

10 TIPS FOR ENGAGING FAMILY MEMBERS AS CARE PARTNERS

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Family members are a critical component of the care team, especially for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. But knowing how to integrate family members into the overall care process is often daunting for both providers and families. Below are some ways that providers can help family members enhance the quality of life and satisfaction of residents.



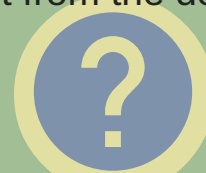
Have family members construct their loved-one's life story using paper and pen, audio/visual recording, pictures or any combination.

This information is valuable for staff members in the creation of a person-centered plan of care.



Help family members bring joy to their loved one during visits; demonstrate how to engage in reminiscing activities with familiar treasured items brought from home.

Inform family members of what changes to realistically expect from the dementia.

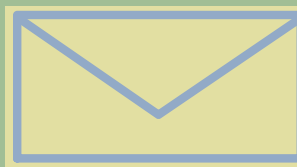


This is important not only in the early stages but also throughout the course of the disease.



Educate family members on grief and the importance of grieving, but ask them not to grieve in front of their loved one.

Invite family members to develop and lead small group activities.



Involve family members in writing and producing the facility newsletter.



Encourage family members to provide an MP3 player and comfortable headphones for their loved one. This is a great way to involve younger family members in care.

Show family members how to recognize when it is necessary to pause and step away if they are surprised or shocked by a new behavior.



Explain the importance of gaining control of oneself before responding to the individual with dementia.

Assign a staff member to regularly update family members on how their loved one is doing.



Be sure to include positive experiences as well as any changes in medical conditions.



Educate family members on ways to approach their loved one and how to support and help maintain functional abilities throughout the course of the disease.