

Module 8 - Providing Care for the Patient Environment

Introduction

A clean home environment is essential to the overall health and well-being of our patients. As a home care aide, you should understand the importance of maintaining a clean and healthy environment for the patient. This module will explore the role of the home care aide and discuss, in detail, some of the home management tasks you may be expected to perform.

Objectives

At the end of this module, the nurse aide will be able to:

1. Describe the role of the home care aide in caring for the patient's environment
2. Explain why a clean home is important to the overall health and well-being of the patient
3. Identify basic guidelines for cleaning and home management tasks
4. Describe how to develop a cleaning routine/schedule

Instructional Resource Materials

- Power Point for Module 8 – Providing Care for the Patient Environment
- Handouts/Activities

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Slides	Instructor's Script	Notes
Slide 1 Title Slide	Script <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing Care for the Patient's Environment 	
Slide 2	Script <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives - At the end of this module, the nurse aide will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the role of the home care aide in caring for the patient's environment 2. Explain why a clean home is important to the overall health and well-being of the patient 3. Identify basic guidelines for cleaning and home management tasks 4. Describe how to develop a cleaning routine/schedule 	
Slide 3	Script <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home care aides play a big part in keeping a patient's home in order. This includes household maintenance and cleaning. • Some home care aides report that they do not feel that home management tasks should be part of the care that is provided. It is often said, "I am an aide, not a maid." • While this is true, light home management tasks are extremely important to patients. • The patient's illness or disability could alter or prevent the patient's ability to complete home tasks, which can lead to stress. Stress can have extremely negative effects on health and illness recovery. • In addition to decreasing a patient's stress level, completing home management tasks may also be an issue of health. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) – the patient needs an environment free from dust; this patient will not have the energy to dust; the dust could affect the patient's lungs leading to breathing problems and cause hospitalization ○ CHF (Congestive Heart Failure) – this patient will not have the strength or endurance to carry a heavy basket of clothes, may not be able to push a vacuum, etc. ○ Cancer patient undergoing chemotherapy – this patient will be weak and will not feel like cleaning; they are at extreme risk of infection because their immune system is compromised; a clean environment is essential in the health and well-being of this patient ○ Flu – patients with the flu are contagious; it is important that you wash the sheets frequently and 	

