

Meaningful Recreational Activities: A Thirty Minute In-Service for Facility Staff

By Kimberly Grandal BA, CTRS, ACC/EDU

Activity Directors are required to provide in-services to educate the facility staff regarding various approaches to providing individualized and meaningful activities. Below are a few ideas that you can share with facility staff. This will only take about 30 minutes or less and can be done directly on the nursing unit or nearby conference room. The following is an excerpt from the Re-Creative Resources Inc. In-service entitled "[Breaking Down The Barriers: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Quality of Life](#)".

Benefits of Meaningful Recreational Activities

Improved Cognitive Skills

- Ability to follow simple directions
- Communication
- Interpersonal Skills
- Decision Making
- Attention Span
- Sensory Awareness
- Environmental Awareness
- Ability to make needs known
- Memory Skills
- Self-Expression

Improved Physical Skills

- Fine/gross motor skills
- Endurance
- Mobility and Range of Motion
- Hand/Eye Coordination
- ADL Skills/Body Awareness
- Strength and Flexibility
- Sleep Patterns
- Skin Integrity
- Appetite
- Incontinence
- Decrease use of pain medications

Improved Emotional Well-Being

- Socialization
- Motivation
- Creative Expression
- Self Esteem and Confidence
- Depression
- Boredom
- Stress Management Skills
- Decrease Learned Helplessness
- Increased Independence

Decreased Behavior Issues

- Wandering
- Sundown Syndrome
- Agitation
- Anxiety
- Repetitive Motions
- Yelling and Screaming
- Use of physical restraints
- Use of chemical restraints

Examples of how YOU can enhance a resident's quality of life through meaningful recreational activity.

One to One Visits

- Have friendly conversation i.e. talk about resident's favorite interests, their family, etc.
- Play a quick game of cards or other game
- Talk about current events, facility news, or read a quick story
- Bring outside, to the activity room, lobby, etc.

Tactile Stimulation

- Give a hug, hand massage, or hold hands
- Offer a variety of tactile equipment

Environmental Awareness

- Talk about the environment i.e. Do you hear that music?
- Inform the resident that the Activity Room is down the hall, etc.
- Point out facility signs i.e. bathrooms, dining room, phone, etc.
- Divert to fish tanks, rummage areas, multi-sensory rooms, birds, plants, etc.

Music/TV/Movies

- Put on appropriate music or television stations in resident rooms or the day room.
- Remember that, each resident or patient has a preference.
- Ask the Recreation staff for specific details.

Parallel Programming

- Work with residents who are not involved in the group activity.
- Group/seat residents according to functional abilities and interests
- Provide activities that meet the interests and abilities of the residents i.e. hand out magazines/books, offer pictures to color, provide manicures, encourage residents to put on makeup or comb hair, table games, diversional/sensory activities, range of motion, massages, talk one on one with residents, etc.) Provide any activity the resident would enjoy!
- Utilize supplies in dayroom; return when finished
- Encourage resident independence
- Adapt activities and/or use adapted equipment

❖ Other Interventions

- Assist recreation staff with motivating residents to participate in activities.
- Assist in transporting residents to the day room or to special events.
- When applicable, monitor safety and positioning of residents; release restraints
- “Talk up” activities. Notify residents of the scheduled activities for the day.
- Help to motivate the residents and congratulate them on their achievements.
- Validate/re-assure cognitively impaired residents
- Your trash may be treasure! Bring in magazines, books, music, knick-knacks, videos, etc.
- Participate in large events such as parties, talent shows, BBQ’s, etc. It’s fun work!

Breaking Down the Silos: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Quality of Life In-Service (\$25)

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 and the MDS 3.0. 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>.

About the Author

Kimberly Grandal, Founder and Executive Director of Re-Creative Resources, Inc., is a strong advocate for the field of Therapeutic Recreation and Activities, with over 18 years of experience in various management and consultant positions. She is an Activity Consultant Certified and a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. Kim founded Re-Creative Resources Inc. in 2006 and provides seminars for various local, state and national activity associations. She also offers lectures for Re-Creative Resources Inc. and provides online webinars. In addition, Kim provides consultation and support to numerous facilities in the state and nationwide and writes for numerous online sources.

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