

## **Module 20. Consumer and Worker Rights; Managing Time and Stress**

### **Goals**

The goals of this module are to prepare participants to:

- Recognize and support consumers' and workers' rights;
- Manage time effectively; and
- Identify their own signs of stress and find ways to stay energized.

### **Time**

3.5 hours (includes 30 minutes for one break and closing)

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Time</b>
20.1 Consumer and Worker Rights	Interactive presentation, large-group exercise, discussion, pairs work	1 hour
20.2 Managing Time and Stress	Interactive presentation, small group work, discussion, individual exercise, scripted role play, pairs exercise	2 hours

### **Supplies**

- Flip chart, markers, and tape
- Paper and pencils
- Instructor's Guide: "Interview with Carline Smith, Direct-Care Worker"

### **Handouts**

- Handout 20.1 Introduction to Rights of Consumers
- Handout 20.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Consumers
- Handout 20.3 Rights of Workers
- Handout 20.4 What If Your Rights Are Not Respected?
- Handout 20.5 Managing Time – Setting Priorities
- Handout 20.6-a Putting Tasks in Order (Robert)
- Handout 20.6-b Putting Tasks in Order (Mrs. Banerjee)

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- Handout20.6-c Putting Tasks in Order (Helen)
- Handout 20.7 Personal Worksheet for Managing Stress
- Handout 20.8 Stress and What Causes It
- Handout 20.9 Signs of Stress
- Handout 20.10 Ways to Manage Stress

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**Advance Preparation**

Review all training and presentation materials for this module.

Copy all handouts for participants.

Gather all necessary supplies and equipment.

***Activity 20.1: Consumer and Worker Rights***

Prepare flip chart pages for this module's "Learning Agenda" (step 1), the definition of "rights" (step 3) and "What should you do if your rights are not being respected?" (step 11).

***Activity 20.2: Managing Time and Stress***

Prepare flip chart pages for "Prioritizing" (step 2) and "Be Organized—Plan your work in 3 phases" (step 6).

Talk to a participant about volunteering to interview "Carline Smith" (step 10).

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ACTIVITY 20.1 Consumer and Worker Rights  
60 minutes

**Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Define the word “rights.”
- Describe at least three rights of a consumer.
- Describe at least three rights of a direct-care worker.

### **Key Content**

- ❖ Rights are defined as powers or privileges granted by an agreement or law. In direct-care work, both consumers and workers have rights.
- ❖ The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed to confirm the rights of people with disabilities to hold jobs and to be able to easily use public facilities and public transportation. In that law, “disability” is defined as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities” – which includes many, if not most, of the consumers with whom trainees will be working.
- ❖ In home care, community-based, and residential care settings, consumers (and/or a guardian) are told about their rights and are usually given what is called a “bill of rights.”
- ❖ Rights for direct-care workers include the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and the right to a safe working environment, free from abuse or threat. These rights are described in many places -- organizational policies, employment law, and civil and human rights laws. For example, the Civil Rights Act protects people from discrimination based on race or ethnicity, in employment and other areas.
- ❖ If a worker feels that their rights are not being respected, they should use the “exploring options” approach to try to solve the problem. If that doesn’t work, they should go to their supervisor for help, and follow agency policies (if they exist). Generally, asking for a new assignment or quitting should always be the last resort because it creates additional stress for the worker’s life.

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**Activity Steps**

***Interactive presentation (5 minutes)***

1. Review the “Learning Agenda” for this module. Explain that this module addresses two important issues that will always be important in their work caring for others: the rights of consumers and workers, and how to take care of themselves while caring for others.



**LEARNING AGENDA**  
**Module 21**

- Understanding the rights of consumers and workers
- Getting things done by managing time
- Taking care of yourself by managing stress

***Interactive presentation (10 minutes)***

2. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to help participants understand how the concept of “rights” helps to protect the safety, dignity, and freedom of choice for workers as well as consumers.
3. Post the prepared flip chart page with the definition of “rights.” Ask a participant to read it. Then ask participants:

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- *What does that mean to you? Personally? What does it mean in terms of being a direct-care worker? What do you think it means for a consumer?*



RIGHTS

Powers or privileges  
granted by  
an agreement or law.

