NC Department of Health and Human Services

NC Nurse Aide I Curriculum

Module U
Mental Health and Mental Illness
July 2019
Objectives

• Explain the role of the nurse aide in the de-escalation of the resident who is agitated.
• Describe anxiety disorders
• Describe mood disorders
Mental Health and Mental Illness

• Mental health – ability to cope with and adjust to everyday stresses in ways that society accepts

• Mental illness – disturbance in the ability to cope or adjust to stress

• De-escalate – to cause to become less dangerous or difficult
Mental Health and Mental Illness – Importance

- Great day-to-day relationships are the heart of de-escalation
- Know what is normal
- Signs resident is becoming agitated
Causes of Mental Illness

Contributing Factors

- Physical Factors
- Environmental Factors
- Heredity
- Stress

Image of Human Brain
Anxiety Disorders

- Generalized anxiety disorder
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Posttraumatic stress disorder
- Phobia

Image – example of an uneasy older adult
Mood Disorders

Disorders

• Depression
• Bipolar Disorder
• Schizophrenia

Image – example of a sad older adult
Mental Health and Mental Illness Treatment

• Medication
• Psychotherapy
• Cognitive behavioral therapy
Mental Health and Mental Illness – Nurse Aide’s Role

• Important for nurse aide to recognize inappropriate behavior:
  – Report to nurse
  – De-escalate behaviors

• Nurse aide has many chances to observe and to get to know resident
De-escalation of a Resident Who is Agitated – Nurse Aide’s Role

• First and only objective in de-escalation is to reduce level and intensity of resident behavior so that discussion becomes possible
*De-escalation of a Resident Who is Agitated – Nurse Aide’s Role (1)

- Behavior
- Posture
- Position self for safety
- Body movement and language
- Facial expression
- Eye contact
*De-escalation of a Resident Who is Agitated – Nurse Aide’s Role (2)

- Attitude
- Tone
- Responses
- Reasoning
*De-escalation of a Resident Who is Agitated – Nurse Aide’s Role (4)

- Trust instincts – if de-escalation is not working, the nurse aide should STOP and calmly call for help
De-escalation of a Resident Who is Agitated – Nurse Aide’s Role (5)

- Control the environment
- Look for meaning of the behavior
- Check for underlying causes
- Respond in person’s reality
*Points to Remember (1)*

- Residents are more than a diagnosis
- Recognize that a person with a mental illness is an individual with a unique background and life experience
- Each resident diagnosed with a mental illness is different from other residents with same diagnosis
*Points to Remember (2)*

- All behavior has meaning – looking for the meaning behind the behavior is key
- Resident may not be doing things on purpose
- Nurse aides can successfully handle situations when a resident is stressed and agitated by using proper communication skills
*Points to Remember (3)*

- When unusual or inappropriate behavior escalates resident may be a danger
- Nursing care plan includes specific details
- Important tool is de-escalation
- Great day-to-day relationships are at the heart of de-escalation