

# Chapter 7

## Understanding the Person

# Lesson 7.1

- Define the key terms in this chapter.
- Identify the parts that make up the whole person.
- Explain how to properly address the person.
- Explain Abraham Maslow's theory of basic needs.
- Explain how culture and religion influence health and illness.

# Lesson 7.1 (Cont.)

- Identify the elements needed for good communication.
- Describe how to use verbal and nonverbal communication.
- Explain the methods and barriers to good communication.
- Explain how to communicate with persons who have special needs.

# Lesson 7.1 (Cont.)

- Explain why family and visitors are important to the person.
- Identify courtesies given to the person, family, and friends.
- Explain how to communicate with persons who have behavior problems.
- Explain how to promote PRIDE in the person, the family, and yourself.

# Caring for the Person

- The patient or resident is the most important person in the agency.
- Holism is a concept that considers the whole person.
- The whole person has physical, social, psychological, and spiritual parts.
  - These parts are woven together and cannot be separated.
  - Each part relates to and depends on the others.

# Addressing the Person

- Follow these rules to address patients and residents with dignity and respect:
  - Use the person's title
    - Mrs., Mr., Miss, Ms., or Dr.
  - Do not use a first name unless the person asks you to.
  - Do not use any other name unless the person asks you to.
  - Do not call the person Grandma, Papa, Sweetheart, Honey, or other names.

# Basic Needs

- A need is something necessary or desired for maintaining life and mental well-being.

# Basic Needs (Cont.)

- According to psychologist Abraham Maslow:
  - Basic needs must be met for a person to survive and function
  - Needs are arranged in order of importance (Figure 6-2)
  - Lower level needs must be met before the higher-level needs.
  - Basic needs, from the lowest level to the highest level, are:
    - Physical needs
    - Safety and security needs
    - Love and belonging needs
    - Self-esteem needs
    - The need for self-actualization

# Culture and Religion

- Culture is the characteristics of a group of people passed from one generation to the next.
  - People come from many cultures, races, and nationalities.
- Religion relates to spiritual beliefs, needs, and practices.
  - Many people find comfort and strength from religion during illness.
- The care plan includes the person's cultural and religious practices.

# Communicating With the Person

- For effective communication between you and the person, you must follow the rules of communication:
  - Use words that have the same meaning for you and the person
  - Avoid medical terms and words not familiar to the person
  - Communicate in a logical and orderly manner
  - Give facts and be specific
  - Be brief and concise

# Communicating With the Person (Cont.)

- Understand and respect the patient or resident as a person.
- View the person as a physical, psychological, social, and spiritual human being.
- Appreciate the person's problems and frustrations.
- Respect the person's rights.
- Respect the person's religion and culture.
- Give the person time to process the information that you give.
- Repeat information as often as needed.
- Ask questions to see if the person understood you.
- Be patient.
- Include the person in conversations when others are present.

# Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

- Words are used in verbal communication.
  - Follow these rules for the spoken word:
    - Face the person. Look directly at the person
    - Position yourself at the person's eye level
    - Control the loudness and tone of your voice
    - Speak clearly, slowly, and distinctly
    - Do not use slang or vulgar words
    - Repeat information as needed
    - Ask one question at a time. Wait for an answer
    - Do not shout, whisper, or mumble
    - Be kind, courteous, and friendly

# Verbal and Nonverbal Communication (Cont.)

- Use the written word if the person cannot speak or hear but can read.
  - The nurse and care plan tell you how to communicate with the person.
- When writing messages:
  - Be brief and concise
  - Use a black felt pen on white paper
  - Print in large letters
- Some persons cannot speak or read.
  - Ask questions that have “yes” or “no” answers.
  - Follow the care plan.
- Persons who are deaf may use sign language.

# Verbal and Nonverbal Communication (Cont.)

- Nonverbal communication does not use words.
  - Gestures, facial expressions, posture, body movements, touch, and smell send messages.
  - Nonverbal messages more truly reflect a person's feelings than words do.
  - Touch is a very important form of nonverbal communication.
    - The meaning depends on age, gender, experiences, and culture.
    - To use touch, follow the person's care plan and maintain professional boundaries.

# Verbal and Nonverbal Communication (Cont.)

- People send messages through their body language:
  - Facial expressions
  - Gestures
  - Posture
  - Hand and body movements
  - Gait
  - Eye contact
  - Appearance
- Control your body language as needed.