***Discussion (20 minutes)***

4. Explain that you will first look at consumer's rights. Distribute and review Handout 20.1, "Introduction to the Rights of Consumers."
5. Distribute and review Handout 20.2, "Rights and Responsibilities of Consumers." Explain to participants that in each work setting there may be a "Consumer Bill of Rights" specific to that setting. The ones listed here are general guidelines.
6. Explain that as direct-care workers it will be their responsibility to respect and support the rights of the consumer and to report situations that threaten the rights of consumers. Identify two or three consumer rights. Ask: *How does the worker support these rights?* Briefly discuss.

***Large-group exercise (5 minutes)***

7. Note that they will now think about the rights of direct-care workers. Basically, as with consumers, workers have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and the right to be safe. Brainstorm: *What do you need to feel respected*

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*and safe in your work environment?* Write responses on flip  
chart page.



To feel respected and safe in my work, I  
would need or like...

⇒ **Teaching Tip**

If a participant can't think of a time they were treated "respectfully" on a job, ask them to think about a time when they felt disrespected and what made the treatment disrespectful (to help articulate how they wanted to be treated).

Things that may come up are: I liked to be asked, not told. I don't want to be yelled at. I want to be called by my name. I want to be paid on time. I want my personal time to be respected. I don't want to hear bad things said to me because of my race or ethnic group.

***Discussion (20 minutes)***

8. Discuss the fourth bullet of "Key Content." Note that some workers' rights are protected by state and federal laws (e.g., minimum wage, accurate pay for hours worked including overtime where applicable, etc.). Organizational policies often include the worker's rights to a safe working environment and are generally addressed during new employee orientation.



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9. Distribute and review Handout 20.3, “Rights of Workers.” Note how these rights match what they brainstormed—or not!
10. Ask participants to think about what they would do if their rights are not being respected. Discuss their ideas and consider how these would play out.

⇒ **Teaching Tip**

Workers often see requesting a new assignment or quitting as their first option when they feel their rights are not being respected at work. Guide the discussion to consider other options—e.g., using pull-back to control their emotions, using listening and paraphrasing to make sure they understand the other person’s perspective, and using the exploring options approach to problem solving to try to work out a solution.

11. Post and review the flip chart page, “What should you do if your rights are not being respected?” Note that asking for a new assignment and/or quitting should always be the last options—most problems can be solved before it gets to that point.

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WHAT TO DO IF YOUR RIGHTS ARE  
NOT BEING RESPECTED?

- State the problem objectively
- Express it respectfully
- Try to work it out with the person who is responsible for the problem
- Follow agency policies
- Go to your supervisor for support in problem solving
- Go to your supervisor's supervisor, if necessary
- Ask for another assignment
- Quit

12. End this activity by reiterating the fact that BOTH consumers and workers have rights, which are intended to make the working situation better for both. Distribute Handout 20.4, "What If Your Rights Are Not Respected," for participants' binders.

## ACTIVITY 20.2 Managing Time and Stress

2 hours

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Define “time management.”
- Define “prioritize” and describe how to do it in their work.
- Demonstrate use of time-management skills.
- Identify common causes of stress.
- Identify their own signs of stress.
- Explain the need to reduce stress.
- List three ways to reduce stress they can use for themselves.

