



OCSCA

Ontario Community  
Support Association

United in our commitment to care

# Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Personal Support Worker Training Standards (1997)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>OPEN LETTERS TO TELL YOU WHO WE ARE</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ROLE OF PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>INDIVIDUALITY OF THE CLIENT</b>	<b>10</b>
Respects the Client	10
Aware of Client Rights	10
Aware of Culturally-Shaped Values	11
Respects the Client's Family	11
<b>ROLE OF PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS</b>	<b>12</b>
Works Under Supervision	12
Works in a Variety of Settings	12
Aware of Workplace Legislation	12
Aware of Strengths and Limitations	12
Works in a Responsible Manner	13
Provides Safe and Effective Support	13
Applies Time Management Techniques	13
Identifies Stress	14
<b>GENERAL ABILITIES</b>	<b>14</b>
Communicates in Either English or French	14
Establishes and Maintains Supportive Relationships	14
Contributes to Care/Support Plan or Service Contract	15
Assists Client to Develop Skills	15
Recognizes Concepts of Interdependence, Independence	15
Uses Concepts of Health Promotion, Maintenance and Rehabilitation	16
Responds to Abuse	16
Recognizes Behaviours	16
Responds to Clients With Cognitive Impairment	17
Promotes a Safe Environment	17
Applies Emergency First Aid	17
<b>ASSISTING WITH ROUTINE ACTIVITIES OF LIVING</b>	<b>18</b>
Assists With Household Activities and Management	18
Prepares Appealing Meals	18
Assists with Routine Activities of Living	19
Assists Families	19
Assists Client with Medications	20
<b>ASSISTING WITH SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>20</b>
Supports and Assists the Client Who is Dying	20
Recognizes Activities Which Require Additional Training	21

## Do You Know Me? Open Letters To Tell You Who We Are

**The following letters have been contributed by people who use—or may use—support services.**

---

You will be bringing your caring abilities and techniques to people in their homes or institutions when assistance is needed.

One day we might meet in my home. Knowing **who I am** could ease the way for both of us.

I am a woman who has had almost 74 years of life experience.

I remember vividly experiencing a wonderful new feeling in my late teens. I felt that I had arrived—could do anything—so strong and so sure of my ideas! I could even change the world!

Disappointment of failure wasn't shattering—there was always hope: tomorrow would be better... tomorrows were infinite.

Today, my tomorrows are not infinite. But my convictions are still strong. I'm full of ideas, and excitement about important things to do, so life will be better for all of us. I'm working to bring my ideas to fruition because my gut feeling tells me - don't give up.

The fire of youth has given way to seasoned wisdom of reality. Optimism at times collides with harsh reality. I am relatively well and active—and deeply involved in Long Term Care Reform.

This year and last, I've been invited to interact with—not lecture—students in Long Term Care Administration and Gerontology classes. Sharing our ideas, has been thought-provoking, stimulating and very exciting. We gain a deeper understanding of each other.

### **What Are Our Differences - Our Similarities?**

Differences

Our age. I have lived longer than you and gone through different stages of life.

Similarities

In important ways we're the same, with the same basic needs. From the day we're born until we die we all have **feelings**. Sensory and visual feelings are reactive and central to all our experiences, influencing and reflecting our emotions. EXAMPLES: Happy, sad, angry, pain, hot, cold, love, hate. The joy of music, art, nature. A hug, a kiss, a smile. Yet the importance of feelings are seldom acknowledged in classrooms or government Long Term Care documents.

I have loved and been loved. Gave birth to a daughter and a son - have a granddaughter

and grandson. I've felt great joy. I've felt unbearable pain and sadness. Today, like many women of my generation, I live alone. Days, even a week can pass without hugs or touch. Loneliness and isolation is the curse of living alone. Depression and illness can follow. Now, I'm well enough to go out and about. I'm stimulated, have a balance, so loneliness is bearable. If illness should confine me to a small apartment, unable to get out, the thought and fear of isolation, lack of stimulation, feeling dependent and imprisoned in a shrinking world becomes unbearable.

Older and disabled people must be recognized by society as an asset, an integral part. Look at what we **can do**, not what we can't. Housing must be planned for today, tomorrow and the future - an inclusive vision.

Client, consumer? Makes me feel like an inanimate object. I am a person - we are people with feelings, fears, concerns, ideas, and great potential.

Recently, walking past a store window, I saw the reflection of an older woman. I was shocked when I realized it was my reflection - that that's how people see me. But it's not the real me. Inside I'm still that young woman.

I wish you growth, excitement and a fulfilling future in a better world.

Thank-you for listening.

**Resource Group Member Esther Jackson**

## What My Attendants Mean to Me

I require my attendants for eight hour shifts, and need them to provide their duties in a wide variety of settings: at home, at school, at work (if I obtain employment), and many other locations in the community, for example, professional offices, mall restaurants, movie theatres, friends' houses and numerous other places. Like many disabled persons, I have an active "normal" lifestyle, facilitated by self-directed attendant care. My attendants are quite simply an indispensable part of the independent life I wish to lead.

The relationship between attendant and consumer or client is complex and elusive of ready definition. To use the concepts of transactional analysis, it is **not** a parent-child relationship, but rather an **adult-adult** relationship. Some elements of the relationship are, obviously, that of employer and employee, while other elements are, perhaps surprisingly, that of friendship. Thus personal compatibility is crucial to a successful and mutually beneficial attendant/attendee relationship.

I do not want someone who will adopt a paternal stance toward me, or assume that I am "sick" rather than have a disabling condition. I am looking for someone who will be both an attendant and a companion to me, someone on the same intellectual wavelength, and with similar broad interests.

