**Unit 1**

**ROLE OF A CAREGIVER**

**STRUCTURE**

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1. **Introduction**

**Why should you learn this Course?**

The World Health Organization and the World Bank predicted that to attain universal access to healthcare workers by 2030, there will be needed to train and deploy 40-50 million new health and social care workers globally. The requirement of Caregivers in several developing nation is growing exponentially-**The Big Job Opportunity.**

**The course covers the following aspects:**

1. Role of a Caregiver
2. Infection Prevention and Control
3. Duties and Responsibilities
4. Respect, Privacy and Dignity
5. Fluids and Nutrition
6. Personalized Care and Attention
7. Self-Development
8. Mental Health and Wellbeing
9. Communication
10. Respecting Equality and Diversity
11. Maintaining Confidentiality
12. Technical Knowledge
    1. **Learning points**

The Caregivers will:

* Understand their own role
* Work in ways that have been agreed with their employer
* Understand working relationships in health and social care
* Work in partnership with others in the workplace or family

**1.2 Definition of a caregiver**

A person who assists another person who is dependent for daily activities. Caregivers give assistance to people who are sick, injured, mentally or physically disabled, or the elderly and fragile. Although there are many different types of Caregivers, but most common are Eldercare and Care for Babies or Children.

In this Course we will discuss about Eldercare, emergency care, post-operative care, home care, etc. An Elder Caregiver is a person who takes care of a dependent Elderly, who is immobile or bedridden due to age or any other reason. Basically, you will learn to take care of a person who is dependent on you for daily activities of their life.

**1.2.1 Where they work**

Caregivers work in different types of health care agencies such as:

* Long-term care centres e.g. nursing homes
* Home care agencies
* Surgery centres adult day-care centres
* Doctors’ offices
* Hospice
* Clinics
* Hospitals
* Centres for persons with mental health disorders
* Centres with developmental disabilities
* Drug and alcohol treatments centres and
* Homes

Caregivers help their clients with daily activities, such as bathing and bathroom functions, feeding, grooming, taking medication, and some housework. Caregivers help clients make and keep appointments with doctors, provide or arrange transportation and serve as a companion for their clients. Caregivers are either hired by a client or their family or report directly to a physician or a nurse.

Job duties in the hospital set up:

They work under the supervision of and take direction from staff nurses and doctors: Duties Include assisting patients with basic tasks, such as bathing, dressing, and eating; collecting specimens for lab tests, physically moving or repositioning patients.

**1.2.2 Education requirements**

Certified caregivers must complete of state approved caregiving training. They are usually required to pass state competency exams after their training is complete to earn certification.

**1.3 Understanding the Role of a Caregiver**

The duties and responsibilities that are part of your role will be listed in your job description

**Your role is likely to include:**

* Providing care and support, working in a person-centred way, communicating well, building relationships, and promoting equality and diversity. Equity and diversity mean to ensures that care is fair to everyone and individuals are not discriminated against. You will learn more about this later during this course.
* Working as part of a team, whether with the family or workplace, being a supportive team member and developing your skills to improve your work.
* Contributing to activities in a safe way, keeping and filing clear records, keeping to regulations as applicable in your country, and following the agreed way of working.
* Respecting confidentiality by not discussing any personal information on individuals or staff with unauthorised people and storing records securely.

Your work must always be carried out in agreed ways and must keep to regulations in mind

**Regulations:** are rules that come from legislation or laws. The legislation establishes the general ‘laws of the land’. Regulations provide the specific ways in which those laws are interpreted and applied.

**1.3.1 Responsibilities at work:**

* To work in agreed ways that are safe for everyone concerned and to discuss safety concerns with their seniors
* To treat other people’s private and sensitive information confidentially
* To treat others equally regardless of anything and follow equality

**1.3.2 Responsibilities to the individuals you support**

You have responsibilities to the people that you provide care and support for including:

* Safeguarding their safety and welfare
* Involving the individual and their support network in the planning, delivery, and review of their care
* Ensuring that their dignity is promoted, and their rights upheld
* Supporting the person to complain or raising concerns if care is inadequate or rights are not upheld



**Equality:** under legal provision in some country or region *identified characteristics or groups* are protected under equalities law.

**1.3.3 Standards and codes of conduct and practice**

A code of conduct is a set of rules outlining the norms, rules, and responsibilities or proper practices of an individual party or an organisation.

Below is what is included in the Code of Conduct Standards

* The ways we need to work to safeguard the people we support
* The skills and knowledge we need to be competent in our role
* The moral and ethical standards that we must meet in all aspects of our work
* How we should behave when we are at work

The Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers has the moral and ethical standards expected of all caregivers or health workers. We advise the Professional Caregivers to follow and maintain the code of conduct for caregiving.

The Code of Conduct for Professional Caregivers broadly includes the following principles:

* To be accountable for their action
* To promote and uphold privacy, dignity, rights, health, and wellbeing
* To work in collaboration with the family, employer, care-recipient and medical staff, etc.
* To communicate openly and in an effective way
* To respect a right to confidentiality of individuals
* To improve the quality of care and support through regular training and skill up-gradation

**Experiences, attitudes, and beliefs**

Your experiences, attitudes and beliefs affect how you think and behave, and these can:

* Lead you to make assumptions
* Make judgements

Things that can influence your experiences, attitudes and beliefs are:

* Your background,
* upbringing,
* relationships,
* education,
* the media,
* attitudes of your friends and family.

Self-awareness and learning to understand the attitudes and beliefs of others can help you to work in ways that value the individuals that you support

**Beliefs:** can be described as things in life that you feel strongly about, that guide you in your daily life and are linked very closely to your morals and values

**Attitudes:** are the approaches, opinions, and mind-set that you have developed through your upbringing and life and learning experiences.