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	<p>wash the dishes in hot water; you can stop the spread of infection by using infection control practices and home management; you are protecting yourself and others.</p>	
Slide 4	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The home care aide should view home management tasks as an opportunity to educate the patient and family, and set good examples for their patients, with the hope that the patient may be able to take on more responsibility for the tasks that he or she is able to perform. • It could be possible that some patients have never learned sanitary, safety, or even grocery shopping skills. The home care aide can model healthy habits for the patient. • Other duties entrusted to the home care aide include assisting the patient with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal hygiene ○ Communication skills ○ Nutrition, food preparation, and meal planning ○ Organizational skills 	
Slide 5	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home care aides are not expected to do any heavy cleaning. Heavy cleaning includes tasks such as washing windows, scrubbing floorboards, moving furniture to vacuum, cleaning out the garage or mowing the lawn. However, it is ok to move light items when cleaning, such as a wastebasket or plant. • Light housekeeping tasks are expected, tasks such as dusting, vacuuming, sweeping, or tidying up. Other duties that may be assigned include laundry, changing linens, picking up/organizing the patient's living space, cleaning the kitchen, and washing the patient's dishes, taking out the garbage or cleaning the bathroom. • Important: When the home aide is in the home, he or she is expected to provide care for the assigned patient only. • If the patient has other family members living in the same home, the home care aide is there to assist the patient only and is not there to provide these tasks for the whole family. • This approach may cause some tension or confusion for the other family members if they have the wrong idea of who the home care aide is there to help. The home care aide's supervisor can assist with discussing this with the family if it becomes an issue. It is important to remain sensitive to the patient's and family's needs; however, it must be clear who the home care aide is assigned to assist. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition, it is acceptable for the home care aide to invite the other family members to participate in home management tasks if they are available and capable. 	
Slide 6	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity #1 – Case Scenarios; to be completed as a class group, or divide into smaller groups that come together as a class to compare thoughts. 	
Slide 7	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The home care aide’s supervisor will assign home management tasks on the patient’s plan of care for the home care aide. The home care aide is to follow the plan of care, and to report if it needs to be changed or adjusted. The best way to begin is to design an organized plan with the patient. Writing out daily or weekly plans with the patient will help in setting up a routine and will help the home care aide to see the tasks assigned clearly and a scheduled way of completing them. For example, if the home care aide is assigned to do laundry once a week and assigned to change linens once a week, the home care aide should plan to do those tasks on the same day, instead of having dirty linens pile up in the patient’s home. As important as it is to develop a routine, it is equally important to allow for some flexibility. If the home care aide is out for a day, or if the patient has other appointments or activities for a day, the plan should accommodate this type of change in schedule. 	
Slide 8	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With regards to frequency of home management tasks, some tasks will not need to be completed on a daily, or even weekly, basis. For example, food shopping may be assigned every other week. Plan this shopping trip on a day where the home care aide is not doing other time consuming or labor-intensive tasks. This again comes down to planning and scheduling. Making the bed, straightening up, and emptying trash cans, on the other hand, will be done every day the home care aide is there. These tasks can be completed while the patient is eating or doing something else. Should the home care aide have questions about cleaning, ask the patient since some surfaces may require special or specific care. For example, some floors are only to be washed with water, and wood floors may need a special, gentle cleanser. Be sure the floors are dry before your patient walks on them. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always sweep or vacuum before washing the floors, and try to avoid waxing floors, as that may become a fall hazard. 	
Slide 9	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity #2 – Cleaning Schedule and Classroom Activity 	
Slide 10	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As well as writing out a routine or schedule with the patient based on the plan of care, the home care aide would benefit from familiarizing him or herself with the household's cleaning materials and equipment, including the storage or placement of these items. Cleaning supplies should be in one location, clearly labeled and out of a child's reach. Looking in several locations for supplies is time consuming and it takes time away from the daily tasks of the nurse aide. Read the labels on your patient's cleaning supplies and equipment. If you are not familiar with them, familiarize yourself with their uses and hazards or contraindications prior to use. Replacement parts for cleaning equipment can be expensive; therefore, the home care aide should learn how to use the patient's equipment before starting on a task such as vacuuming. Cleaning supplies are chemicals and should be treated as such. Proper usage and storage are important for your patient's health, as well as your own. NEVER use a product that does not have a label. NEVER mix any cleaning products. Chemical reactions may occur and can produce serious hazards and fumes. For example, never mix bleach products with ammonia products. The fumes are very toxic and can be life threatening. Also noteworthy is the fact that urine has ammonia in it. Never pour bleach on a urine spill, human or pet. Since urine has ammonia in it, the mix of bleach and ammonia may produce toxic fumes. Your agency will have access to a Safety and Data Sheet (SDS) on the products you use most commonly. It is important that you become familiar with the SDS and refer to it anytime you have questions. Always contact your supervisor as a resource for questions. 	
Slide 11	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When working in the kitchen, keep sanitation at the forefront of your mind. Many diseases can be transmitted via food, contaminated surfaces, or dishes. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food handling is critical for older adults or sick patients. Wash your hands after touching raw meat. Wash countertops and any other surfaces that raw meat has touched. Wash fruits and vegetables. • Clean dishes in hot, soapy water, and leave the heavily soiled items (pots and pans) for last. • Air drying is more sanitary than drying with a dish cloth. • Do not leave the dishes for the last part of your day. For a more sanitary kitchen, clean as you prepare the food and do not leave dirty dishes out. • If an electric dishwasher is available, be sure you know how to load it correctly and use it properly. • When cleaning the refrigerator, use either water or water with baking soda only. Never use chemical cleaners inside the refrigerator. • There is more information about food safety in a later module. 	
Slide 12	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathrooms can be a haven for odors, microorganisms, mold, and/or mildew. It is an important room to clean. These guidelines are to assist in the bathroom cleaning process. • Handout #1 – Cleaning the patient’s bathroom 	
Slide 13	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean clothes, towels, and linens are especially important to most people, and your patient is no exception. • It is important to take care with your patient’s clothes, and always follow care instructions on clothes. Never wash clothes that say Dry Clean Only on the care instructions tag, and if the clothes are especially delicate, hand washing is ideal. • Handout #2 – Laundry 	
Slide 14	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While doing laundry, or any other task for that matter, practicing proper body mechanics is of utmost importance. • As outlined in Handout #3, keeping your body positioned properly will help in preventing injury to yourself, especially your back. • Review Handout #3 and always remember to put these guidelines into practice. • Handout #3 – Proper Body Mechanics 	
Slide 15	<p>Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home management assignments may not be the home care aide’s favorite tasks; however, they are incredibly important to the patient’s overall well-being. A clean 	

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	<p>and organized home will ease your patient's stress and could have beneficial health outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The End.	
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