

CONSISTENT ASSIGNMENT

Tips for Implementation



Begin with global education of staff residents and families about 4-6 weeks before you initiate consistent assignments.

- Solicit feedback from staff especially nurse managers about their commitment to the process, questions on actual resident assignments, concerns about the “what if” scenarios.
- Create Fact Sheets related to the advantages of consistent assignment and the impact on resident satisfaction.
- Call a nurse aide (direct care) staff meeting on a shift-by-shift basis to explain the consistent assignment and why you intend to implement the concept. Field questions and concerns. Circulate the Fact Sheet.
- Involve Social Service. Use those individuals to communicate to residents and families about your future plans. Be prepared to “sell the program” and answer questions.
- Pilot the program on one unit for 30 days! Select a unit that is most likely to succeed. Evaluate the “good and bad” after each week. Adjust according.

Partner with direct care staff to ensure fair and equitable assignments.

- Seek the input of shift staff to develop the assignments.
- Consider letting the staff weigh in on selecting their residents. This will neutralize the tendency to complain about assignments.
- Create contingency plans for days off and benefit days. Shared assignments work well.

Develop a “Get to Know Me” campaign.

- Resident scrapbooks are an excellent way to communicate interesting facts about residents to their consistent caregiver.
- Interview residents as well as families regarding resident preferences.
- Utilize information from the MDS 3.0 as a foundation for choices and preferences.
- Create a communication tool as a care guide reference tool for the nurse aide.

Rebalance the assignments every three months.

- Address discharges and changes in acuity of residents.
- Be sensitive to staff needing a “break” from difficult residents.
- Interview residents for level of satisfaction with caregiver.

Adapted from American Health Care Webinar November 2007.