**Reviewer Tom Wagner**

Bette Midler's song **The Wind Beneath My Wings** aptly describes what long term support services must continually strive to be... the wind beneath one's wings. Strong, silent, steady and supportive... invisible but essential in enabling individuals to rise to become the best of what they can be in achieving their goals and living their lives."

**Resource Group member Audrey King**

I have been caring for my husband at home for the past 8 years - he suffered a cerebrovascular accident and became cognitively impaired (memory loss and confusion) and his ability to ambulate was seriously affected - he requires 24 hour supervision and assistance with most aspects of activities of daily living.

My goal has been to keep my husband at home and I have been able to do this with the support and encouragement of Home Care and Respite Care Workers.

The life of a caregiver is filled with responsibilities, challenges and frustrations. It is difficult to describe how dependant I am on caring, compassionate, trustworthy workers who are well-trained and respond to the needs as a family and treat my husband with respect, understanding and determination to keep him functioning at his highest possible level.

My "free" time is essential and precious to me and it is made possible by those to whom I entrust my husband's care in my absence, knowing that he will be cared for according to his needs and my wishes.

**Caregiver Ros Lawrason**

Primary caregivers, are those special people who out of love and concern provide unpaid full time care in their home for a chronically ill, disabled, elderly, or mentally-challenged person.

We vary in age and gender. In the process of caring, we put our own lives on hold for the duration of an illness which can last up to 20 years or more. Some of us must walk away from a lucrative career with all it's benefits and dreams for a life of devotion to a family member or friend. The personal sacrifices abound as we go about our busy schedule in a loving and gentle way. As the title of the book written by Nancy Mace suggests, we work a "36 Hour Day" to ensure care and comfort. We become amazingly adept at wearing many hats of responsibility as we switch from caregiver, to spouse, mother, daughter, son, cook, cleaner, gardener, banker, repair person, etc.

It is no surprise that we become skilled case managers, administrators, co-ordinators as we continue to provide hand-on-first care.

Caregiving is a gift of self and time. It is a service, a commitment to provide comfort and

compassionate care, well-laced with love, laughter and joy to validate the life of another. However, the long hours, the sleepless nights, the feelings of concern, worry, acute anxiety, elation and relief that accompany each crisis seriously affect and take their toll on our lives as we experience the gambit of emotions over and over, for the many years that we provide quality and dignity of life. Therefore, for this reason, it is hoped that as you embark upon your new career, you will attempt to walk “in our shoes”. Be gentle, tolerant and respectful towards us—become our friend and ally in the service of others. Do not label us, rather, be sensitive to our responsibilities and needs, for it is a valiant service we render our society.

We truly are our brother’s keepers.

### Primary Caregiver Carmelle Harrison

We have never met, but there are some things I would like to tell you about who I am, why I chose to live in a care facility and what I think should be important to you in the work you have chosen. Some of what I want to say is about me, some about the people I have met here and some is about what I have learned over the past eighty years of my life.

My friends call me Bessie and you can call me that too, since I expect we would become friends if you were part of the staff or a student in the care facility where I have lived the past few years. I think of it as my home now, although I still think about the house my husband and I shared for so many years and about the farm where I was born and brought up.

When I lived in my own home, I could do what I liked, but life got harder for me after my husband died. My five children worried about me. To be truthful, I worried too sometimes. My arthritis and my bad eyesight made it hard for me to clean, to shop, to cook my own meals, even to have a bath by myself and get dressed. Night time scared me. I was afraid of falling and lying there all alone until help came. I was very lonely at times and afraid, but I hung on. I did not want to be a burden to my children or my friends and neighbours.

On the farm we all had to work very hard. My grandmother lived with us until she died. That was the way things were done then. We did not want her to go to the county home, which to us was a fearful place. That fear was probably why I was afraid of growing old and sick and having to go to a home. I struggled to get along on my own after my husband died. Some of our five children lived far away and they all had homes and families of their own to worry about.

It got time to think about moving to a special residence like this one. I chose to come here because it is in the town where I have always lived and two of my children live around here. I am glad I did. Here I have made new friends. Every help I need is here and there are lots of things for me to do, things I enjoy.

One of the best things about my home is the staff. They are mostly friendly and kind. It can be lonely at times, especially for people with no family around. Kind words and love from the staff mean a lot to us all. The staff treat us as people, not just as a job to get done. They give

us choices about where and when and how we get the help we need. That makes us feel important.

One of the hardest things for me to get used to was giving up some of my privacy. Someone has to help me have a bath and someone often has to be in the bathroom while I use the toilet. Things like that can be done in ways that tell me you understand how I feel and I am not as embarrassed.

I like to talk and to hear what is going on in the world. The staff help me to do that. They talk to me about their children and they read the local newspaper to me. Sometimes they ask my advice about things like cooking and fancy work.

Even though I am old, I am still me, Bessie. Remember it is the little things that make a big difference for us. It is not as much what you can do for us physically as how you do it and the kind of person you are that matters. I can give you some examples of what I mean. One day, one of the staff helped me fix my hair when she saw my arthritis was bad. One knew I was sad and worried when my grandson was so sick. She took me for a walk while we talked. Things like this mean a lot, more than you will ever know.

Some of the residents here are very sick and the staff have to do a lot for them. The good staff are gentle and kind and talk to us as they work. They make us feel no bother, but special, a friend. They give us a say about what we want to do and how we want things done for us.

I did not have much schooling, what with working on the farm and getting married young. You should be very proud of the education that lets you do something good with your lives, working to help others. You are helping people like me and all the others you will meet. Remember we are all different, but we all want to be treated as real people. Remember how much we appreciate having you around us. You can be our hands and our feet and our friends. I would like that. I wish you well, not just in your career, but in your life. I hope it is as full and happy as mine has been.

