

## Using Aide Training To Improve Quality and Reduce Turnover

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Home health services are facing a crisis in quality precipitated by three factors: *a rapidly aging population* that will increase needs for home health and long term care services; limited oversight regarding the *quality of home care*; and *high turnover of aides*.

Current training approaches are primarily lecture-based with some demonstration of mandated clinical skills. They do a poor job of reaching all types of learners and in addressing the factors that are associated with job dissatisfaction and turnover of aides, as will be detailed below.

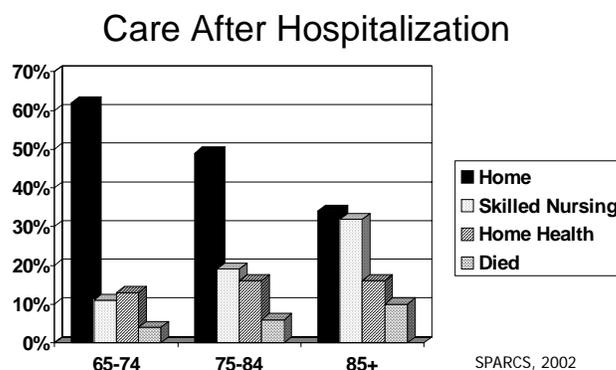
### Providing Quality Care to an Aging Population --

Well over 90 percent of the elderly live at home<sup>1</sup>. After hospitalization, most are discharged to home, without the support of home health services.

High quality home care relies on the home care aide working alone, with occasional oversight by the home health nurse. Thus, the quality of care received by the home care client is linked directly

to the quality of the job performed by the paraprofessional.<sup>2</sup> Although staff in long term care facilities are trained in quality assurance mandates, such as the Resident Assessment Protocols (RAPS)<sup>3</sup> there is no current mandate that professionals or aides be trained in a similar process in home care. Increasing rates of Alzheimer's Disease makes the aide's job even more challenging.

In addition, there is evidence that the quality of care provided by the aide is associated with job satisfaction.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Coward RT, Krout JA (1998) *Aging in Rural Settings: Life Circumstances and Distinctive Features* New York: Springer Publishing

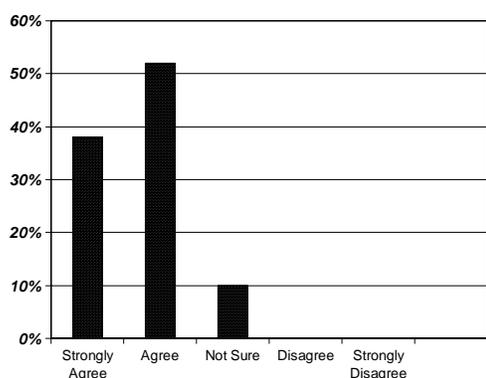
<sup>2</sup> Surpin, R., K. Haslanger, et al. (1994). "Better jobs, better care: building the home care work force." *Pap Ser United Hosp Fund N Y*: 1-54.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. *Resident Assessment Instrument for Long Term Care Facilities (Appendix P)* Retrieved January 10, 2002 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.hcfa.gov/pubforms>

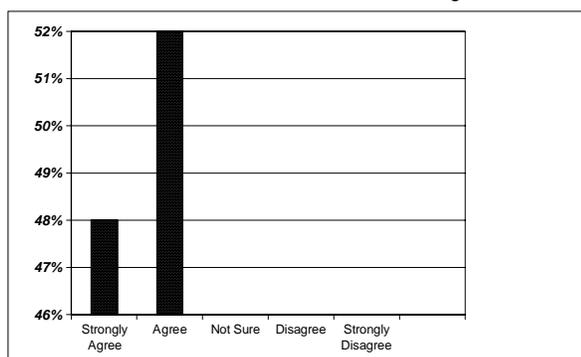
<sup>4</sup> Castle, N. G., H. Degenholtz, et al. (2006). "Determinants of staff job satisfaction of caregivers in two nursing homes in Pennsylvania." *BMC Health Serv Res* 6: 60.

