



Person-centred health care: Getting to know the older service user

“Partnership, client involvement in decision making and client empowerment are thought to be fundamental elements of person-centred care” (Corring & Cook, 1999).

The Registered Nursing Association of Ontario (2002) nursing best practice guidelines on person-centred care recommend that health care staff:

- Initiate discussion or strategies in order to understand the patient’s perspective regarding their health and quality of life, such as finding out:
 - What the situation is like for the patient
 - What is most important to the patient
 - What the patients goals are
 - How involved the patient wants to be in their health care
 - What they would you like to know about
- Seek to clarify and document the hopes, wishes, preferences, strengths, needs and concerns of the patient in relation to their health care
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Resources to help support effective person-centred health care:

- Biographical approach - an approach to care that encourages patients to talk about their past and present lives through story telling and helps staff to get to know the patient.

http://www.nari.unimelb.edu.au/pchc/dischARGE_planning.htm

- User led daily living plan - a communication tool, designed to facilitate communication between hospitals and residential care facilities, which includes information about the patient’s history and preferences.

http://www.nari.unimelb.edu.au/pchc/dischARGE_planning.htm

By getting to know the older service user the healthcare team is able to find out what is important to them in relation to their episode of care.



Key elements to consider in providing effective person-centred health care in your organisation:

- Do staff have the opportunity, and are they encouraged to get to know each service user as an individual?
- Do staff listen carefully to what service users have to say, and incorporate this in the management plan?
- Do staff find out the name that service users prefer to be called by, and then use this name?
- Do staff have opportunities to find out what is important to the service user about their health and wellbeing?
- Are assessment tools in use that elicit information relevant to a holistic perspective of the service user?

For further information:

For more information about person-centred health care or for information on good practice resources or initiatives in person-centred health care please go to:

<http://www.nari.unimelb.edu.au/pchc>.

Corring, D., & Cook, J. (1999). Client-centred care means that I am a valued human being. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 66(2), 71-82.

The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. (2002). *Nursing best practice guideline: client centred care*. Toronto: The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario.

