



Tips for Careworkers: Person-Centred Care

What it is: Person-centred care is about dignity, worth and human rights. Sometimes called ‘patient-centred care’; it involves treating people the way they want to be treated and listening to their needs and preferences. This supports quality of life. It helps people to live a meaningful life based on what they value.

Why it matters: Quality care is more than good symptom control and emotional support. It is about helping the older person to live well and maintain control over their life, relationships, and social connections.

What I need to know: Palliative care is focused on quality of life. Being treated with dignity and respect is essential to quality of life. Being compassionate and valuing people as the person they are, rather than just the illness they have promotes a sense of dignity.

Helping people retain dignity as they die includes:

- symptom control
- psychological and spiritual support
- attending to privacy, respect and choice
- care of the family.

Do

Always introduce yourself and give the person your full and complete attention.

Do

Respect a person’s need for privacy.

Do

When speaking with the person try to be seated at the person’s eye level when possible.

Do

Address people by their preferred name and avoid pet names or generic terms like ‘love’ or ‘dear’.

Do

Ask questions such as:

‘What should I know about you as a person to help me take the best care of you that I can?’

‘What are the things at this time in your life that are most important to you or that concern you most?’

‘Who else should we get involved at this point, to help support you through this difficult time?’

Name:

My reflections:

What could I do when speaking with an older person that would make them feel valued and listened to?

What situations have I observed that have not been person-centred? What could I do to improve things, so this doesn't occur again?

My notes:

See related palliAGED Practice
Tip Sheets:
Advance Care Planning
Case Conferences
People with Specific Needs

For references and the latest version of all Tip Sheets visit
www.palliaged.com.au/PracticeTipSheets