

# cares<sup>®</sup>

## Online Dementia Training

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### **Supervisor Strategy Guide for Training**

These additional approaches and training exercises can be used to augment and reinforce the education and development that the CNAs are receiving in the CARES<sup>®</sup> Online Training and Certification™ Programs. It is our hope that CARES is not simply a training that you and your CNA complete and is then forgotten. Instead, we hope the strategies in this guide help you make the evidence-based practices and person-centered care approaches part of your organization's culture. As we all know, changing culture is not easy, and many strategies need to be employed to change care team behavior. We believe that this guide can play an important part in achieving that goal.

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### The CARES<sup>®</sup> 5-Step Method Review, Reinforce and Reassure

1. Ask the CNA to write up an example of how they have used CARES with a person who is living with dementia during the past week. Share this example with other staff members in a meeting and post the write up in the break room.
2. Walk up to the CNA and say, "Tell me about a really challenging situation today and how you used the CARES Approach or what could have been done differently next time using the CARES Approach."
3. If staff members are not using the CARES Approach daily, simply encourage them to keep trying.
4. Remind staff members that CARES should be used every day. Reassure staff members by telling them that any new approach will take 28 days to make into a habit.
5. Let staff members know that it is possible to use the CARES Approach even when they have limited time and have many people in their care. Let them know that this may be the most important time to use CARES!
6. Lead by example and take a moment to demonstrate the CARES Approach yourself. Talk about the five CARES steps (C - Connect with the Person, A - Assess Behavior, R - Respond Appropriately, E - Evaluate What Works, and S - Share with Others), and then apply the approach with an actual person you care for.

## CARES® Serious Mental Illness™ Activities

### 1. Differences between Serious Mental Illness and Dementia

Ask your CNA to think about one person they care for who is living with a serious mental illness, and another person they care for who is living with dementia. On a white board or flip chart, write the following questions for them to consider for both the person with serious mental illness and the person living with dementia:

- How has their memory changed over time?
- How have their other thinking skills (such as attention, judgment, abstract thinking, language, and/or motor skills) changed over time?
- Has their ability to perform daily tasks changed over time?
- Has the amount of help you need to provide changed over time?

After 5-10 minutes discuss what they've noticed about each person's thinking skills and abilities. *The observations will likely show that people with SMI may improve over time, while people with dementia can have "good days" and "bad days," but their abilities eventually get worse over time.*

Finally, ask:

- What is the goal for caring for people with SMI?
- What is the goal for caring for people living with dementia?

*The goal for caring for people with SMI is to help them improve. The goal for caring for people living with dementia is to let them do things for themselves whenever possible but be ready to do more when they can no longer do something on their own.*

### 2. Empowerment - Role Play

Pick one of the three scenarios below:

- Scenario 1: Jonas is 55 years old and lives with bipolar disorder. Lately he's been irritable and loud. Today, when it's time for his physical therapy appointment, he refuses to go. How might you handle this situation?
- Scenario 2: Joanne is 67 years old and lives with major depression. You know her symptoms are back when she stays in bed and doesn't want to do anything. It's time for her to go eat, but she won't get out of bed. How might you handle this situation?
- Scenario 3: John is 75 years old and lives with schizophrenia. Lately he's been talking to himself more and frequently arguing with people. When it's time for him to take his medications, he refuses. How might you handle this situation?

Have one of you act as the person living with the serious mental illness, while the other acts as the caregiver. Make sure to have fun role-playing and take turns in each of the roles.

Think about and discuss the following:

- How did the caregiver's approach feel to the person with SMI?
- How did the person's behavior feel to the caregiver?
- What worked well and what could have been better?
- Did the caregiver help empower the person?
- What are some suggestions for how the caregiver might revise their approach in the future?
- What would you share with others on the staff?

*Possible suggestions may include Truly listen to what they are saying. Validate their feelings. Ask questions. Encourage them. Explore options together. Let them decide. By being respectful and non-judgmental, you will build a relationship where the person feels comfortable discussing their feelings. Being supportive and encouraging will help build trust. Be patient. Talk about other things of interest to them. As you get to know the person better, focus on their strengths and hopes. Talk to them as adults. Give them the dignity to be able to make choices.*

### **3. Serious Mental Illness – Common Myths**

On a white board, write three common myths about people with serious mental illness.

- Myth A: There are no treatments for SMI.
- Myth B: You can't understand and communicate with people with SMI.
- Myth C: People with SMI are always "crazy."

Discuss and talk to your CNA about the following:

- Have you encountered anyone, at your job or in your community, who may have expressed one of these perspectives? What was said?
- For each myth listed above, if you hear someone saying something like this, what could you say to help educate them about the truth?

➤ *Possible responses to Myth A: Effective treatments do exist. Medications can help minimize delusions and stabilize moods. Reducing stress and avoiding triggers can help lessen or prevent symptoms. Staying active with meaningful activities can improve overall well-being. People with SMI, including many famous people, can and do lead successful, productive, meaningful lives.*

➤ *Possible responses to Myth B: If you take the time to get to know the person, you will begin to understand how and why their behavior is a way of dealing with stress. When you understand what stresses them and how they feel, you can communicate awareness, acceptance, and comfort.*

➤ *Possible responses to Myth C: The abilities and symptoms of people with SMI vary widely, but when they have few or no symptoms, they are like any other person. When a person is on the right medication, feels understood, and is no longer under stress, you may find there are a lot of similarities between the person with SMI and a relative, friend, or even yourself.*

- Why is it important to educate people about the facts of serious mental illness?

*Possible responses: Mental health awareness will help reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness. Because of misconceptions, many people choose to suffer in silence rather than seek treatment. People of all ages and backgrounds should feel comfortable asking for help for themselves or someone they know. If you can educate even one person, it will help end the stigma of mental illness, which will help save lives.*