



Tip #5: The Power of Huddles: Making Sure We Are All Looking at the Same Picture

What is a huddle?

Caregivers gather to briefly exchange information, share observations and develop strategy. Use huddles to share insights about what really helps each resident feel comfortable and understood, so that all caregivers are equipped to provide the best person-centered care.

What is a shift huddle?

Certified nursing assistants (CNAs) and nurses meet at shift changes to discuss quality of life, care risks and opportunities for specific residents. CNAs from the outgoing shift lead the discussion about the residents in their care, followed by nurses' sharing their contributions and then other involved staff or departments can also share. Conducted while standing or while walking from room to room, a shift huddle takes 15 minutes or less, and management provides caregiver coverage during the huddle.

Why huddle?

A huddle, also called a "time out," puts heads together on a new challenge or to exchange helpful information. Huddles encourage everyone involved with the residents to compare relevant observations and to problem-solve. Successful huddles build teamwork, identify potential issues and improve the care provided by the team.

Examples of huddle discussions include talking about how well a resident at risk for pressure ulcers ate and drank or any relevant positioning issues, the interactions and activity participation of someone who has seemed depressed or observed changes in a resident who seems out of sorts.

Other huddle topics include: Resident reports by exception • Residents due for MDS • New/leaving residents • New/leaving caregivers • Events/incidents/accidents • Resident concerns/compliments

Action Items

- Try a pilot test of huddles with one charge nurse and CNA team.
- Use INTERACTII *Stop and Watch* for good examples of issues to note.
- Be sure huddles are positive and supportive and an opportunity for team-building.
- Come up with a consistently used name for your facility's huddles based on when you have them. Examples include *Shift Huddles*, *QI Huddles*, *New Resident Huddles* or *Everyone Stands Together Huddles*.

Additional Resources

- The above information was adapted from *Huddles Tip Sheet* by B&F Consulting for Pioneer Network. Find it at the Advancing Excellence website at <https://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/files/HuddleTips.pdf>.
- Visit www.BandFConsultingInc.com/WhatYouDoMatters to watch short videos on huddles.



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