Understanding the values, aims and objectives of your employer will help you to understand your role

**Values** are the beliefs or ideals that should be evident in all aspects of the service you provide

**Aims** are the general goals that one hopes to achieve through their activity, which is the purpose of your job is to achieve these

**Objectives** are specific things that must be in place to achieve the aims

**1.3.4 Rights at work**

Legislation gives employees’ rights and responsibilities at work or at home.

**Employees’ have the right to:**

* Work in an environment that is safe
* Be provided, free of charge, with the equipment they need to keep them for work in a safe environment

Employees have the responsibility towork in agreed ways that are safe for them, for others in the workplace and for the people they support.

If you have concerns about safety in your workplace you must talk to your employer or manager.

**The Data Protection Act** protects people’s rights to confidentiality. It restricts how personal and sensitive information can be used, stored and passed on. It applies to employees information and to how they share the information of others.

**The Equality** gives all people in most countries the right to be treated fairly and afforded equality of opportunity.

**Protected**: There are many pieces of legislation in any country that set out what are fair terms of employment including pay and hours of work.

* + 1. **Agreed ways of working**

Agreed ways of working are the ways in which employers expect you to work, which could be:

* Part of a policy in a workplace of likes and dislikes in a family environment
* Provided by your manager or colleague or family members or engagers
* Part of an individual’s care plan about his/her likes and dislikes

**1.3.6 Reporting errors**

Mistakes sometimes happen and it is important to be honest, admit and identify when errors have been made

* It is important to be honest and admit when errors have been made

**Scenario 1**

A meal containing meat is given to a vegetarian. They do not eat it.

**What action should be taken?**

The meal should be replaced with something the person can eat – the individual’s welfare is the top priority and they should not be allowed to go hungry.

The mistake should be reported (in line with the agreed ways of working)

**Why is it important to be honest and admit when errors have been made?**

If a worker does not admit the mistake the individual may miss a meal. This standard of care would not be acceptable.

**What are the potential consequences of not reporting a mistake?**

* In this scenario the individual may be hungry
* A complaint could be made
* Not eating could affect the effectiveness of medication which has to be taken with or after food
* Not reporting may mean that similar incidents happen in the future.
  + If it happens repeatedly to the same person, they could become malnourished
  + If an unsuitable meal were given to an individual with allergies it could have serious consequences

**Scenario 2**

An individual tells a worker that they have been experiencing severe headaches everyday an hour after they have taken their medication and the worker forgets to make a note of this in the individual’s care plan

**What action should be taken?**

The worker must tell their employer, family, or supervisor as soon as possible

**Why is it important to be honest and admit when errors have been made?**

* The individual is experiencing pain which may be avoidable if medication is changed
* The headaches could be a sign of a more serious problem

**What are the potential consequences of not reporting a mistake?**

The individual will continue to experience pain- this is not an acceptable level of care if pain could be avoided

The individual may become reluctant to take their medication which could affect other aspects of their health

The individual’s care plan will not be up to date

**1.3.7 Whistleblowing**

* Reporting things that you feel are not right or are illegal is known as whistleblowing
* You have a responsibility to report concerns about the safety and welfare of all people around you in the workplace
* You must follow the whistleblowing policy for your employer or follow instruction of family

Activity

**Whistleblowing –** Decide whether each should be reported as a concern – yes/no answers

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Report | |
|  | yes | no |
| The health and safety of staff is in danger |  |  |
| Individuals are treated with dignity and respect |  |  |
| The environment is being damaged by work activity |  |  |
| Wrongdoing is being covered up |  |  |
| The individual’s care is inadequate, but they cannot or will not complain |  |  |
| Care plans are reassessed and updated regularly |  |  |
| Your manager is involved in the abuse of individuals |  |  |

**1.3.8 Working in partnership**

In your role you will be working with people in a variety of situations, which is known as ‘partnership working’

Working relationships fall into four groups:

* Individuals and their friends and family
* Your colleagues and managers
* People from other workplaces, including advocates
* Volunteers and community groups

**Advocate:** Is a trusted, independent person who can speak and act for the individual. They can advise on matters such as benefits and can ensure that the individual’s voice is heard in care planning meetings, making sure that decisions are made in the interests of the individual. The role of advocates and advocacy services are important in some countries due to regulation of care services by the government.

**Some of the people who are involved in providing support to an individual.**

* The person
* The person’s family and friends
* Colleagues doing the same or similar jobs
* Managers and supervisors
* People who do other jobs such as nurses, GPs, physiotherapists, social workers, dieticians
* People who work for charitable organisations
* Religious groups
* Special interest, recreational and support groups.

**1.3.8.1 Effective partnership working**

The effectiveness of partnership working affects the quality of care delivery and the skills and values necessary for it to be effective include:

**Communication** – choosing appropriate ways of communicating, language and avoiding medical terms that the care recipient may not understand. This may require using interpreters, communication aids etc. to communicate effectively

**Record** **keeping** – information must be understandable, accessible, and shared with those who need to know and up to date

* **Trust** – Workers must build working relationships based on trust as this helps to promote openness and honesty and so that everyone is confident that they can rely on the people that they are working with
* **Respect** – Workers must always work in ways that promote respect and, may involve in partnership working play a valuable part in planning and providing care

– Respecting the part that each person must play helps to promote effective partnership working.

Conflicts and disagreements can affect the quality of care provided, and seeking advice from seniors and colleagues (Ujuzi Fursa Africa) who have the experience will help you

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Working well in partnership** | **Failings in partnership working** |
| * Good quality care * Meets all the individual’s needs | * Poor standard of care * Often identified as a factor when things go wrong |