



THE NURSE'S GUIDE BOOK

**Practical Tips for RNs, LPNs,
CNAs, & Certified Med Techs**



A career in nursing can be gratifying. It is an occupation that provides continuous job security, plenty of availability, and a respectable salary, even if you are just starting. But as with any job, there are downsides to being a nurse that includes stress, long hours, and dealing with difficult physicians and patients. That is especially true when it comes to working with seniors.

Elderly patients who stay at assisted living or senior care facilities will often have multiple conditions making their care plan more complex.

Older patients' abilities also vary as you have some who are very independent and able to carry out most tasks on their own, while others may require assistance with feeding or grooming.

If you are new to working with elderly patients or simply need some helpful tips to make your job less stressful, this guidebook can help. Here you will find valuable reminders and information for all types of nurses to help you get through your most challenging workdays.

HOW TO DEAL WITH PHYSICIANS



Working with seniors in a healthcare setting requires you to have plenty of patience, training, and experience. It is also good to have excellent communication skills and have the ability to communicate well with your coworkers.

Unfortunately, some of the best medical staff sometimes do not have perfect social skills.

If you find yourself dealing with a problematic physician, it can help to have a flexible personality. Remember that everyone is different. Your coworkers and patients will not always act based on your standards. Find ways to prove your worth to gain their respect and stick to your duties as a nurse by communicating effectively and initiating the conversation if necessary.

HOW TO REMAIN CALM IN A MOMENT OF CRISIS

When you are faced with a healthcare crisis, it can feel like everything around you is moving faster. Slow down and, if possible, do not react immediately. It may be necessary to count your breaths and force yourself to breathe in a calming or relaxed way.

If you are feeling overwhelmed during a crisis with a patient, take a break, if possible. Go for a walk or step outside to clear your head. Once you are away from the situation for a few minutes, you can return and begin to help with a clearer mind and better focus.



HOW TO BUILD RESISTANCE IN TODAY'S HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT



The healthcare industry has endured many changes recently, and for many nurses, it can be challenging to adjust to new rules and techniques. Still, you want to provide the best possible care for your elderly patients and ensure all their needs are met. Therefore, it is essential to plan and be prepared for changes.

If you are an RN who oversees other nurses' work, you will want to communicate with your staff and explain why these changes occur. Encourage others to ask questions if needed and listen sincerely to their concerns.

Ensure that everyone understands why these changes are taking place and explain the benefits of these changes to reduce resistance.

HOW TO BUILD TEAMS



If your nursing team does not work well together, it can make your work environment stressful for everyone, including your patients. It's essential to create a stable and peaceful environment, especially for your patients living with conditions such as Alzheimer's or dementia. These patients often require strict daily routines, and if something causes their schedule to be altered, it can make caring for them much more chaotic.

Building a solid nursing team requires a lot of time and effort,

but fortunately, it is not impossible. Start small by building relationships with a few of your coworkers. Work to promote clear and consistent communication throughout the team. Most importantly, do not ignore conflicts within your team. Dealing with disputes between two or more coworkers can be emotionally exhausting, but ignoring the issue will only set you up for bigger problems in the future. Attempt to address the problem directly without involving a supervisor to help resolve the situation calmly and efficiently.

HOW TO POSSESS EMPATHY

Empathy is the most crucial element of compassionate nursing. When we feel empathy, we acknowledge the emotional state of another person without actually dealing with those same emotions ourselves. When working with seniors, empathy is a necessary factor. Many of your patients will have conditions that cause them to behave differently than they usually would. And they require someone empathetic to their unique needs as their caregiver. If you are a nurse and have issues with empathy, you can try these suggestions.

Many elderly patients will not always be able to tell you what they need verbally. Learn to pick up on nonverbal cues or body language. Speak to them in a calm and reassuring tone if they appear to be scared or angry, and do not take their negative behavior personally.

Do your best to understand what your patient may be struggling with. Doing so will help you determine how they feel and how you can help them overcome their obstacles.



REMIND NURSES THAT PATIENTS COME FIRST

Not every patient you assist will be grateful for your help, and that may not be just because the patient has a poor attitude. Their irritability could be due to a neurological condition or the side effects of their medication. They may also be irritated due to pain and discomfort from sore muscles and joints. Still, a difficult patient can often stir up feelings of regret and uncertainty for nurses who may wonder if they chose the right occupation.

If you are serious about nursing, you should keep in mind that your patient's needs always come first. Ensure that your patients have continuous care with a healthcare professional they trust and that they have easy access to assistance if needed.



REMIND NURSES OF THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF SICK PATIENTS



While medicine and other forms of treatment can help resolve many serious health issues, there are some necessities all nurses should remember when dealing with sick patients.

Comfort is one of the most important factors when someone is severely ill. A sick patient should rest in a quiet and comfortable space with plenty of light and fresh air.

With practically any sickness, drinking plenty of liquids is essential. Make sure the patient has access to water, broths, tea, or juice to stay hydrated.

Finally: cleanliness. It is essential to help keep the patient clean while they are sick. They may need assistance with bathing if they are unable to get out of bed. Ensure that their clothes and bed sheets are clean and changed, if required, as well.

HOW TO BE PATIENT AND KIND TOWARD PATIENT'S FAMILY MEMBERS

Speaking with your patient's family members can sometimes be a difficult task for nurses. The family members can be a valuable source of helpful information for the patient's care. It is crucial to recognize any abnormal family dynamics and remain neutral while ensuring the patient's needs are met.

Often, the children of elderly patients in assisted living facilities may feel they know what's best for their parents, and while their knowledge of the patient's medical history and lifestyle can be beneficial, always remember that the care provided to your patient is your responsibility. You have the training and experience needed to make the best possible decision for their care.





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