Volume XXVI

Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment

A VIDEO GUIDE FOR EMPLOYING BREAKTHROUGHS IN CARE GIVING
Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment

You may not consider yourself a customer service representative – and you’re right. But caregivers in long-term care do provide a service to residents. Those residents notice when caregivers take an interest in their well-being ... or whether staff is just going through the motions. Family members notice it too. They also notice a rejuvenated and engaged loved one when they come to visit. For caregivers, excellent customer service earns praise from supervisors and makes care giving easier when residents and their families are satisfied.

This facilitator’s guide will help you plan for and conduct sessions to help ensure that you maximize the material in this video. Consider your facility’s protocol for delivering customer care, and consider topics to engage in meaningful discussion regarding customer service.

This program will focus on practical skills in delivering excellent customer care. We will describe what you can do and what your customers expect.
VIEWING GUIDELINES

“Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment” is a video-based learning program. It supports the needs and motivations of health care professionals and staff that provide direct resident care. Conduct learning sessions for:
  - All CNAs
  - All RNs
  - All newly hired CNAs and RNs

“Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment” can positively influence care giving by helping you:
  - The importance of customer service in long-term care
  - Who your customers are and what they expect from you
  - How to consistently provide quality customer service
  - Customer service concepts specific to long-term care

PROGRAM CONTENT

“Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment” is a practical educational tool. It demonstrates important skills necessary to help caregivers provide care for their customers – residents and their families – and to ensure consistent customer satisfaction. Filled with practical information and useful instruction, this video illustrates the standard for excellent customer care.

This video training provides a unique and interactive learning experience. In addition to the valuable learning information contained here and in the accompanying workbook, the video in-service provides opportunities for facilitated discussion to help participants understand how excellent customer care can influence resident quality of life and make care giving more enjoyable.
SAMPLE GROUP SESSION AGENDA

Use the following sample agenda to structure a session featuring “Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment.”

Length of videotaped program: approximately 25 minutes

Suggested length of session: 1 hour and 40 minutes (including a 10 minute break)

MATERIALS NEEDED

- This facilitator’s guide
- The “Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment” video program
- Optional paper and pencils for participant note-taking
- Optional flipchart and markers for writing key ideas
## SUGGESTED SESSION AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>Welcome the group to your session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 min</td>
<td>Show first module of video program: <em>Introduction</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td><strong>INTRODUCE</strong> the “<em>Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment</em>” topic by leading this discussion:</td>
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</table>

**ASK:** Why is customer service relevant to the work we do? Describe examples of when you deliver customer service – to residents, to their families?

**ASK:** How often do you experience challenges when delivering customer service?

**Review** the learning objectives -- after viewing this program you will be able to:
- The importance of customer service in long-term care
- Who your customers are and what they expect from you
- How to consistently provide quality customer service
- Customer service concepts specific to long-term care

**ASK:** How are these learning objectives relevant in your facility?

**DISCUSS** prior knowledge of customer service and why customer service training is appropriate in long term care. Try to understand the group’s prior knowledge so you can help reinforce good practices and change those that are incorrect. (Encourage discussion to help uncover staff knowledge). With this baseline, you can better understand how to focus later discussion and follow-up exercises. You can also realize how the learning sessions have helped to improve training.
2 min  Show second module of video program – *How to Deliver Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment*

10 min  Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 2. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the first module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** What are some things you are doing now to provide excellent customer care?

**ASK:** How does excellent customer care support resident dignity? How does excellent customer care affect their quality of life? How does it affect the quality of care you provide?

**ASK:** Are there any strategies and protocols in place at your facility for providing customer service? Working with resident or families? If so, what are they?

**DISCUSS** the meaning of customer service. Distinguish customer care versus health care with health care being the medical needs of your residents. Discuss their in delivering customer service. Describe and agree upon some guidelines – what are your facility’s standard and the basic expectation for customer service.

