

Department-Specific Quality of Life Strategies

By Kimberly Grandal BA, CTRS, ACC

Getting facility staff on board with activities and helping to provide opportunity for meaningful activities for the residents is a major concern for activity professionals. The Activity Director must get the support of the Administrator and the department heads in order to truly create an environment that promotes an interdisciplinary approach to quality of life. Even after the implementation of the revised F248 in June 2006, Activity Directors around the country continue to express that facility staff members are simply not assisting with activities. Be sure to meet with the Administrator first to discuss your concerns and ideas and inform him/her that F248 clearly states that all staff members are to promote meaningful activity, not just the activity staff.

The Activity staff, often professionally certified through NCCAP or NCTRC, are specially trained to facilitate activities that are designed to meet the needs and interests of each resident, however, facility staff can supplement the activity program in a variety of ways. The assessment, care planning and planning stages are key to successfully facilitating a program of activities, therefore the Activity staff must commit to training facility staff and communicating residents' interests and needs.

When developing an interdisciplinary approach to quality of life program, it is important to remember the following:

- ❖ All interventions must match the needs and interests of EACH resident.
- ❖ All work-related activities must be included in the comprehensive care plan.
- ❖ Residents have the right to refuse activities.
- ❖ Residents have the right to refuse to provide work for the facility.
- ❖ The intent is not for the residents to do our work, but to feel a sense of self-worth and purpose!

The following are just a few ideas on how each department can offer meaningful activity experiences for the residents.

Nursing

- ❖ Incorporate meaningful activities into ADL's and restorative programs.
- ❖ Schedule medications, ADL's, and treatments around residents' favorite activities.
- ❖ Assign CNAs to assist in the day rooms and other activity areas.
- ❖ Facilitate simple, groups, and one to one activities.
- ❖ Incorporate resident interests into the daily CNA assignment.
- ❖ Provide opportunity for residents to assist with making beds.
- ❖ Staff Educator can provide in-services to residents such as diabetes, infection control, flu shots, dealing with residents with cognitive impairments, etc.

Food and Nutrition

- ❖ Have residents' favorite comfort foods readily available.
- ❖ Create an ice cream cart or ice cream parlor that is always stocked with sweet, cold, treats.
- ❖ Cook or do food preparations in a common area for residents to see and smell the food.
- ❖ Host cooking programs and specialty dinners, breakfasts, etc.
- ❖ Facilitate a Menu Planning Committee.
- ❖ Provide cultural meals in accordance with resident's tastes.
- ❖ Provided meals that meet residents' religious needs.
- ❖ Provide opportunity for residents to set tables.
- ❖ Have residents plan a meal.
- ❖ Have residents do some food preparations.

Social Services

- ❖ Assist with utilizing residents PNA to purchase electronics, adaptive equipment, decorations, community outings, etc.
- ❖ Play a major role in the Resident Council process.
- ❖ Purchase clothing, schedule beautician appointments, etc.
- ❖ Facilitate a new Resident Support Group, Adjustment Group, or other support groups.
- ❖ Facilitate a Life Review Program (Group or one to one).
- ❖ Provide One to One visits for reminiscing, support, and companionship.
- ❖ Encourage family to bring in personal belongings to create-homelike atmosphere.
- ❖ Have mock elections during voting seasons.
- ❖ Facilitate Resident Rights Bingo.

Housekeeping and Laundry

- ❖ Some residents may enjoy cleaning-give them a duster, cloth, broom, etc. and have them help.
- ❖ Put on residents favorite TV station, music, etc.
- ❖ Discuss what the resident is watching on TV, reading, etc.
- ❖ Discuss family photos, memorabilia, etc.
- ❖ Assist in facilitating specialty groups such as a men's club, cultural programs, young adult groups, etc.
- ❖ Provide opportunity for residents to fold towels and linens.

Maintenance

- ❖ To cut costs, build items that can be utilized with the residents such as: garden boxes, tactile boards with various objects and textures, games (target toss, Wheel of Fortune Boards, etc.). If appropriate, have a resident assist.
- ❖ Ask residents to assist with minor projects such as hanging a picture, repairs, etc.
- ❖ Assist in facilitating specialty groups such as a men's club, cultural programs, young adult groups, etc.

- ❖ Facilitate a wood working program (bird houses, shelves, etc.). These items can then be used to decorate facility or personalize a resident's room.
- ❖ Bring in videos of sporting events.

Business Office and Human Resources

- ❖ Residents may be able to assist with folding brochures, mailings, some filing, clerical work, etc.
- ❖ Have residents be part of an Employee Appreciation Program such as a resident committee that nominates employees for "Employee of Month/Year." Have a special recognition program where residents can present awards.
- ❖ Have a resident greet family and visitors at the reception area.

Admissions

- ❖ Residents may be able to assist with folding brochures, mailings, some filing, clerical work, etc.
- ❖ Put up a welcome sign, provide a welcome greeting card, flower arrangements, etc.
- ❖ Follow-up to see how the resident is doing and if they like their room and roommate.

Marketing

- ❖ Encourage residents to be part of marketing strategies such as news articles, videos, etc.
- ❖ Some residents may even be able to assist in writing press releases, or interviewing other residents about what they like about the facility. You may even bring a resident to a luncheon or meeting and have the resident express the positive aspects of the facility. The greatest marketing tool we have is our residents!
- ❖ Implement the "Adopt-A-Nursing Home" Project.
- ❖ Be on the lookout for community and volunteer opportunities.
- ❖ Market specialized activity programs and special events.

Therapy

- ❖ Schedule therapy sessions around resident's favorite activities.
- ❖ Make recommendations and referrals to the Activity Department such as range of motion activities, ADL activities, cognitively stimulating activities, etc.
- ❖ Utilize Pet-Facilitated Therapy
- ❖ Provide opportunities for co-treatment groups such as cooking, gardening, etc.
- ❖ Develop a Fitness Trail designating specific exercise that can be done standing or sitting.
- ❖ Help co-ordinate a "Walk/Wheel- A-Thon" to raise money, or a "Senior Olympics".

Administration

- ❖ Host a monthly "Lunch with the Administrator" or "Meet the Administrator" for new Residents.
- ❖ MC a special event

- ❖ Attend Resident Council
- ❖ Encourage Residents to be on facility committees
- ❖ If possible, involve Residents in facility renovations. Ask them about color preference, styles, décor, themes, etc.
- ❖ Be proactive in the Culture Change Movement.
- ❖ Create an Administrative policy that supports and interdisciplinary approach to quality of life.

Although an interdisciplinary support to quality of life is prominently stated in the revised F248 Activities regulation, it is not adherence to this regulation that Activity professionals are concerned about, but rather the idea that all residents should be given an opportunity to engage in activities that are purposeful, meaningful, therapeutic and enjoyable. Truly providing a program of activities that meets the needs and interests of each resident requires support, continuity, education, commitment and a complete team approach.

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Do you need to educate healthcare providers in your facility about the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to quality of life? Yes, we all do, especially since the implementation of the revised CMS guidance to surveyors for Activities, F248. This in-service will help you “break down the silos” in your facility and create a person-centered environment. You receive an outline, PowerPoint presentation with teacher’s notes, a student manual, an icebreaker activity, and a post-test. To order this in-service visit <http://www.recreativeresources.com/recreationforms.htm>.