**From the Ontario Association of Residents' Councils**

## Role of Personal Support Workers

### Purpose

Personal support workers respect and support people's desire to be healthy and independent according to their own choices and capabilities. The purpose of the support is to assist persons with the tasks of daily living so that they may participate in their community.

They contribute to the quality of life of individuals who live in facilities and at home by promoting their independence; dignity; social, emotional and physical well-being; mobility; personal appearance; comfort and safety.

They support individuals and their families and may work as a member of a team. They observe and report changes in conditions to the most appropriate person.

The range of services provided by Personal Support Workers depends upon the individual needs of each person they support. Services include:

- **home management (such as shopping, house cleaning and meal preparation);**
- **personal care (such as dressing, personal hygiene, mobility, and other routine activities of living in accordance with the Regulated Health Professions Act);**
- **family responsibilities (such as routine caregiving to children)**
- **social and recreational activities**

Services are provided in homes and apartments in the community, in long term care facilities, congregate housing settings, in the workplace and in educational facilities. Personal Support Workers must be able to adapt to varying

degrees of supervision and in keeping with the consumer/client's requirements and wishes. Personal Support Workers must also be able to adapt to the variety of client settings, and at times, to the varying needs of the client in a particular setting.

### Clients

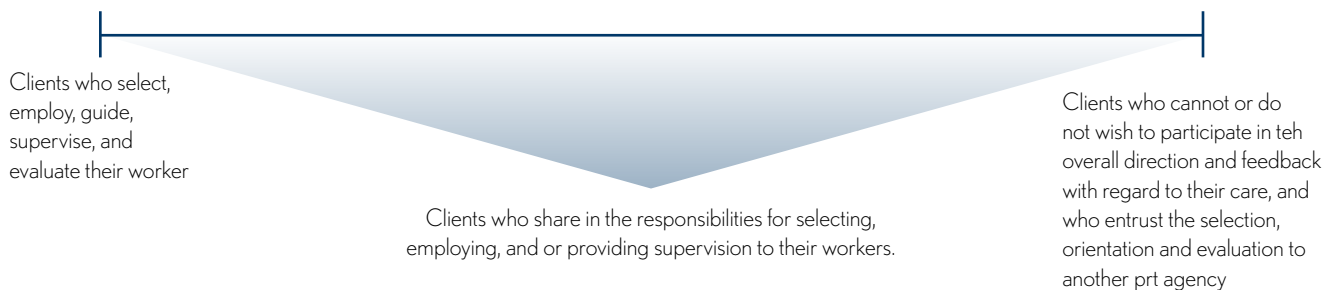
Personal Support Workers provide services to persons who require assistance to carry out their routine living activities. The persons' children and other family members may also benefit from the PSW's services. Although the term client is often used to describe a person the PSW assists, it is understood that the client is a person, first and foremost.

Clients will have varying interest in and/or ability to direct the PSW. In some cases a family caregiver will assist in giving direction; in others that responsibility will rest with an agency or facility. The PSW must value their clients' right to self-determination and control of their environment. The PSW must support and follow as much as possible their client's direction and preferences about the services to be provided. They must show initiative and sound judgment when serving clients who have a limited ability to direct their own services. The PSW's goal must be to optimize their clients' independence, expression of preferences and participation in daily activities. (See figure 1)

While PSWs are expected to use judgement in responding to the needs of persons within the boundaries of their role, they are not expected to diagnose, assess, or to respond to acute or unexpected situations (beyond any emergency assistance which might be required). These responsibilities are left to the persons (client, professional, or caregiver in any combination) whose role is to organize and monitor the services provided.

Figure 1

### THE PARTICIPATION CONTINUUM



## Accountability

---

Personal Support Workers must always work within the bounds of applicable legislation and regulation. They are also accountable to:

### 1. clients and/or family caregivers

PSWs respond to their client's preferences within the service/support plan. This plan is negotiated with clients (or their substitute decision-maker) and the case manager. In many cases, PSWs may contribute to a plan when it is being developed and reviewed. In all cases, they provide services in support of the plan, and communicate observations to the most appropriate person.

### 2. employing agency or facility

PSWs honour the mission, mandate, philosophy, values and training standards as set out in this document and their employer. The employer is responsible for providing sufficient administrative, training and supervisory support to create a healthy, high-quality working relationship between the client, family caregiver and the PSW. PSWs are responsible to perform only those activities for which they have received the necessary training and support, and for which they are competent.

### 3. professionals with whom they work on particular aspects of a support plan

PSWs are responsible for following the instructions given by health professionals, as a part of the plan of support or care. They observe and report conditions as instructed, after consultation with their supervisor.

With appropriate assistance, PSWs must try to resolve conflicting directions from client, family, employer and health professionals. They must also recognize when a conflict must be referred to another member of the team.

The focus of training is to provide PSWs with abilities that they will be able to use in a client setting. Like any training, it does not guarantee that the PSWs will be able to use all abilities in every work setting. While most employers would make use of many of the abilities PSWs may possess, they

may establish boundaries which exclude the performance of some abilities, or establish criteria under which certain abilities may be performed. As well, they may provide specific training beyond that described in the training standards and in compliance with any legislated or regulated requirements. They may also set policies and procedures with regard to the way in which an ability is carried out.

