

## November is Home Care & Hospice Month!

November has been proclaimed as Home Care & Hospice Month across the nation! In many individual states, Governors and local leaders have also proclaimed November as Home Care & Hospice Month.

Many of the proclamations state that in home services strengthen the family bond and support families as they care for their loved ones at home, lessening caregiver burnout and unnecessary placement in more costly institutional settings as well as building upon a strong tradition of care and compassion.

Congratulations to all of the In-home aides across the nation that make this possible!



Kathie Smith,  
RN: Director of  
Quality Initiatives  
and State  
Liaison;  
Editor in Chief

### The Aide as a member of the Home Care Team :

#### What you will learn:

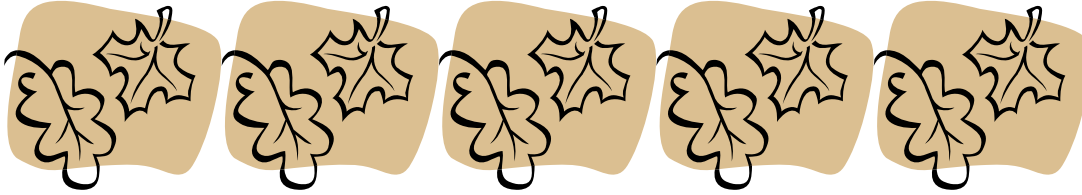
- The importance of teamwork
- The importance of the care plan
- The importance of professionalism
- The Aide's role in observation and reporting
- The Aide's role in documentation

### The Home Care Team :

- When a team works well together, it can provide far better, more comprehensive care to a client than individuals working separately. Elements of teamwork include good communication, cooperation, clarity, having a common goal, and respect for each other.
- Of all the Home Care team members, the Aide is often the person who spends the most time with and becomes the closest to the client. The Aide often knows the client's likes and dislikes, personality or style, preferred ways of doing things, and the client's background or life stories.
- The Aide is a valuable member of the Home Care Team in providing care and in observations that are noted during time spent with a client and reporting the observations to the supervisor and or family for follow up as needed.
- An effective team communicates with each other; respects each other's talents, abilities and input; recognizes and appreciates the value of each team member's efforts; encourages participation; and maintains focus on the goal.

“Professionalism” means working in a professional manner, or doing a good job at whatever one does. The way a worker looks, talks, and acts can show respect for the client and show pride in themselves and their work.

Another aspect of Professionalism is being on time and being ready to start work from the moment the worker arrives.



### The Plan of Care:

- The client's plan of care will list the tasks that the aide is to complete with the client as well as what to observe about and report on the client.
- The plan of care is a way that the entire team helping to care for the client will understand what is to be done for the client and what the client's needs and preferences are.
- The Plan of Care is required for an agency as part of caring for client's in their home
- The aide should follow the plan of care and notify the supervisor if the aide notices that changes may be needed to the plan of care (such as if a client is requesting a different type of bath than was assigned.) Even though it may seem that you are just following the client's wishes if they ask you to do something beyond what is on the plan of care, if harm comes to the client as a result, you could put yourself and your agency at risk of liability.

**Professionalism** means working in a professional way, or always doing your best work. As a professional, you show pride in yourself and your work. And you also show respect for the client.

- You show professionalism in the way you look, talk, and act; and,
- By being on time and ready to start work from the moment you arrive

### Getting Ready for Work- (check with your agency for specifics on your agency's dress code)

Here are some important things to remember about being prepared to do your best work:

#### **How we dress matters!**

- ❖ Wear clean, neat clothes.
- ❖ Wear clothes and shoes which are easy and safe to work in.
- ❖ Wear a name badge that is easy to see and read.
- ❖ Follow the rules of your agency (e.g., uniforms might be required, white clothes or shoes, etc.)

