating activities throughout the day

I. Grief and End-of-Life Issues

1. Identify the stages of grief
2. Give examples of behaviors at different stages of grief
3. Understand that death is unique to each individual
4. Describe the physical and emotional aspects of the dying process
5. Give examples of how cultural and family differences influence the death and dying process
6. Explain how a death can affect a DCW.
7. Identify and explain coping strategies relevant to grieving and/or dying.
8. Describe resources the community has to offer.