4 min  Show third module of video program – *Your Customers*

15 min  Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 3. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the second module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).
DISCUSS the importance of first impressions. Consider the role plays in the video – how do positive and negative first impressions affect later encounters with residents or family. Finally, discuss why it’s important to treat co-workers as you would a customer.

ASK: Describe a positive or negative experiences interacting with residents? What do you think was the difference between the negative or positive impression? In the case of the negative experience, what stood in your way? What prevented a positive outcome?

ASK: Why should you treat co-workers like customers? How can your customer service affect your relationships with co-workers?

DISCUSS the challenges of delivering excellent customer care. What are the barriers to delivering excellent customer service?

- Time?
- Training?
- Making it seem natural?

6 min Show fourth module of video program – Basics of Customer Service

15 min Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 4. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the third module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

DISCUSS what it means to have a customer-friendly attitude. Give examples of what you can do to be customer friendly. Think about all of the forms of communication that your customers experience when they interact with you:

- How you look,
- How you act,
- What you say, and
- How you say it.
**ASK** What do you like most about your work? How do you convey that to the people around you?

**ASK** about times and circumstances when it is difficult to deliver good customer care? When residents or family are upset, anxious or difficult? How can good customer care help you turn a rough encounter into one that goes more smoothly?

**DISCUSS** how body language and eye contact affect the way others see you customer service. What can you do to get the most out of body language and non-verbal signs?

10 min  **BREAK**

1 min  Welcome the group back from the break.

5 min  Show fifth module of video program – *Customer Service Concepts for Long-Term Care Residents*

15 min  Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 5. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the third module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**DISCUSS** the golden rule. How do you apply it to the care you provide? Discuss the importance of being flexible and providing care according to the needs and interests of your customer:

- Personality,
- Life-history,
- Culture,
- Ethnicity, and
- Individual Needs.

**ASK:** Do you have special names you use with any of your residents or co-workers? What makes that name special? How does your resident or co-worker feel when you use that name?
**ASK:** Do you ever help resident get dressed? What can you do to make this as easy as possible for everyone? How does your approach involve customer service?

**ASK:** Why is mealtime such an important opportunity to deliver excellent customer care? Describe approaches you can take that make residents and families feel good about the service you provide.

**DISCUSS** the participants’ successes and failures in providing customer service. Talk about difficult residents, families and co-workers. Why is customer service important in these cases? How can customer service help you turn an angry customer into one who is more agreeable?

1 min  Show *Conclusion* of video

5 min  In closing:

**ASK** for questions or additional comments from the group.

**DISCUSS** as appropriate.

Thank group members for their participation and conclude the session.
EXERCISES AFTER VIDEO

1  How do you rate our current success in providing customer care? How do we do in adapting to the challenges you face in your facility?

2  Ask your customers to rate your service. Tell them to be open and honest. Ask what they like and how you can improve the care you provide. Take a fun approach to this inquiry – try not to be defensive.

3  Role play with your co-workers. Each of you pick a part – resident, family member or co-worker. Demonstrate good customer care and poor customer care in one of the following situations:
   ■ Helping move residents to a social area
   ■ Helping seat residents at meal time
   ■ Giving family members and update on residents
   ■ Handling multiple task at once

Suggest that participants accept a follow-up assignment, as a proactive step in improving their customer care.

For the next week, think about the way you deliver customer care, and then come together as a group to discuss what you discovered. Talk about ways to simplify caring giving and improve resident quality of life through your approach to customer service.

Finally, as a group, establish a series of recommendations outlining how to best deliver customer care. Post your guidelines throughout the facility.
Questions?

If you have any questions about how to implement the “Delivering Excellent Customer Service in the Long-Term Care Environment” program, or if you would like information about other programs available from ElderCare Communications, call or write:

ElderCare Communications
680 Northland Blvd., Building C
Cincinnati, OH 45240

Phone: 800-505-3232    Fax: 513-742-6269

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