

Cindy Story



Why did you choose the adult services as a career? I chose this field because caring for the elderly population is a challenging yet rewarding career. Over the last twenty-one months working in the assisted living/memory care setting has been an outstanding opportunity. The challenge is that every person has different abilities and it is amazing if you have the patience to see them grow in self-reliance when you allow them to do as much for themselves as they can with nothing more than a little encouragement. I find it rewarding to see the joy on their faces as a result of accomplishing tasks the many of us take for granted. I want to use my critical thinking skills to help the older population because their health can change quickly and care providers need to be in tune with the many nuances of their overall health to catch any changes. I find it rewarding when the residents give me a smile when I know they have had a rough day. Some of them do not have families that see them that often and they can be very lonely; some have told me as much and it makes me feel like I am making a difference in their lives when I can be there for them, take care of them with respect and give them the dignity they deserve.

What do you want to do with your life and how do you hope to impact the older adult services profession? I would like to work in long term care facilities to gain experience once I graduate with my ASDN next year. While working in the long term facilities I will be working toward my goal of earning my BSN. During this time I hope to gain the knowledge of the many challenges that face the older adult community, such as serious illnesses that can cause discomfort, incontinent cares that can lead to skin break down, pressure ulcers that can cause infection. I want to learn and be able to identify potential problems that may arise quickly and catch them in time to reduce health problems that can lead to death. I feel that these skills are essential to the older population and will make it a goal of mine to learn how to recognize when a problem may arise to make an impact on their lives.

Provide a specific example of when you positively impacted someone through the care or services you provided. I have one resident in particular that has a lot of needs. They have expressed to me that when I take care of them they appreciate the thoroughness and careful ways I take care of them. I pay special attention to their skin to reduce skin break down and make sure the catheter is cleaned prior to switching out bags to reduce infections. They see how cautious I am in making sure these tasks are executed properly. I treat everyone I take care of as well as I can, but this couple verbally expresses how much they appreciate my interactions with them. I feel that it is important to pay attention to all aspects of a person's care to show that they matter. I had a resident that was on hospice care and I paid special attention to what she had to say. She had a fear of being alone when she died. I told her that we would make sure a family member was with her or that we would be with her at all times - this calmed her fears significantly. Throughout my shift that evening, I was with her as much as possible unless a family member was there. I passed this information onto the nursing staff and nurse assistants to make sure someone was with her to fulfill her wish. In the end we had a nurse assistant that was with her when she died, and her husband was just walking through the door. I believe that it is paying attention to the residents' wishes that matters most while treating everyone as an individual with unique needs. Not every resident is the same and even some residents are hard to deal with, especially those with dementia. I had a resident that was screaming and not making any sense; I tried turning on soothing music and calmly rubbing her back - this seemed to calm her down.

Sometimes this does not work and you have to figure out other ways to get them to feel calm. I feel that I positively impacted her life by making her feel comfortable.

How have you positively impacted your organization and increased its effectiveness (through teaching, mentoring, serving on committees, etc.)? I won employee of the month in June 2011; as this is an award on which my colleagues vote, I feel like I am thoroughly appreciated as a team player by those with whom I work. I am a team player and willing to help out when their work load is increased to help them catch up in their work. I have helped trained several new employees when it was their first experience as a CNA. I make sure I show them in detail how to perform the job and I always try to blend efficient executing with addressing the needs of the residents. Even after they have been trained I am usually checking in on them to see if they have any questions. I also believe that attitudes are contagious; if you show a good attitude and smile to make their day a better one it usually makes them happier. I have also brought up suggestions to help the residents when it comes to using a shower chair for a resident to use the toilet. I suggested that they remove the seat so that the shower chair could move all the way back so as to reduce an accident on the floor for a male resident. This not only reduced the accidents the resident has had it also makes him feel well cared for and less embarrassed when he had an accident in the past.