**Communication**

**Competency**

General Information

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Competency in communication can be addressed in several different areas:

1. Communication and interpersonal skills while caring for the resident and communicating with the resident representative
   1. All Staff training and competency
2. Effective communication within the interdisciplinary team and health care continuum on the care, condition and medical needs of the resident
   1. All Staff training and competency
3. Resident specific communication needs
   1. Hearing or vision deficits
   2. Cognitive or behavioral deficits
      1. Alzheimer’s or Dementia
      2. PTSD
      3. Other psychological
   3. Other specific resident communication needs

**Suggested Competencies for Staff**

* Licensed Nurses
* General communication/interpersonal strategies
* Assessment process, including sensory, vision, hearing
* Plan, communicate, and oversee cares provided
* Documentation and care plan development
* Use of the 24-hour report for communication
* Communication using assistive devices and equipment
* Person-centered care processes
* Ability to direct staff in communication techniques and reporting
* Communication with all members of the interdisciplinary team and the healthcare continuum
* Communication strategies for residents with sensory, cognitive, psychological or other deficits
* Nursing Assistants
* General communication/interpersonal strategies
* Communication strategies for residents with sensory, cognitive, psychological or other deficits
* Communication with the nurse and members of the interdisciplinary team
* Ability to properly use and care for Adaptive devices and equipment
* Follow individualized person-centered care processes
* Ability to promptly report changes of resident communication abilities
* Communicate with residents according to preferences
* Encourage resident to interact with peers and participate in meaningful life enrichment opportunities
* Other Interdisciplinary Team Members
  + General communication/interpersonal strategies
  + Communication strategies for residents with sensory, cognitive, psychological or other deficits
  + Ability to follow the individualized person-centered plan of care
  + Use and properly care for adaptive devices and equipment
  + Encourage and assist residents to interact with peers, participate in meaningful life enrichment opportunities, and maintain relationships with family and others
  + Communicate with residents according to preferences to overcome deficits
  + Ability to promptly report changes of resident communication abilities

**1a. F-Tag Reference General Information:**

Some examples of communication related citations which may be identified during a survey include:

F552 Notice of Rights/Right to be Informed/Make Treatment Decisions

Dignity

F558 Accommodation of Needs/Preferences- Accommodation of Needs and/or Sound and

Lighting

F600 Abuse

F636 Comprehensive Assessments & Timing

F637 Comprehensive Assessment After Significant Change

F641 Accuracy of Assessments

F655 Baseline Care Plan

F656 Develop/Implement Comprehensive Care Plan

F657 Care Plan Timing and Revision

F658 Professional Standards

F660 Discharge Planning

F675 Quality of Life

F676 Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)/Maintain Abilities

F684 Quality of Care

F685 Treatment/Devices to Maintain Hearing/Vision

F697 Pain Management

F710 Physician Services

F741 Sufficient Staff

F742 Treatment /Services for Mental/Psychosocial Concerns

F745 Social Services

F842 Resident Records

F941 Communication Training

**1b. Link to Critical Element Pathway**

*CMS-20069 “Communication and Sensory Problems (includes Hearing and Vision)”*

Observation, interview, and record review is completed to review this pathway, with assessment, diagnoses, physician orders, and the resident care plan key source documents used to guide observations and interviews.

Through observation assistive devices and equipment in use are identified and their condition reviewed. Interventions provided are compared to needs identified to determine whether resident needs, choices and preferences are followed, and the environment addresses individual hearing, vision, or communication concerns. Lighting, clutter, background noise, and glare are some areas observed.

To assess whether the resident’s preferences and choices are followed, interview to ensure that the resident is involved in development plans for care and routines and they are consistently provided in the manner desired. Staff are also interviewed to determine their understanding of proper assistive device use and care, and monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness of the interventions used.

Staff need to be able explain the individualized care plan and use of any assistive devices in place, including approaches to be employed to communicate with the resident who has sensory deficits and communication challenges. Documentation reviewed is expected to support planning, interventions, and demonstrate that resident assistance is provided to meet needs, including appointment scheduling and transportation to providers.

*CMS-20066 “Activities of Daily Living (ADL) Critical Element Pathway”*

This element is used to determine if facility practices are in place to identify, evaluate, and provide interventions to meet individual resident’s care needs, communication needs, and attain or maintain their highest level of function.

Observation, interview, and record review is used in determining that the assistance provided to each resident is individualized, follows assessment information obtained and the resident’s plan of care, and ensures that resident’s preferences and choices are included.

Observations during ADLs are completed, and assistive device use reviewed to ensure the resident’s needs are met and abilities maintained. Communication techniques used and devices such as communication boards are observed for use. Staff capabilities, including therapies, are assessed through interview, observation, and medical record review to determine competence in use of devices and identify ability to effectively interact with the resident. The Restorative Programming established to address resident needs is reviewed and evaluated for effectiveness.

CMS-20067 “Behavioral and Emotional Status Critical Element Pathway

This element is used to determine if the facility is providing necessary behavioral, mental, and/or emotional health care and services to each resident. Similarly, the facility staff members must implement person-centered, non-pharmacological approaches to care to meet the individual needs of each resident.

Observations include, “How does staff demonstrate their knowledge of the resident’s current behavioral and emotional needs? Does staff demonstrate competent interactions when addressing the resident’s behavioral health care needs?”[[1]](#footnote-1)

**References and Resources**

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services State Operations Manual, Appendix PP – Guidance to Surveyors for Long Term Care Facilities (Rev. 173, 11-22-17): <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/downloads/som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Long-Term Care Facility Resident Assessment Instrument 3.0 User’s Manual, Version 1.16. October 2018: <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Quality-Initiatives-Patient-Assessment-Instruments/NursingHomeQualityInits/MDS30RAIManual.html>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. LTC Survey Pathways (Download)

<https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/guidanceforlawsandregulations/nursing-homes.html>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. CMS Survey and Certification Group. Integrated Surveyor Training Website. Facilitating Communication in Individuals with Neurological Disease Also Know as “Communicating Skills” Video: <https://surveyortraining.cms.hhs.gov/pubs/VideoInformation.aspx?id=1035&cid=0000002926>

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Integrated Surveyor Training Website. Hand in Hand: A Training Series for Nursing Homes: <https://surveyortraining.cms.hhs.gov/pubs/HandinHand.aspx>

1. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Behavioral and Emotional Status Critical Element Pathway. CMS-20067: <https://www.cms.gov/medicare/provider-enrollment-and-certification/guidanceforlawsandregulations/nursing-homes.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)