### **Key Content**

#### **Managing Time**

- ❖ Across all settings, direct-care workers frequently report not having enough time to complete all the things that need to get done. Not getting some tasks done on time can mean putting the consumer at risk. “Time management” means figuring out what to do and when, so that things get done when they need to be done.
- ❖ “Prioritizing” means determining which tasks are the most important and doing them first or organizing the work so that those tasks are sure to be completed. Three categories of prioritizing are helpful for time-management. These are: 1) tasks that must be done immediately, 2) those that need to be done within a certain time period, and 3) those that would be nice to do if there is enough time.
- ❖ The service or care plan is important for time management. It now only identifies the tasks or services to be provided to the consumer—it will sometimes indicate when things need to be done and even how much time should be spent doing them. In addition to consulting the care plan, it is important to get the consumer’s input on their priorities for getting things done.
- ❖ In consumer-directed work settings, *what* needs to be done and *when* are almost always directed by the consumer. Direct-care workers often assist consumers by taking them to appointments or accompanying them as they go about their daily activities (school, shopping, etc.). It is important to discuss with the consumer what their priorities are in order to determine what can be done during the worker’s shift.
- ❖ Planning how to do each task can help to get things done more quickly. Thinking of three aspects of the work can be helpful for planning: 1) Get ready—gather all equipment and supplies; 2) Do the job; and 3) Clean up—clean work areas and put away equipment and supplies.

#### **Managing Stress**

- ❖ Direct-care work can be stressful. The work can be both physically demanding and emotionally challenging. Adding to the stress is the fact that many direct-care workers work multiple jobs due to low wages and often are heads of their households.

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- ❖ Stress is the body's reaction to change, challenges, or danger. The stress reaction allows us to fight or run away from dangerous situations. But long-term stress puts extra strain on the body systems.
- ❖ Different things feel stressful to different people. Stress, by and large, involves feelings of *too much*: too many pressures that demand too much of you, physically and psychologically. Even positive changes in life—such as marriage, moving to a nicer place to live, or starting a better job—can cause stress from adding new responsibilities or requiring adjustments to things being different.
- ❖ Stress can affect one's thoughts and feelings. It can cause physical pain, problems with sleeping and breathing, and weight gain or loss. It can also contribute to substance abuse and antisocial behaviors.
- ❖ Stress is a part of life and it cannot be eliminated—but it can and should be managed to fit in with one's life. Some tips for managing stress include eating and sleeping well, getting moderate exercise, cutting back on caffeine and sugar, and avoiding alcohol and other drugs. Seeking support from friends and family can also help reduce stress.

**Activity Steps**

**MANAGING TIME (1 hour)**

***Interactive presentation (15 minutes)***

1. Note that managing time and stress are important skills for direct-care workers. Ask participants:
  - *What does time management mean to you?*

After a few responses, review the first bullet in “Key Content,” defining time management.

2. Ask participants:
  - *What does “prioritizing” mean to you?*

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After a few responses, post and review the flip chart page on “Prioritizing.”



#### PRIORITIZING

##### 3 Categories

- 1) Things that have to be done immediately
- 2) Things that need to be done by a certain time
- 3) Things that would be nice to do, if there is enough time

3. Note that participants already have some skills and experience in prioritizing in their personal lives. Ask for some examples from their own experience. Note that for direct-care work the key is figuring out which tasks are most important. Ask participants:
  - *What tasks do you think would be most important when assisting a consumer?*

[Response: Those that affect the consumer’s safety and health.]

4. Note that direct-care workers have two important tools for setting priorities in their work—the care plan and the consumer. Distribute Handout 20.5, “Managing Time – Setting Priorities.” Review the handout, stopping before the section on being organized. Briefly discuss the fourth bullet in “Key Content,” on setting priorities with the consumer in consumer-directed care.

#### ***Small-group work (15 minutes)***

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5. Explain that they will now have a chance to practice prioritizing for work with consumers. Ask participants to form three groups. Distribute Handouts 20.6-a, b, and c (“Putting Tasks in Order” —Mrs. Banerjee, Robert, and Helen), assigning one scenario to each group. The instructions are to prioritize the list of tasks that the consumer has requested or that need to get done. After they have finished, they will report their work to the large group, explaining their choices (including areas of agreement/disagreement). Allow groups 10 minutes to work.

***Small-group reports (15 minutes)***

6. Ask each group to present their list of tasks and explain the reasoning behind each choice. Invite comments or questions from other participants. If needed, correct any prioritizing.

⇒ **Teaching Tip**

If more than one group worked on a scenario, have one group present first, and then the other, and lead a combined discussion about that scenario.