**High turnover of aides** -- Many of the most important factors that are associated with the high turnover of aides are addressed in *Never Too Old*. For example, high turnover of aides is associated with poor communication<sup>5</sup>,<sup>6</sup> with patients and other team members. Research has also shown that aides are more likely to stay on the job if they are involved in care planning<sup>7</sup>,<sup>8</sup>,<sup>9</sup>. In addition, high levels of stress have been linked to the turnover of both aides and professionals<sup>10</sup>,<sup>11</sup>,<sup>12</sup>,<sup>13</sup>.

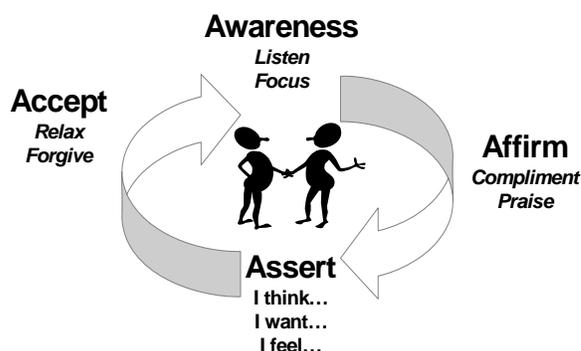
### Being Your Best Worksheet Can Help to Understand and Support the Care Plan Home Health Aides at HANCI Training



### "Warning Signs & BEST Questions" Can Help To Raise Questions with Doctor and Nurse Home Health Aides at HANCI Training



Positive results (see above) have been demonstrated in pilot projects, in which the *Never Too Old* content was presented to a convenience sample of 63 aides. The "satisfaction skills" content (e.g., awareness, affirmations, assertiveness, acceptance) that addresses the communication and stress management issues associated with turnover, was also well received – as noted by the following graphic.



<sup>5</sup> Davidson, H., P. H. Folcarelli, et al. (1997). "The effects of health care reforms on job satisfaction and voluntary turnover among hospital-based nurses." *Med Care* 35(6): 634-45.

<sup>6</sup> Buelow, J. R., K. Winburn, et al. (1999). "Job satisfaction of home care assistants related to managerial practices." *Home Health Care Serv Q* 17(4): 59-71.

<sup>7</sup> Caudill, M. E. and M. Patrick (1991). "Turnover among nursing assistants: why they leave and why they stay." *J Long Term Care Adm* 19(4): 29-32.

<sup>8</sup> Cohen-Mansfield, J. (1997). "Turnover among nursing home staff. A review." *Nurs Manage* 28(5): 59-62, 64.

<sup>9</sup> Barry, T. T., D. Brannon, et al. (2005). "Nurse aide empowerment strategies and staff stability: effects on nursing home resident outcomes." *Gerontologist* 45(3): 309-17.

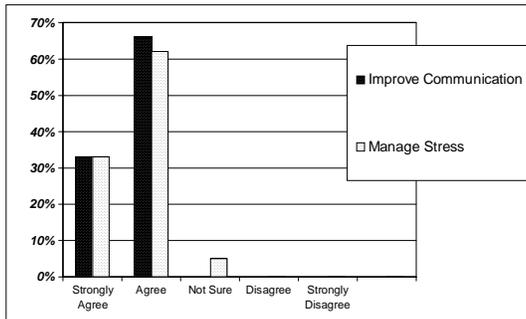
<sup>10</sup> Gaddy, T. and G. A. Bechtel (1995). "Nonlicensed employee turnover in a long-term care facility." *Health Care Superv* 13(4): 54-60.

<sup>11</sup> Shader, K., M. E. Broome, et al. (2001). "Factors influencing satisfaction and anticipated turnover for nurses in an academic medical center." *J Nurs Adm* 31(4): 210-6.

<sup>12</sup> van Wijk, C. (1997). "Factors influencing burnout and job stress among military nurses." *Mil Med* 162(10): 707-10.

<sup>13</sup> Dutcher, L. A. and C. E. Adams (1994). "Work environment perceptions of staff nurses and aides in home health agencies." *J Nurs Adm* 24(10): 24-30.

### “Satisfaction Skills” Can Help Home Health Aides at HANCI Training



A major premise of the program is that family caregivers need to learn that same curriculum that is mandated for aides. Thus, the same materials that is be used to train aides are also used for target family caregivers – enhancing communication between patients, family care givers and the care team.

