

Ten Ways You Can Support a Resident With a Schizophrenia Diagnosis

Supporting a resident who has schizophrenia can be challenging. Try to see beyond the symptoms and connect with the resident on a personal level. Ensure that residents with a diagnosis of schizophrenia get the support, appropriate level of counseling, and psychiatric care in your facility.



Here are 10 tips for supporting a resident diagnosed with schizophrenia:

1. Foster open communication with the resident and the family.
2. Educate your entire team.
3. Support social connections for the resident.
4. Create an individualized care plan.
5. Create a structured environment.
6. Offer therapeutic activities such as art, music, cognitive exercises, or group activities based on the individual's needs, abilities, strengths, and preferences.
7. Be aware of warning signs that may signal a need for additional support.
8. Use behavioral strategies shared by the resident and family that help with symptom management.
9. Manage medications in collaboration with the individual and the interdisciplinary team to ensure the lowest effective dose. Monitor resident reactions.
10. Work toward gradual dose reduction in medications.

Nursing facilities should work with their psychiatric providers and medical directors to ensure the appropriate professional standards and processes are being implemented related to diagnosing and treating people with schizophrenia.

Sources:

1. Appendix PP of the State Operations Manual and the Minimum Data Set 3.0 Resident Assessment Instrument Manual.
2. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
3. World Health Organization (WHO)
4. American Psychiatry Association.