# Verbal and Nonverbal Communication (Cont.)

- Communication methods
  - Listening means to focus on verbal and nonverbal communication.
    - You use sight, hearing, touch, and smell.
  - Direct questions focus on certain information.
  - Open-ended questions lead or invite the person to share thoughts, feelings, or ideas.
  - You use clarifying methods to make sure that you understand the message.
  - Silence is a very powerful way to communicate.
  - Sometimes you do not need to say anything.

# Communication Barriers

- Communication barriers prevent the sending and receiving of messages.
  - Language
  - Cultural differences
  - Changing the subject
  - Giving opinions
  - Talking a lot when others are silent
  - Failure to listen
  - Pat answers
  - Illness and disability
  - Age

# Persons With Special Needs

- A person may acquire a disability any time from birth through old age.
- Common courtesies and manners (etiquette) apply to any person with a disability.
- The person who is comatose:
  - Comatose means being unable to respond to verbal stimuli.
  - The person who is comatose often can hear and can feel touch and pain.

# Persons With Special Needs (Cont.)

- When caring for the person, do the following:
  - Assume that the person hears and understands you
  - Use touch and give care gently
  - Knock before entering the person's room
  - Tell the person your name, the time, and the place every time you enter the room
  - Give care on the same schedule every day
  - Explain what you are going to do and explain care measures step-by-step as you do them
  - Tell the person when you are finishing care
  - Use touch to communicate care, concern, and comfort
  - Tell the person what time you will be back to check on him or her
  - Tell the person when you are leaving the room

# Family and Friends

- The presence or absence of family or friends affects the person's quality of life.
- The person has the right to visit with family and friends in private and without unnecessary interruptions.
  - Protect the right to privacy.
  - Treat family and friends with courtesy and respect.
  - Provide support and understanding.
- Do not discuss the person's condition with family and friends.
  - Refer their questions to the nurse.

# Behavior Issues

- A disability is any lost, absent, or impaired physical or mental function.
  - It may be temporary or permanent.
- Many patients, residents, and families accept illness, injury, and disability.
  - Those who do not adjust well have some of the following behaviors:
    - Anger
    - Demanding behavior
    - Self-centered behavior
    - Aggressive behavior
    - Withdrawal
    - Inappropriate sexual behavior

# Behavior Issues (Cont.)

- Anger is a common emotion.
  - Causes include:
    - Fear, pain, and dying and death
    - Loss of function and loss of control over health and life
    - Long waits for care or to see the doctor
      - A symptom of some diseases that affect thinking and behavior
      - Some people are generally angry
  - Anger is shown verbally and nonverbally.
  - Violent behaviors can occur.

# Behavior Issues (Cont.)

- Demanding behavior
  - Nothing seems to please the person.
  - The person is critical of others.
  - Causes include:
    - Loss of independence
    - Loss of health
    - Loss of control
    - Unmet needs

# Behavior Issues (Cont.)

- Self-centered behavior
  - The person cares only about his or her own needs.
  - The needs of others are ignored.
- Aggressive behavior
  - The person may swear, bite, hit, pinch, scratch, or kick.
  - Causes include:
    - Fear
    - Anger
    - Pain
    - Dementia
  - Protect the person, others, and yourself from harm.

# Behavior Issues (Cont.)

- Withdrawal
  - The person has little or no contact with others.
  - This may signal physical illness or depression.
  - Some people are not social and like being alone.
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
  - Behaviors include:
    - Inappropriate sexual remarks
    - Touching others
    - Disrobing or masturbating in public
  - The behaviors may be on purpose or due to disease, confusion, dementia, or drug side effects.

# Behavior Issues (Cont.)

- Some behaviors are not pleasant.
  - You cannot avoid the person or lose control.
  - To deal with behavior issues:
    - Recognize frustrating and frightening situations.
    - Treat the person with dignity and respect.
    - Answer questions clearly and thoroughly.
    - Keep the person informed.
    - Do not keep the person waiting.
    - Explain the reason for long waits.
    - Stay calm and professional, especially if the person is angry or hostile.
    - Do not argue with the person.
    - Listen and use silence.
    - Protect yourself from violent behaviors.
    - Report the person's behavior to the nurse.