### ***Measurable Outcomes for “Train the Trainer” and “Aide Training”***

“Train the Trainer”, as well as training sessions for aides can improve the process of care and upgrade skills through learning objectives based on federally mandated learning objectives for home health aides<sup>14</sup>. *Never Too Old* supplements these mandates with communication, stress management and quality improvement initiatives especially designed to reduce turnover while improving quality. Thus, participants will be able to:

- Use the “Being Your Best” care plan system to design a personal improvement plan and an eldercare plan
- Discuss or demonstrate the use the *satisfaction skills* with friends, elders and care team members to improve communication, manage stress and improve teamwork
- Describe and demonstrate strategies for elders with Alzheimer’s and/or dementia to assist in:
  - enhance communication
  - dealing with problem behaviors
  - engage them in activities
- Discuss or demonstrate the appropriate use of *support skills* (e.g., partnership planning) to improve personal or elder health
- Discuss or demonstrate the value of “rechecking” signs or symptoms as a means of *continuous improvement* for personal, elder and organizational needs

<sup>14</sup> §484.36 Condition of participation: Home Health Services – Home Health Aide Training-Content

- Describe and discuss questions that should be asked when taking any medication (e.g., how often should I take it)
- Demonstrate the use of the “Signs and Steps Learning Log” as a means of tracking and communicating health status changes to the care team
- Demonstrate the use of “Warning Signs and BEST (behavioral, environment, social/spiritual, treatment) Questions” as a reference to raise with the health team in response to selected signs or symptoms
- State the limitations of the “Warning Signs and BEST Questions” in guiding elder care (e.g., It only contains symptoms that are easily observable and should never be used for diagnostic purposes or for a caregiver to independently change medication regimen)

The wallet card (below) summarizes the learning objectives presented in *Never Too Old* and the related training programs.

<p><b>Use the Satisfaction Skills For Communication and Stress Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Focus inside and outside of yourself</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Affirmations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Compliment, praise, and be thankful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assertiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Say what you think, need and feel</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Acceptance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Listen, relax, forgive yourself and others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>It's BEST to ASK...</b></p> <p>Don't assume a problem is “just” physical. Ask how these factors might help or hurt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>B</b>ehaviors (communication, depression, motivation)</li> <li>• <b>E</b>nvironment (e.g., hazards,, lighting, noise, home setting)</li> <li>• <b>S</b>ocial/Spiritual (e.g., isolation, support, peace of mind)</li> <li>• <b>T</b>reatment (e.g., medications, surgeries, therapies)</li> </ul>										
<p><b>BEING YOUR BEST</b></p> <p>Decide your <b>goals</b> (physical, emotional, spiritual) and Check your <b>signs</b> (blood pressure, stress, peace of mind) Take some <b>steps</b> (resources, meds, lifestyle, communicate) <b>Learn</b> each time (What steps work for you?)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="207 1409 771 1539"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Niagara Caregivers Network</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Health Association of Niagara County</td> <td>716-285-8224</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Niagara County Office of the Aging</td> <td>716-438-4020</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Erie County Dept. of Senior Services</td> <td>716-858-8526</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Dale Association</td> <td>716-433-4440</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Niagara Caregivers Network		Health Association of Niagara County	716-285-8224	Niagara County Office of the Aging	716-438-4020	Erie County Dept. of Senior Services	716-858-8526	The Dale Association	716-433-4440	<p><b>Keep Your HOPES Up!</b></p> <p>ALWAYS ASK YOUR DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will this <b>h</b>elp me?</li> <li>• How <b>o</b>ften is it necessary?</li> <li>• What <b>p</b>recautions (e.g., diet) should I observe?</li> <li>• When can I <b>e</b>xpect results or changes?</li> <li>• What <b>s</b>igns should I watch for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Positive changes (e.g., better blood pressure)</li> <li>○ Negative changes (e.g., side effects)\</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>www.NiagaraCaregivers.org</b></p>
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For additional information, visit:  
[www.NiagaraCaregivers.org](http://www.NiagaraCaregivers.org) or [www.NeverTooOld.net](http://www.NeverTooOld.net)