## Common Values That Guide the Approach of A Personal Support Worker

---

Certain values form the basis of all actions of the PSW and are incorporated in each of the training standards Personal Support Workers must attain. These values are as follows:

1. **Client rights to confidentiality, privacy, independence, well-being, choice and self-determination are both supported and promoted by the PSW.**
2. **Services are individualized to suit the preferences and directions of the client.**
3. **The client is accorded the respect and dignity that is their right.**
4. **Service is provided in a manner sensitive to the various unique differences of clients (including culture, religious values and beliefs).**
5. **The importance of family, friends and other caregivers roles in the overall provision of service is to be respected and supported.**
6. **The PSW values the collaboration and works as a member of a team which includes clients, family caregivers and other service providers.**

## Individuality of the Client

### Standard - Respects the Client

Personal Support Workers respect each client as an individual with unique personality, interests and needs—emotional, mental, social, spiritual, cultural and physical.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Recognize that the client has a variety of life experiences and has methods of meeting needs that are unique to him/her.
- b) Recognize the importance of these needs - physical, emotional, mental, social, recreational, spiritual and cultural - to the client and apply this information as appropriate to their work.
- c) Recognize what the client enjoys; support the client in maintaining roles and activities of interest.
- d) Respect individual rights and preferences, specifically regarding lifestyle.
- e) Support the client's self-esteem; foster a sense of purpose and well-being.
- f) Recognize the importance to the client of any condition or changes in function.
- g) Respect the client's right to privacy and to be treated with dignity.

### Standard - Aware of Client Rights

Personal Support Workers recognize that the client has rights including the right to make choices, to participate in directing the support Personal Support Workers provide and to take risks. Personal Support Workers respect their client's decisions in light of these rights. Where the client's ability to understand the consequence of choices or risk has been identified as diminished, Personal Support Workers recognize and respect that their client may still be able to make choices in some situations and support them in doing so, in accordance with a plan of support or care.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Recognize rights as applicable to all clients.
- b) Recognize legislated sources of rights including: Charter of Rights & Freedoms; Advocacy Act, Consent to Treatment Act, Substitute Decisions Act, Long Term Care Statutes Law Amendment Act (Bill 101, and the acts it amends) and how these rights affect the Personal Support Worker's role.
- c) Recognize that some clients have diminished ability or interest; identify that diminished interest and/or ability in one aspect may not suggest diminished interest and/or ability in all.
- d) Distinguish between the issue of risk-taking and responsibility for safety; clarify issues of concern with support of supervisor.
- e) Respect that their client's right to make choices, take risks and have control over her/his life is closely related to sense of self and dignity.
- f) Recognize potential personal feelings of responsibility for a client's safety and view these in light of the right of the client to take risks and the care/support plan; clarify issues of concern with the client and supervisor.
- g) Choose the least restrictive alternative for the client when providing assistance.
- h) Respect that restraint is an extreme measure of control and is used only in accordance with a client's plan of support/care.
- i) Recognize the client's right to refuse assistance or treatment.

## Standard - Aware of Culturally-Shaped Values

---

Personal Support Workers possess an awareness of their own culturally-shaped values. They show awareness of and respect for cultural, linguistic and religious differences among clients while providing care or support.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Recognize the impact of their own culturally-shaped values, as well as individual attitudes toward other cultural groups on their ability to provide assistance and support to clients and to take measures to minimize negative impact of these values and attitudes.
- b) Recognize the cultural significance to the client of health, ongoing conditions, illness, or impending death, as well as attitudes toward support services and/or medical care. Adapt their support so as to maximize the client's comfort.
- c) Recognize and respect ways in which a client's culture influences communication. Adapt their communication style so as to be effective. When necessary, seek support needed to effectively communicate.
- d) Identify personal needs for cultural/religious information as it relates to their work; take steps to meet these needs.
- e) Recognize impact of personal behaviours which may be seen as racist or sexist; take steps to eliminate/minimize these behaviours.
- f) Appropriately respond to client and family caregiver behaviours which may be seen as racist, sexist or ageist.

## Standard - Respects the Client's Family

---

Personal Support Workers recognize the client's family and friends and respect the client's relationships with them. They recognize that both the client and caregiver may have needs for support and respond to these needs in accordance with their role and the client's support plan.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Recognize the role(s) of family and friends, including the significance of their role to the client.
- b) Identify with the client and/or supervisor, their role in providing support (including to whom and to what extent support is provided) and to work within the scope of that role.
- c) Identify their personal expectations about the role of friends and family and take steps to prevent those expectations from negatively affecting their work with the client or the client's family.
- d) Recognize factors that might affect a client and/or their family member's acceptance of support and respond to those factors in light of their role.
- e) Recognize that conflicts between clients, other caregivers and support workers sometimes occur; make an attempt to resolve the issue using the appropriate resources.

## Role of Personal Support Workers

### Standard - Works Under Supervision

Personal Support Workers practise under the supervision of the employer or the client or the family caregiver. They respect the scope of the role as identified by the supervisor, within the bounds of training and legislation.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify their role and scope of practice in relation to the client, family, other team members and supervisor
- b) Perform activities within the boundaries set by their job description, within the bounds of their ability and applicable legislation.
- c) Identify possible consequences should they exceed their role.
- d) Seek the guidance of their supervisor when necessary.
- e) Follow their supervisor's direction.
- f) Seek to resolve issues of concern with regard to guidance and boundaries with the persons involved (client, supervisor, etc.).
- g) Identify methods used to resolve a problem available through agency policies and procedures or legislation.

### Standard - Works in a Variety of Settings

Personal Support Workers are able to work in a variety of settings.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify the types of settings in which they can work (e.g. client's home, group home, long term care facility, school, workplace).
- b) Adapt to the settings, within the scope of their role as defined by the agency or client, within the bounds of their ability and legislation.
- c) Recognize and respect the role of the client as well as any family, friends or others providing support.
- d) Adapt to variations in routine between and within each client's settings.

### Standard - Aware of Workplace Legislation

Personal Support Workers take part in identifying and working to resolve areas of concern in the workplace. They are aware of agency policies and procedures as well as the general intent of workplace legislation that applies to their employment.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Recognize legislation that is relevant to their work, including: The Human Rights Code, Child & Family Services Act, Occupational Health & Safety Act, Workers' Compensation Act, and The Long Term Care Statutes Law Amendment Act (Bill 101), and the acts that it amends.
- b) Locate information with regard to legislation; act in accordance with their rights and responsibilities as provided by legislation.
- c) Recognize issues or problems and the processes available to resolve them.

### Standard - Aware of Strengths and Limitations

Personal Support Workers are aware of their own strengths and limitations. They work effectively as a member of a support team referring problems beyond their role to the appropriate team member.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Describe the possible effect of their strengths and limitations relative to the quality of support provided to the client.
- b) Identify possible legal consequences should they exceed their role.
- c) Refer issues beyond their role to the appropriate team member.
- d) Identify personal needs to maintain/enhance their own skills and knowledge; seek opportunities to meet those needs.

## Standard - Works in a Responsible Manner

---

Personal Support Workers work in a responsible manner.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Maintain confidentiality of information about the client and family.
- b) Assume responsibility for own actions; admit mistakes, take corrective action; and take steps to prevent repetition of a mistake.
- c) Be reliable and consistent; to arrive at work on time, at the right location and to complete the full shift.
- d) Give reasonable notice if changes need to be made in the work schedule.
- e) Treat the belongings of the client with respect and care, taking care to return belongings to their designated spot.
- f) Accept the job requested by the employer (client, caregiver, agency) and advises the employer of reasons if unable for any reason to complete the assignment.
- g) Refrain from selling items to clients, requesting tips, loans, or other gifts; seek guidance of supervisor before accepting gifts.
- h) Ensure that their personal activities and needs do not interfere with their judgement and performance of the job.
- i) Refrain from imposing their personal problems, lifestyle and opinion onto the client.
- j) Dress appropriately for safety, the work to be done, the setting in which it is to be done, and any agency guidelines.
- k) Recognize issues or problems which, if discussed with the appropriate person(s) (client, supervisor, co-worker, etc.) might be resolved and if so, take steps to resolve them.

## Standard - Provides Safe and Effective Support

---

Personal Support Workers provide safe and effective support to meet the comfort needs of the client. They seek guidance from their supervisor or client to adapt the support so as to most closely meet the client's expectations and the need to perform the mechanics of the task safely.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify with the client (or if appropriate, the family caregiver or the supervisor) the client's particular needs with regard to assistance with activities of living.
- b) Adapt the task as much as possible in order to meet the client's preferences, while maintaining the essential principles of safety and comfort involved in performing the task, within the boundaries of the support/care plan.
- c) Work with the client (and the supervisor if necessary) to resolve any concerns regarding the methods.
- d) Recognize limitation of their role and request assistance from other resources (supervisor, family, therapists, etc.) with client understanding and agreement.

## Standard - Applies Time Management Techniques

---

Personal Support Workers apply time management techniques to work loads and multiple demands upon time.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Balance multiple demands upon time.
- b) Set safe priorities.
- c) Recognize when duties required exceed time constraints or are too complex for the time provided; work with the client or supervisor to resolve the issue.

## Standard - Identifies Stress

Personal Support Workers are able to identify signs of stress in themselves and others; possible sources of personal stress; and signs of excess stress. They are able to use appropriate techniques to manage personal stress.

## Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Describe general causes of stress; identify potential sources of stress, including workplace and personal sources.
- b) Recognize the indicators of stress.
- c) Identify and apply techniques used to manage stress.
- d) Identify and make use of workplace resources to deal with stress as needed.

## General Abilities

## Standard - Communicates in Either English or French

Personal Support Workers are able to read, write, and speak in either English or French. They are able to ask for clarification when communication is unclear or not fully understood.

## Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Read, understand and relate agency policies and procedures to the specific job or task.
- b) Read and understand written memos, referrals, care or support plans, daily or incident reports as they relate to their job.
- c) Clearly communicate information to client, caregiver, supervisor and other support workers in oral and written form.
- d) Clearly document information using appropriate terminology as legislation and the employer requires.
- e) Identify areas of concern and ask for clarification as required.

## Standard - Establishes and Maintains Supportive Relationships

Personal Support Workers are able to establish and maintain a supportive relationship with the client and others. They practice effective verbal and nonverbal communication with the client, the client's family and friends, members of the support team and others.

## Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Describe the concept of interpersonal skills and their role in maintaining the relationship between the worker and client.
- b) Identify general cultural differences in approaches to communication and apply this information to their work setting.
- c) Demonstrate empathy, respect, encouragement and clarity in communication.
- d) Identify personal barriers to communication and take steps to minimize the effect of these barriers.
- e) Be aware of own non-verbal communication and how it may be interpreted by the client.
- f) Use communication techniques such as identifying client's perspective, responding to nonverbal communication, active listening, clarifying and giving clear feedback to attain clear communication.
- g) Adapt their method of communication to facilitate understanding.
- h) Identify possible barriers to communication related to common vision, hearing, speech and language problems; adapt communication to minimize these effects.

- i) Use communication aids (sign boards, picture boards, communication cards, etc.) and appropriate techniques to facilitate communication.
- j) Encourage any efforts by the client to communicate.
- k) Provide basic orienting information to clients.
- l) Apply basic problem-solving techniques as appropriate.

## Standard - Contributes to Care/Support Plan or Service Contract

---

Personal Support Workers are able to contribute to the client's support/care plan or service contract, in accordance with the employer/client's guidelines. They are able to implement parts of the plan as required and to communicate information about the client accurately and without pre-judgement.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify the purpose of the support/care plan or service contract; recognize common types of plans/contracts.
- b) Identify the role and extent of their participation in the plan or contract; recognize that the role and extent may vary from client to client.
- c) Support the client's participation in planning the services to be provided; encourage the client to identify preferred techniques and priorities.
- d) Assist other members of the team in identifying the client's needs and identifying/evaluating techniques to meet those needs.
- e) Implement the portions of the support/care plan or contract as delegated.
- e) Accurately and objectively observe and record both positive and negative effects of the support plan.
- f) Accurately and objectively communicate observations to members of support team.

## Standard - Assists Client to Develop Skills

---

The graduate is able to reinforce teaching by providing information and assisting the client to practice new or redeveloped skills, in keeping with a support or care plan.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Describe her/his role in supporting a client to develop or

regain skill as one of support and assistance to the client.

- b) Identify general characteristics of learners of various ages (child, youth, adult, older adult); relate these characteristics to the client's situation.
- c) Respect the client's interest in learning and preference for what, how and when they learn.
- d) Recognize the effect fatigue, illness and disability can have on a client's interest in and stamina for learning.
- e) Support the client's confidence, assist in clarifying goals and removing obstacles.
- f) Recognize client learning needs which exceed their scope of ability; and to refer these needs to the appropriate team member.

## Standard - Recognizes Concepts of Interdependence, Independence

---

Personal Support Workers recognize the concept of interdependence and independence as those which apply to all persons, regardless of their ability to perform a task. As such, they identify the support or care as simply the means by which the client is able to accomplish what she/he needs to accomplish and would otherwise do for her/himself.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Define the meaning of the concept of interdependence (the reliance upon cooperation and mutual support that all persons have on each other); relate it to situations in their own life, as well as that of a client's.
- b) Describe and support the concept of independence (the ability to prioritize needs and set goals, take responsibility to make decisions, take necessary actions to attain the goals regardless of the ability to physically perform a task without assistance.)
- c) Recognize the possible impact loss of ability (physical or cognitive) might have on the client and to identify ways in which they can assist the client to minimize this impact.
- d) Support the client's independence as defined above and in so doing, encourage the client's involvement in directing tasks, in keeping with the client's interest and ability as well as Personal Support Workers's safety.
- e) Encourage the client to participate in their home and community life in ways meaningful to him/her.

## Standard - Uses Concepts of Health Promotion, Maintenance and Rehabilitation

Personal Support Workers recognize the concepts of prevention, health promotion, maintenance and rehabilitation and applies these concepts as indicated by the client or appropriate professional to the clients with whom they works.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- Use the concept of prevention, health promotion, maintenance and rehabilitation as indicated by the client or appropriate professional in care/support provided to the client.
- Identify barriers to a client's functioning (physical, social, emotional or cognitive); assist the client (in keeping with any identified plan of care or support) to address these barriers.
- Recognize factors which can influence the behaviour of the client who requires assistance in activities of daily living.
- Assist the client as appropriate to maximize their ability and to minimize the risk of additional disability, in keeping with the client's preferences and the support/care plan.

## Standard - Responds to Abuse

Personal Support Workers identify the concept of abuse and are able to recognize both causes and indicators. They are able to identify the requirements of legislation and to respond in accordance with legislation, employer policy and provisions of the support plan. They recognize that the Personal Support Worker may also be the focus of abuse.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- Identify the concept of abuse as an issue of power and control which can apply to children, spouses/partners, older adults, persons with disabilities, and their caregivers.
- Recognize possible signs of abuse and report observations to the appropriate person.
- Identify appropriate actions to be taken (including any legal obligations for reporting) in keeping with agency guidelines and the client's support plan.
- Identify situations which might reflect abuse of Personal Support Workers; appropriately deal with situation at the time; identify with supervisor other actions in keeping with agency policy and legislation.

## Standard - Recognizes Behaviours

Personal Support Workers recognize that behaviours or changes in behaviours can be related to an illness or other condition and reports any observations to the appropriate team member. They also identify factors which can increase risk of suicide and recognize signs of possible suicidal behaviour. They make use of appropriate responses to behaviours, as identified in the support/care plan.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- Recognize changes in behaviour which may be related to certain illnesses, conditions, or situations (i.e. depression, bi-polar affective disorder, schizophrenia, forms of cognitive impairment, substance abuse).
- Recognize that behaviours related to a sense of sadness or "feeling down" are among the most common of older adults.
- Recognize that behaviours are often misinterpreted; ensure that s/he is aware of any diagnosis/assessment related to the behaviour, identified approaches, and their expected outcomes.
- Recognize that behaviours may or may not be intentional, and may be caused by a variety of factors (environmental, physical, interpersonal, etc.)
- Objectively report concerns and observations of changes to the appropriate person.
- Recognize the potential significance of her/his support; demonstrate ways in which s/he can support/respond to the client, in keeping with the care/support plan.
- Recognize when unexpected client behaviour requires an immediate response as well as a report to supervisor
- Demonstrate methods to maintain client and personal safety in preventing and responding to behaviours.
- Identify personal views about suicide and examine how these views may affect the service provided to a client.
- Identify factors which can increase risk of suicide in adults.
- Recognize possible indicators of suicidal behaviour.

## Standard - Responds to Clients With Cognitive Impairment

---

Personal Support Workers recognize that cognitive impairment can be the result of either reversible or irreversible conditions. They recognize the signs of cognitive impairment and use approaches and techniques to assist clients with varying degrees of cognitive impairment. As well, PSWs may also assist the client's family and/or friends to support the client.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Describe cognitive impairment as a difficulty with concentration, memory and understanding information, which causes significant changes in behaviour, personality a person's perception of the world, and their interactions with others.
- b) Recognize that impairment may be caused by reversible as well as irreversible conditions
- c) Identify common misconceptions about cognitive impairment.
- d) Identify the common effects cognitive impairment may have on a client's perception, memory, judgement/organization, language, and motor skill, and how these effects may vary with severity of the impairment.
- e) Recognize the individuality of impairment, identify that impairment in one area may not indicate impairment in another.
- f) Identify factors such as illness, fatigue, stress, sensory overload, pain, fear, frustration and depression which can further affect the functioning of the person with cognitive impairment.
- g) Identify environmental factors which can affect the client's ability to function; adapt the client's environment to support comfort, safety and function.
- h) Identify the need for, and importance of communication with the client; adapt communication to best meet the needs of the client.
- i) Apply common encouragement and stimulation techniques to provide the client with the opportunity to participate in activities.
- h) Identify common behaviours associated with cognitive impairment and their possible causes; use appropriate methods to respond to behaviours.
- i) Recognize the need for consistency in approach.

- j) Recognize the importance of observing responses to prescribed approaches and changes in the client's behaviour
- k) Identify common demands on family caregivers; provide support to the family caregiver in keeping with the plan of care or support.

## Standard - Promotes a Safe Environment

---

Personal Support Workers practise measures which promote a comfortable and safe environment for both the client and themselves.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify unsafe situations in a facility and a private home and state steps to prevent injury to the consumer/client or to the PA/PSW
- b) Use knowledge of Occupational Health and Safety Legislation
- c) Identify equipment and safety measures related to equipment commonly used in a facility and home.
- d) Complete, in accordance with agency policy, an incident following an unusual occurrence
- e) Identify potential fire hazards in a facility/ home and actions to take in event of fire.
- f) Handle and store hazardous products safely.
- g) Identify steps to minimize contamination or cross-infection

## Standard - Applies Emergency First Aid

---

Personal Support Workers has knowledge of situations which require immediate attention and is able to give the appropriate emergency aid.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Contact emergency services
- b) Apply appropriate emergency aid to conscious or unconscious clients with: airway obstructions, bleeding, fractures, burns, possible head or spinal cord injuries, hypo or hyperthermia, or suspected poisoning or allergic reactions
- c) Apply cardiopulmonary resuscitation to infants, children and adults in keeping with Heart & Stroke

Foundation standards, unless specific instructions against resuscitation are recorded in the plan of care and support.

- d) Recognize predetermined differences in a client's reactions to injury; apply appropriate predetermined adaptations to the techniques to meet the need of a client with specific physical disabilities.

- e) Report any emergency assistance given in accordance with agency policy.

## Assisting with Routine Activities of Living

### Standard - Assists With Household Activities and Management

Personal Support Workers are able to assist with household activities and household management, in accordance with preferences, comfort and safety of the client.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify with the client both short and long-term priorities for household activities and the client's level of involvement in these activities.
- b) Support the client's involvement in household activities as they wish.
- c) Organize (in accordance with the client's priorities and preferences as well as principles of time management) the various tasks of the visit so as to minimize effort and resource use.
- d) Assist the client/family to plan work so as to meet ongoing needs.
- e) Perform general household tasks (housekeeping, laundry) safely and appropriately.
- f) Safely operate and care for standard household equipment, including kitchen, laundry and vacuuming equipment.
- g) Report hazardous equipment to supervisor.
- h) Assist the client with shopping without taking excess control, including respect for the client's preferences with regard to time and location.
- i) Shop for the client, in accordance with their wishes and particular requirements, if requested.
- j) Handle money for the client as part of a plan of support or care, and if so, does so responsibly and in keeping with employer guidelines, keeping records of transactions as required.

### Standard - Prepares Appealing Meals

Personal Support Workers are able to prepare appealing meals in accordance with the client's directions, preferences, budget, storage and cooking facilities. They also prepare meals to be eaten at a later date and meals conforming to a special diet. Where appropriate, they prepare meals and snacks for family members, in accordance with their needs and preferences. In all cases, Personal Support Workers respect the right of the client to determine what and when they eat.

#### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Prepare a nutritious well-balanced menu, under the client's direction, in accordance with client preferences and if requested by the client, assist in selecting nutritious foods in keeping with Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.
- b) Assist the client to prepare a shopping list respecting personal preferences, budget and storage limitations, interpret unit pricing, grade, ingredient and date labels when shopping
- c) Safely store and handle food.
- d) Follow a recipe and make common substitutions for ingredients.
- e) Serve foods so as to be appealing to the client with regard to presentation, temperature and portion size.
- f) Adapt techniques to meet identified special dietary needs, including those of infants, pregnant or nursing mothers and others who require a 'special diet', as well as cultural or religious dietary preferences.
- g) Operate equipment, commonly used in meal preparation, including conventional, microwave and/or convection ovens.
- h) Report to supervisor if food is repeatedly unavailable or budget insufficient.