\*\*\*\*\*

- ❖ Do not wear clothes that are too tight or show too much skin.
- ❖ Do not wear something that you mind getting dirty.
- ❖ Do not wear clothes with holes or wrinkles.
- ❖ Do not wear large earrings, rings and bracelets

#### **Tips to getting to work on time!**

- ❖ Check the weather for the next day.
- ❖ Plan what to wear. Iron your clothes, if needed.
- ❖ Pack the things you will need. Be sure you have gas.
- ❖ Make sure there is gas in the car, or you have money for the bus or train.
- ❖ Make sure you have clear directions to a patient's home if you have never been there before
- ❖ Set your alarm clock.

## *The Aide's Role in Observing the Client, Reporting, and Documenting*

### **Observe, Record, & Report - Always check with your supervisor about what to observe with your client's and how to record and report:**

- The aide usually spends more time with clients than any other health care worker. That makes them the “eyes and ears” of the care team. Things that direct-care workers notice about clients could improve or even save their lives!
- The aide documents when they do the tasks that are listed on the care plan. They also should note what they observe while doing those tasks and while spending time with the client.
- This important part of the worker's job is called “Observe, Record, and Report” or ORR, for short. These tips will help you to do this job well.

#### **What should I observe?**

- Changes in the client's condition physical, mental, emotional
- Changes in the environment, or setting, that could affect the client's health
- Changes in relationships with family and friends that could affect the client's health

#### **Changes in the client's condition - look for:**

- Signs of physical discomfort
- Changes in what the consumer can do
- Changes in behavior
- Changes in physical appearance

#### **Changes in the client's environment- look for:**

- Potential safety hazards
- Health hazards

#### **Changes in relationships with family and friends- look for:**

- Family or friends who used to visit regularly and don't anymore
- Family or friends who suddenly start visiting regularly

#### **How do I “record” it?**

Different agencies will have different forms that they want you to use for recording. Check with your supervisor regarding what type of “aide log” or “aide service note” to use. Be sure to discuss with your supervisor the requirements for documentation, how to document deviations to the care plan ( such as client refusing a task, etc.). Documentation is important and is a required part of giving care to a client. Agencies have to keep the documentation to show regulatory bodies such as licensing agencies and payer sources that client care was given according to the plan of care.

**Resources:** PHI (<http://PHInational.org>)- Providing Personal Care Services To Elders And People With Disabilities; Kathie Smith, AHHC of NC



Kathie Smith, RN: Director of Quality Initiatives and State Liaison; Editor in Chief  
For more information on AHHC's endorsed risk management and insurance program visit: <http://www.homeandhospicecare.org/insurance/home.html>

**In-home aide newsletter- November 2011**  
**POST-TEST on Being Part of a Team**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check True or False on the following questions:**

1. The way a worker looks, talks and acts can show respect for a client.

True

False

2. An In-Home Aide can change the plan of care if the client requests a different type of care.

True

False

3. Different agencies will have different forms for In-Home Aide documentation.

True

False

4. Documentation is not very important in caring for a client.

True

False

5. Home Care and Hospice month celebrations highlight how In-Home services strengthen the family bond and support families as they care for their loved ones at home.

True

False

**Check the correct answer or answers for the following questions:**

6. Showing professionalism includes the following:

- a. Showing pride in your work
- b. How you look, talk and act
- c. How you dress
- d. Planning ahead
- e. all of the above

7. Observations that the aide can make and report are:

- a. changes in the client's physical, mental and emotional condition
- b. changes in the client's environment that could affect the client's health
- c. signs of physical discomfort
- d. changes in behavior
- e. changes in physical appearance
- f. Potential safety hazards
- g. all of the above

**In the following questions, fill in the blanks:**

8. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are an important part of the In-Home aide role in being part of the eyes and ears of the Home Care Team.

9. The aide is a valuable member of the team in providing care and in \_\_\_\_\_ that are noted during time spend with a client.

10. The client's \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ will lists the tasks to complete for the client.