

Gloucestershire Dementia CARE Tool

C

Communication

- Call me by my preferred name
- Do I have my hearing aids or glasses on?
- A lower pitched, calm voice will help me to understand
- Use short sentences and slow down your speech
- Try not to ask me lots of questions at once - avoid factual questions!

A

Approach

- Approach me from the front and come towards my dominant side
- Let me see and hear you, if possible, before you use touch
- Come down to my eye level, smile and raise your hand to the side of your face to engage my attention. Lean out.
- Move in closer once you get my attention and judge it's ok.

R

Resources

- What do you know about me before you support me?
- Check my This is Me, My Life Tree and At a Glance
- Do you know my previous occupation or interests?
- Check My Music Profile and use My Music during support
- Consider PINCHMES and 4AT if I'm more confused or withdrawn than usual - especially if it's a sudden change.

E

Environment

- Is my bed or chair facing the door?
- Am I too hot or too cold?
- Do I need contrasting cups and plates?
- Do I prefer to be on my own in my room or in the day room with others?
- Is it too noisy or too quiet?
- Do I have a special object for comfort such as a cushion, teddy or cardigan to keep with me?

Additional communication considerations

- **I may have lost some understanding of language** so try short 'chunks' of information, one 'chunk' at a time.
- **Pictures may help me** if I don't understand your words.
- **Consider various ways to respond to me if I get distressed** such as validation, reassurance, diversion and entering into my reality.

Additional approach considerations

- **I may have lost my peripheral vision** (edge vision). This is why it is important to approach me from the front and at my eye level due to changes in my visual field.
- **Stay about a metre away until you have my attention** and move towards me in a calm and relaxed way. This will give me
- Time and help prevent my fight or flight response being triggered.
- **The 'butterfly handhold' can help me with connection through touch.** This may be helpful to support me with eating, drinking, dressing and brushing my hair and teeth if my 'skills fingers' don't work so well.

Additional resource considerations

- **Always check my 'This is me', My Life Tree' and 'At a Glance / enriched model'** for information in order to gain some understanding of who I am.
- **Use the 'Glos 5 Step Approach' with a RAG plan** if I am distressed and behaving in ways that you find challenging.
- **Use PAINAD and Abbey Scales** to check if I'm in pain.
- **Use PINCHMES to check if I have delirium** if there is a sudden change in behaviour /orientation, check, is there a treatable cause?
- **Is there something in my previous profession or life** that may help you to understand why I do something in a certain way?

Additional environment considerations

- **Can the environment be adapted** to assist me?
- **Contrasting coloured plates and cups** may help with my altered vision.
- **Red tape around a door handle or on a light switch** may help me see it more clearly.
- If a door is closed I probably won't understand what might be behind it so **a picture will help.** For example, a picture of the toilet on the door.
- **Talk with my family and friends:** share resources, check do I have an attachment to a special object that may provide comfort to me.
- **Can I be supported in a quieter room?** Is this why I am up a lot. If I am up in the night is there a low light on for me. This could help prevent visual disturbances. Do I need a quieter room?
- **What information about me is available** for all the care team to see?

For further information, visit the Gloucestershire Dementia CARE Tool pages of the staff intranet or scan the QR code.
intranet.ghc.nhs.uk/i/dementia-care-tool