***Discussion (15 minutes)***

7. Note that besides prioritizing, another important tool for time management is being organized. Post and review the prepared flip chart page “Be Organized – Plan your work in 3 phases.” Note that most of their skills checklists followed these three steps. Ask participants how this approach to organization could help them to manage time better.

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BE ORGANIZED

Plan your work in 3 phases

- 1) Get ready
- 2) Do the job
- 3) Clean up

**MANAGING STRESS (1 hour)**

***Individual exercise (5 minutes)***

8. Distribute Handout 20.7, “My Personal Worksheet on Managing Stress.” Note that one common result of NOT managing time well is stress. Explain that, before talking about things that cause stress, you want participants to think about the things that have the opposite effect – the people or activities or things in their lives that make them feel good about life, that give them energy. Ask participants to close their eyes for a minute and picture themselves feeling really good about life in general and about themselves in particular. Ask them to picture what they do or who they are with that makes them feel that way.
9. After a few moments of silence, ask participants to open their eyes and jot down on their paper (in pictures or words) the things or activities that make them feel good and energize them. Ask them to be as specific as possible, and to write their thoughts on the handout, in the section “I feel good about...” Explain that they will come back to this at the end of the activity.

⇒ **Teaching Tip**

For this activity to be most meaningful, ask participants to be as specific



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as possible with what they write. For example, instead of saying “my kids,” ask participants what it is that they do with their kids that energizes them, like playing house or football with them. Other things might be walking my dog in the park; making dinner for friends; singing; dancing, etc.

***Scripted role play<sup>1</sup> and discussion (10 minutes)***

10. Explain that the next profile is a bit different from the others in this curriculum, as it will be of a direct-care worker named Carline Smith. Carline is going to help them learn about stress and work. And to find out a little about Carline, she will “visit” the training and be interviewed, since she didn’t have the time to sit down and write something for participants.
11. Ask for your pre-arranged volunteer to come forward (see Advance Preparation). Both you and the volunteer should have a copy of the *Instructor’s Guide, Activity 20.2, “An Interview with Carline Smith, Direct-Care Worker.”* Explain to the rest of the participants that the volunteer will be the “interviewer” and you will play the part of “Carline Smith.” Conduct the interview.
12. Step out of the role of Carline and thank your volunteer “interviewer.” Facilitate a discussion around what the participants learned about Carline. Ask participants:
  - *What do we know about Carline?*
  - *What stood out most to you about Carline?*
  - *What do you relate to in how she described her day?*
  - *How does this make you feel about being a direct-care worker?*

***Interactive presentation (15 minutes)***

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from “Competence with Compassion – *Universal Core Curriculum.*” BJBC and CARIE, 2007.

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13. Ask participants if they think Carline is feeling stress and why they think that. Ask if any of the participants ever feel stressed? What causes it?
14. Distribute and review Handout 20.8, “Stress and What Causes It.” Note that many of the causes of stress are “good” events, like getting a new apartment or finishing a training program. One way of thinking about situations that cause stress is to put them into two categories – predictable (i.e., you know the situation is coming and you can prepare yourself) and unpredictable (i.e., situations that catch you by surprise and unprepared). Briefly discuss how these situations can cause stress and the difference in our reactions.
15. Note that how we experience stress, physically and emotionally, is very individual. For example, Carline described getting very tired when she is stressed. Others might get very irritable or become nauseous. Explain that knowing when our stress levels are starting to hurt rather than help us—i.e., self-awareness—is the first step in managing stress. Distribute and review Handout 20.9, “Signs of Stress.”

***Individual and pairs exercise (10 minutes)***

16. Ask participants to form pairs. Ask participants to use their personal worksheets (Handout 20.7) and write down some of their own signs of stress in the section “My Own Signs of Stress.” They might have some of the same signs as listed in Handout 20.9, or they may have different ones.
17. After a couple of minutes, ask participants to share their signs of stress in their pairs. Ask them to discuss how these signs of stress affect them at work and at home.

***Discussion (15 minutes)***

18. