Quality of Life
An Introduction
Facilitator Guide
WHY IT’S IMPORTANT TO PROMOTE THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Federal regulations make it clear: we are responsible for preserving and promoting residents’ quality of life as well as for providing a high quality of care. This means an expanded focus for everyone in a long term care facility - a focus that goes beyond the residents’ physical health to include their emotional and psychological well-being.

In response to this enlightened view, surveyors are placing more emphasis on resident interviews. They are looking for evidence that residents feel comfortable, well-cared-for, respected ... and they are looking for evidence that residents do not feel these things. More than ever before, surveyors’ findings depend as much on residents’ impressions of your facility as they do on the observable level of care you provide.

Of course, compliance with regulations is just one part of why we must attend to quality of life issues. The larger reason is simply that doing so provides better service to our primary customers - the residents who entrust us with their care and their lives.

This facilitator’s guide will help you plan for and conduct sessions geared toward ensuring that your staff has a solid foundation in quality-of-life concepts and practices.
VIEWING GUIDELINES

“Promoting Quality of Life: An Instruction” is a video-based learning program for staff members which has a positive impact on every member of the caregiving team:

- Staff members become sensitized to the residents’ need for a high quality of life, and begin the process of identifying staff behaviors which add to quality of life
- Residents feel more “at home” in your facility, are more trusting of - and open with - your staff, and can even show improvement in their physical health
- Family members feel confident that their loved one is receiving high-quality care and attention, and often develop a long-sought-after sense of peace about the resident’s move to your facility

The “Promoting Quality of Life: An Introduction” program should be conducted for:

- All members of your nursing staff
- All members of support staffs who have direct or indirect contact with residents, such as personnel who work in social services, admissions, housekeeping, dietary, maintenance, and so on
- Every newly hired member of your staff
- Every volunteer who works in your facility
PROGRAM CONTENT

Your efforts to provide a high quality of life for your residents will be most successful when you conduct a session which features the “Promoting Quality of Life: An Introduction” video and follows-up with discussion among participants.

During your session you’ll focus on these crucial learning points:

- How a resident’s perspective of his or her life in your facility may be very different from yours
- How quality of life issues co-exist with quality of care issues
- The challenges we face in implementing quality of life practices
- The importance of choice, self-determination, and individuality for each resident
- Factors which influence a resident’s quality of life, such as dignity, the facility’s physical environment, delivery of care, activities, social services and relationships
- First steps for identifying ways to improve the quality of life of every resident in your facility
SAMPLE GROUP SESSION AGENDA

Following is a sample agenda you may wish to use when conducting your “Promoting Quality of Life” session.

Length of videotaped program: approximately 16 minutes

Suggested length of session: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Materials needed:

• This facilitator’s guide
• The “Promoting Quality of Life: An Introduction” 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>Allotment Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Welcome the group to your session.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduce the “Quality of Life” topic by leading this discussion:

ASK: How many of you would say that you have a fairly nice life?  
(Pause for a show of hands)

ASK: What makes your life that way? What do particularly like about your life?  
(Pause for and encourage responses, which may include: good spouse, great kids, good health, morning walks, etc.)

ASK: Who can name something about your life that gets in the way of making it perfect? What would you like to see changed?  
(Pause for and encourage responses, which may include: more wealth, bigger house, kids getting better grades, etc.)

ASK: How do you feel on days when the negatives seem to outweigh the positives?  
(Pause for responses, which may include: depressed, irritable, headachy, etc.)
ASK: And how do you feel when everything seems to be coming up roses? 
(Pause for responses, which may include: positive, hopeful, energetic, etc.)

SAY: What we’ve been talking about is your quality of life. The situations and relationships that add to, and take away from, your positive feelings about your life.

“Quality of Life” probably isn’t a new term for any of us. Each of you have probably used it when talking about a seriously ill resident - you may have said “he/she no longer has a high quality of life.”

But what might be new is the way we’re now starting to look at quality of life. We want to take a more pro-active approach. We want to do things and say things that help maintain a high quality of life - even improve on the quality of life - of every resident in our facility.

There are many behaviors we can adopt that will help us make this shift in focus. But, like any new undertaking, the first step is awareness and understanding. The video we’re going to watch now will help us get started.
16 min  Show video program

15 min  Engage viewers in a brief discussion of what they’ve just seen. If group members are slow to respond, consider giving a brief recap of the main ideas emphasized in the video (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate to).

To facilitate discussion, you may consider asking questions like...

- How would you rate our current success at promoting quality of life for our residents? In what areas are we most successful?
- What are some examples you’ve seen in just the last week or two of:
  - maintaining a resident’s dignity
  - creating a homelike environment
  - providing meaningful activities
  - encouraging self-determination and choice
- What can we do to improve our performance as it relates to promoting residents’ quality of life?

You may want to suggest that each team member accept a follow-up assignment as a pro-active step toward improving residents’ quality of life at your facility.
For example, each staff person could make an effort to get to know 3-5 residents better - find out what the residents like and don’t like, what they did when they were younger, what they would most like to change about their lives now, etc.

Then hold a second meeting and ask each staff member to share what they’ve learned - “re-introduce” their residents to the rest of the staff.

Finally, as a group, decide how you can use what you’ve learned to begin adding more quality and value to residents’ lives.

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.
Questions?

If you have questions about how to implement the “Promoting Quality of Life: An Introduction” program, or if you would like information about other programs available from ElderCare Communications, call or write to:

ElderCare Communications
680 C Northland Boulevard
Cincinnati, Ohio 45240
Phone: 800-505-3232
Fax: 513-742-6262

or check online at:

www.eldercarecomm.com

All video and print materials contained in this program are protected by federal copyright. It is against the law to reproduce by any means any portion of this program without prior permission from ElderCare Communications. When you abide by the law, your cooperation and honesty allows us to serve you better and enables us to continue to offer high quality, affordable programs.

© 1996-2003 ElderCare Communications,
a division of Video Features Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio