

# **Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Fundamentals Training**

Basics of Good Communication

# Disclaimer

**All Rights Reserved.** These documents may not be copied or posted on any network computer, or broadcast in any media, and no modifications of these documents can be made. Unauthorized duplication, in whole or part, of these documents, by any means, mechanical or electronic, including translation into another language, except for brief excerpts in published reviews, is prohibited without the express written permission of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Unauthorized duplication of this work may also be prohibited by local statute. Violators may be subject to both criminal and civil penalties, including fines and/or imprisonment.

**Terms of Use.** These materials are the property of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS). EOHHS authorizes only pre-qualified facilitators trained under the EOHHS PCA Fundamentals Facilitator Training to use these materials. Your use of these materials signifies you have been trained and authorized by EOHHS as a facilitator of the PCA Fundamentals Curriculum.

**Purpose Statement.** These materials are provided free of charge to individuals for the sole purpose of education. Accordingly, any attempt to utilize these materials for any other purpose, including but not limited to, providing PCA Training for profit, is expressly prohibited.

# Module 05: Overview of good Communication

## Goal

**Candidate PCAs will acquire learn how culturally appropriate and effective communication skills establish strong relationships**

# At the end of this training, candidate PCAs should be able to:



**Explain the importance of being clear, objective, and specific in verbal communication.**



**Describe the nonverbal cues (body language) used in active listening.**



**Describe how paraphrasing improves communication.**

# Communication methods

- **Verbally with words**
- **Nonverbally with body language**

# Communication is the activity of sharing information

**It requires**

- **A sender**
- **A message**
- **A receiver**

**The communication process is complete when the receiver understands the sender's message**

**The “information” exchanged through communication can be:**

- **Facts**
- **Feelings**
- **Ideas**
- **Opinions**

# Communication

**People communicate both verbally (with words) and nonverbally (with body language)**



**Why is communication important to PCAs and to long-term support services?**



# Communication methods

**Communicating facts accurately is important for providing quality care.**

**Communicating feelings accurately is important for building strong relationships with consumers, family members, and other workers**

# Communication activity

**What does speak to be understood mean?**

# Body language

**“Body language” means the way we communicate without actually speaking.**

**It’s what we “say” by the way we move when we are speaking or listening.**

**It includes facial expressions, tone of voice, eye contact, hand gestures, and the way you stand or sit when someone is talking to you.**

**Between 80 - 90% of communication is nonverbal.**

# Tips for positive body language

- **Smile**
- **Look the consumer in the eye (unless it's not accepted in their culture)**
- **Position yourself at eye level with the consumer**
- **Use a friendly tone of voice**
- **Touch people gently**

# Poor listener

- **What kind of body language would you want to avoid when working for a consumer/employer?**

# Active listener

- **Looking at the person who is talking (except in cultures where eye contact is a sign of disrespect)**
- **Turning your cell phone off if it rings while the other person is talking**
- **Sitting still or leaning forward, towards the person who is talking**
- **Nodding, smiling (if appropriate)**

# Paraphrasing

- **Confirm you understood**
- **Repeat what you heard but in your own words**

**Consumer: “I’m so hungry. I can’t wait until dinner is ready. And I’m tired. I’m going to bed right after dinner.”**

**PCA: “Even though you are hungry you would like me to change the sheets on your bed first. Because after dinner, you do not want to wait for me to change your sheets, you want to go right to bed. Is that right?”**

**Consumer: “No please change the sheets after dinner is ready. I’ll eat while you change the sheets.”**

# Paraphrase this!

**Consumer: “Last time you were here, you made me feel bad. You ran out of the house so fast I hardly heard you say good-bye”**



# Paraphrase this!

**Consumer: “I noticed the leftovers were packed correctly and you swept under the table like I asked.”**

# Purpose of paraphrasing

- **Confirm or clarify what the other person means**
- **Show you heard the other person**
- **REMEMBER: Part of being a good listener is paraphrasing.**
- **Use your own words what you heard someone say, or express (without words).**

# Paraphrasing improves communication with consumers

- **It shows you are listening**
- **It helps avoid confusion**
- **It helps keep you focused on the consumer**
- **It helps you remember better what the consumer said**
- **It helps you cool down when you feel angry**

# How to start a paraphrase

**“Did I hear you say ...”**

**“So what you’re saying is ...”**

**“Am I hearing you right that ...”**

**“Are you saying that ...”**

**“I believe that you are saying ...”**

# Pull-back strategies

- **The ability to change your reaction when your original reaction will not bring positive results**
- **Take a deep breath**
- **Silently count to five**
- **Silently say a personal affirmation such as “I have the strength to deal with what’s happening here”**

# Prepare for stressful situations

- **Talk to someone else about the situation (protecting confidentiality)**
- **Calm down, listen to soothing music**
- **Rehearse what you plan to say**
- **Plan a time to talk when there won't be any interruptions or distractions**
- **Imagine yourself staying calm and collected during the situation**

# Your strategies

**Can you share a time when you used a pull-back strategy?**