Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Part 1
Communication

- The way we exchange messages with others
- The basis of our interpersonal skills
- Nursing assistant plays an important part by sharing vital information regarding the daily needs of residents
- Important that nursing assistants provide accurate, concise, and honest assessments of their resident’s health and mental status
- Nurse aides have the most contact with residents and healthcare teams relies on the information provided
- Communication is accomplished by careful and diligent observations
Communication Process

- This is the way messages or information with others is exchanged
- What does exchange mean?
Communication Process

1. Sending messages (sender)-provides the initial information or messages; begins the process
   a. verbal-what we say
   b. written, nonverbal, body language
      i. message we send without words such as facial expressions, gestures, nods, posture and personal appearances

2. Receiving messages (receiver)-whom the information or message is intended for
   a. requires:
      i. effective listening
      ii. reading body language (non-verbal)
      iii. Written-communication boards
Communication Process Continued

1. Message-information that is being sent
2. Feedback-acknowledging the message
3. Recognizing differences in communication styles
   a. Generational differences
   b. use of technology
   c. use of acronyms and slang
Communication Process

- It’s important that the receiver understood the message that was sent and that they acknowledge it.
- If the receiver does not understand the message, they should ask for clarification.
Communication

- Verbal vs Non-Verbal
- Verbal
  - spoken message or written message
  - in healthcare industry, we communicate both verbally and in a written manner via charting
- Non-verbal
  - generally in form of body language or gestures
- Communication is challenging in the healthcare industry but it’s important to provide concise, accurate information in a personal manner and the relevance of the information is understood by the receiver
Non-verbal communication/body language

- Sounds (e.g., laughing)
- Ways of talking (e.g., pauses, stress on words)
- Posture (e.g., slouching)
- Closeness (e.g., 'invading someone's space')
- Body contact (e.g., shaking hands)
- Facial expression (e.g., frown)
- Eye movements (e.g., winking)
- Appearance (e.g., untidiness)
- Head movements (e.g., nodding)
- Hand movements (e.g., waving)
Communication

- When talking to someone, tone of voice and body language have more of an impact that the actual words do.
- When we are angry, we speak more rapidly and at a higher pitch.
- When we feel we are being attacked, we respond in short, curt, sentences.
- What do these faces say?
Importance of Communication

- Communications and interpersonal relations are the most important part of life for most people.
- The nurse aide may be the primary person that the resident communicates with on a regular basis.
- Communication is an important part of the care that you give. Effective communication can improve your relationships with residents, make your job easier and save wasted time.
- Communication is also an important part of your personal life. Effective communication can improve your relationships with your family, friends and co-workers.
- Communicating with other members of the health care team.
- INTERACT II STATEMENT - The nurse aide may identify important changes while caring for a resident. Please report any changes to the nurse immediately.
Communicating with Family & Friends of Residents

- Remember that you are representing yourself and the facility to others.
- Maintain an open, friendly and supportive relationship with residents’ families and friends.
- Protect resident privacy and confidentiality as required under the HIPAA Privacy Rule. 35
- When asked, tell family and friends something about the resident’s activities such as “He ate a good breakfast” or “She played Bingo last night.”
- Escort visitors to the supervisor for problems, complaints or reports on a resident’s condition
Communicating with Residents

- Nursing assistants are the “eyes and ears” of residents
- you develop relationships with residents and have many opportunities to assess them daily
- watch for nonverbal cues
Communicating with Residents

- Need communication skills to comfort, reassure and teach residents
- Speak clearly and directly to residents
- Make eye contact
- When possible, sit down at eye level
- Focus on the resident
- Listen to their words and notice their body language
- Respond with positive body language in calm, competent manner
  - Smiling and use of gentle touch
- All questions deserve a response
Communication

- use every contact with residents as an opportunity to communicate
- talk courteously with resident while providing care
- listen and respond appropriately
- smile as you speak and in passing
- set time aside to communicate with residents and family
- communicate with unresponsive residents
- match verbal and nonverbal communication
- observe and evaluate resident’s response
Telephone Communication

1. Speak clearly and courteously.
   ○ tone of voice is considered a type of body language
2. Identify the facility and your location per facility policy.
3. Identify yourself by name and title.
4. Politely ask who is calling and get contact information.
5. Determine what is requested and transfer call to the appropriate person or take a clear message and relay it to the appropriate person as allowed under HIPAA.
6. Thank the person for calling.
Barriers

● Language/ or Cultural
  ○ gestures/body language vary among cultures/religions
  ○ healthcare workers should avoid being judgemental but should be accepting of these differences

● Lack of focus/not listening
  ○ listening is an important part to interpret feedback
  ○ never make fun of residents or their family

● Poor eye contact
  ○ in American culture, this is an important part of communication
  ○ indicates interest and attention
  ○ provide positive reinforcement
  ○ in Western culture, suggests truthfulness
Barriers

● Distractions/Noise
  ○ can prevent message from being heard or interpreted correctly
  ○ cell phones/computers

● Emotions
  ○ should be clear, concise, non-judgmental that is not complicated and free of resentment, anger or anxiety
COMMUNICATION STYLES AND GOALS

- Communication should be goal-oriented. Think about what you are trying to accomplish and set your goal.

- Select your communication style based on your goal.
  - a) Social conversation – goal is to create a comfortable, relaxing atmosphere.
  - b) Interviewing – goal is to conduct a question and answer period to determine resident needs.
    - valuable for recording ADLs and making assessments
    - used during admission procedures
    - professionalism and confidentiality very important here
  - c) Teaching – goal is for the resident to learn and understand.
    - patience and encouragement is required when teaching a resident or new staff member
  - d) Reporting – goal is to accurately communicate the facts.
  - e) Problem solving – goal is to help meet resident’s needs.
  - f) Therapeutic communication – goal is to encourage resident to discuss feelings.
COMMUNICATION STYLES AND GOALS

- Select your communication style based on your goal.
  - d) Reporting – goal is to accurately communicate the facts.
    - Nursing assistants need to differentiate between routine reporting and immediate reporting
      - Routine: can be placed in the chart and reported at the end of the shift
        - This includes any information that is WNL and done routinely
      - Immediate: something that needs to be reported right away because action needs to be taken
        - Anything not WNL, could cause harm or required an incident report
  - e) Problem solving – goal is to help meet resident’s needs.
  - f) Therapeutic communication – goal is to encourage resident to discuss feelings.
End of Shift Reporting

- done by nurses and nursing assistants
- occurs at the end of every shift
- must get/give report on all residents under your care
- information that is shared:
  - care given
  - care that must be given
  - the person's condition
  - lab reports
  - scheduled procedures
Reporting Rules

- Follow these rules when reporting:
  - be prompt, thorough, and accurate
  - give the time your observations were made or the care given
  - report only what you observed or did yourself
  - give reports as often as the person’s condition requires or as often as you are asked
  - report any changes from normal or changes in the person’s condition at once
  - use your written notes to give specific, concise and clear report
1. What was the most challenging task to perform?
2. How did this make you feel?
3. How do you think residents feel?
4. How did this activity help you understand how to communicate with residents?