## Standard - Assists with Routine Activities of Living

---

Personal Support Workers have the appropriate knowledge, skill and attitude to assist the client with routine activities of living. They recognize the importance of providing assistance in a way which supports the client's sense of control, self-determination and well-being, and so that the client feels well served by their actions.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Use knowledge of how the body works, normal aging, changes in function, and responses to common conditions when assisting the client with routines activities of living.
- b) Use concepts of prevention, maintenance, rehabilitation, and palliation as appropriate to support maximum function and comfort of the client.
- c) Provide appropriate assistance to the client, taking into consideration the individual needs and preferences, with: eating, drinking, toileting, menstrual care, skin care, full or partial bathing (tub, shower, whirlpool, basin, bed), mouth care, nail care (according to agency policy), hair care (grooming and washing), shaving, dressing, undressing, general grooming and making an occupied bed.
- d) Use common adaptive devices and techniques as identified by the client or in the support/care plan.
- e) Assist the client with prosthetic devices.
- f) Assist the client to move from one place to another using the designated transfer or lift and making use of appropriate equipment so as to provide for client and graduate safety and comfort.
- g) Promote proper positioning in bed and chair for comfort and safety of the client.
- h) Assist the client with active range of motion exercises as prescribed
- i) Assist the client with ambulation in keeping with the support/care plan.
- j) Assist with measures to enhance continence, as per the support/care plan.
- k) Use appropriate isolation technique used to control the spread of communicable diseases as directed by supervisor or local health department.
- l) Clean and tidy areas after assistance is provided.
- m) Performs the following tasks, if part of an identified support/care plan, or requested by the client or a health professional:

- m.1 Apply an external catheter using appropriate technique.
- m.2 Empty urinary drainage bag of permanent catheter using clean technique as per care plan.
- m.3 Empty colostomy bag as per care plan.
- m.4 Apply heat or cold to intact skin, in keeping with a client's support/care plan.
- m.5 Measure and record height and weight.
- m.6 Take and record a client's pulse, respirations, and oral or axillary temperature; take appropriate action as identified in the support/care plan.
- m.7 Measure and record daily intake and output of fluid if requested to by a physician or nurse.
- m.8 Collect urine, stool or sputum specimens for the lab using clean technique.
- n) Identify conditions which require assistance beyond their abilities and report to the supervisor.

## Standard - Assists Families

---

Personal Support Workers assists families in a variety of settings. Personal Support Workers respect the roles and relationships within the family and assists within the guidelines set out in the support/care plan, or established by the client for whom they provides service and/or the employer.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Recognize the effect Personal Support Worker's presence can have on the family unit and take steps to minimize any negative impact.
- b) Recognize that caregivers may have difficulty accepting assistance; assist caregivers to accept the respite that PSW's presence provides.
- c) Identify with the client or supervisor the specific role Personal Support Workers are to fulfil; respect the wishes of the client with regard to this role.
- d) Demonstrate routine child and infant care, in keeping with the support/care plan.
- e) Support family members to develop and use skills as appropriate to the setting, such as balancing caregiving and rest, as well as infant and child care and parenting skills, in accordance with a support/care plan.
- f) Identify common signs and symptoms of conditions associated with the family setting: including post partum

depression, strain or burn out. Reports these in keeping with employer guidelines.

- g) Assist, in accordance with a plan of support/care, the child with special needs and their family.

## Standard - Assists Client with Medications

Personal Support Workers are able to provide specific assistance with medications (oral, topical, eye, nose or ear drops) to the client, in keeping with the directions stated in the client's care/support plan, and under the direction and monitoring of a health professional. PSWs are not expected to exercise any judgement in administration beyond that required to assist the client.

### Learning outcomes

The Personal Support Workers will be able to:

- a) Describe the continuing role of the health professional in the monitoring of the outcomes of drug therapy as well as

in assuring the PSW's ability to assist the client.

- b) Describe the general purpose of medications and the expected outcomes of their use.
- c) Accurately follow directions for administration of a medication.
- d) Accurately measure liquid medications according to directions.
- e) Demonstrate the required dexterity to assist with the administration of medications.
- f) Recognize changes in a client's behaviour and or condition; report changes to the professional responsible.
- g) Seek guidance of the person responsible (case manager, supervisor, physician, pharmacist, etc.) with regard to questions about storage and administration.

## Assisting with Specific Activities

### Standard - Supports and Assists the Client Who is Dying

Personal Support Workers provide support and assistance to the client who is dying. As a part of this assistance, they may also provide support to the client's family/friends.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify personal reactions to life threatening illness, dying, and palliation
- b) Recognize the impact of life-threatening conditions on the client and her/his family/friends.
- c) Relate knowledge about the process of dying to the client's setting
- d) Apply concept of palliation to the client's setting
- e) Recognize the needs of the client, her/his family & friends to work through the process of dying, deal with the uncertainly and expected loss, and prepare for death.
- f) Assist clients to maintain a lifestyle acceptable to her/him while ill or dying
- g) Recognize the rights of the client, family member or designated other in decisions regarding consent to treatment, living wills and "do not resuscitate" orders as identified in the care plan.
- h) Assist in discomfort and pain-reducing techniques, as identified in a plan of care/support
- i) Carry out the activities required at the time of death, in keeping with the support/care plan.
- j) Care for the body after apparent death, according to agency policy or as outlined in the plan of support or care.
- k) Recognize grief of the family and friends; use active listening skills to assist grieving persons, as a part of the support/care plan.
- l) Recognize personal grief.

## Standard - Recognizes Activities Which Require Additional Training

---

Personal Support Workers recognize procedures that are included in the training standards as distinct from those procedures which are not included and require additional training. They recognize that these additional skills may be taught in a specific work situation, and in many cases training may be specific to a client.

### Learning outcomes

Personal Support Workers are able to:

- a) Identify that any procedure not taught within the Personal Support Worker Programme is considered to require training by the client, their designate, or an appropriate professional prior to its use. These procedures include (but are not limited to):
  - i providing specific types of support to a client with substance abuse or significant psychiatric problems
  - ii performing specific tasks, such as giving an enema or suppository, taking blood pressure, taking rectal temperature, using a glucometer and other procedures governed by the Regulated Health Professions Act.
- b) Identify and discuss with the appropriate person any concerns with regard to these procedures.