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Culture Change is a transformation in philosophy and practice to de-institutionalize care and create a resident-directed approach in all aspects of life in long-term care. The essence of culture change is quality care and quality of life – “OBRA in action!” This handout provides ideas that can be immediately implemented, at no-cost, while emphasizing the core component of culture change, resident-directed care.

Resident Routine

- Honor residents’ choice to wake up and go to bed at a time they choose
- Coordinate with physicians so medication times fit the natural flow of the residents’ day
- Implement consistent staff assignment in order for staff to develop a relationship with residents and gain a better understanding of each residents’ routine, interests and needs

Individualized Care Plans

- Create a welcoming assessment process with the goal to get to know the resident (consider the assessment a conversation rather than an interview, serve a beverage and snack during the assessment, place more emphasis on learning about their personal history, interests and strengths)
- Encourage residents to participate in their care plan meetings (explain the purpose and the importance of their input, give them prior notice and time to prepare, hold the care plan meetings in their room)
- Use I-Care Plans
- Include direct care staff in care plan meetings since direct care staff provide the majority of care and will know the resident’s needs, strengths and routines

Hiring and Training of New Employees

- Include a resident in the interview process for new employees
- Include a resident in staff orientation and in-services to share their perspective on quality of life and care
- Conduct learning circles with all staff members to share ideas regarding resident-directed care and culture change*

Resident Council

- Ensure Resident Council meetings are resident-directed (support residents in leading the council meetings, make sure the agenda is set by the residents)
- Create a Culture Change Team and include representatives from the Resident Council
- Invite the Resident Council to hold a learning circle for residents to share their experience as a new resident and how to improve the experience for future residents
- Work with the Resident Council to create a Welcome Committee for new residents and family members
- Invite a resident to participate in tours with prospective residents*
- Involve the Resident Council in solving problems that arise in the nursing home

Family Council

- Host periodic events for family members to meet staff, discuss culture change and share ideas
- Create a Culture Change Team and include representatives from the Family Council
- Include family members in the interview process for new employees

Responding to Call Lights

- Seek resident input regarding the staff response to their requests for assistance
- Implement consistent staff assignment so staff will get to know each resident’s needs and routine
- Schedule staff to work when residents’ needs are the highest*

Dining Experience

- Survey residents about their satisfaction with the dining experience and meet with the residents to discuss the results and how you will incorporate their input in future plans
- Provide more choices (e.g. buffet-style dining, menus, multiple alternative meal options, expanded dining hours, continuous dining)
- Develop a meal planning team and include residents on the team
- Make snacks and drinks available to residents any time day or night
- Ask residents to choose from personal recipes submitted by fellow residents and acknowledge the recipe's owner on the menu

Defining “Community” and Creating Home

- Encourage residents to decorate their rooms with personal furniture and items
- Speak with the resident and/or family member to choose photos and personal anecdotes and create a visual life story to post in their room or near their door
- Involve residents in creating and naming “neighborhoods” within the nursing home
- Introduce a time for “coffee and conversation” so staff can sit and speak with residents and family members in a casual, relaxed setting
- Increase communication and develop relationships with residents by pairing a staff person with each resident to speak with the resident weekly in order to get to know each resident and discuss concerns

Meaningful Activities and Community Engagement

- Conduct learning circles so residents can share personal interests and identify meaningful activities
- Based on the individualized care plan identify what is meaningful to each resident and help them incorporate those activities into their routine
- Support residents in participating in activities outside of the nursing home (volunteering in community service, making crafts for local art fairs, mentor programs with students, local community events, voting)

Create a Comfortable Bathing Experience

- Ask residents for suggestions to improve their bathing and daily hygiene experience
- Honor residents' preferences regarding a comfortable bathing experience
- Offer residents music, scented lotion, massage and facials during their bath

Resources

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

The National Long-Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center (NORC) www.ltombudsman.org

Pioneer Network www.pioneernetwork.net

Advancing Excellence in America's Nursing Homes www.nhqualitycampaign.org

CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) www.cms.gov

CMS: Four Part Series- Institutionalized to Individualized Care (archived webcasts)

Quality Partners of Rhode Island

PHI National www.phinational.org



The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care (formerly NCCNHR) is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit membership organization founded in 1975 by Elma L. Holder that advocates for quality care and quality of life for consumers in all long-term-care settings.

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*Source: Culture Change: Low Cost and No Cost Improvements You Can Implement Today (Pioneer Network Conference 2010)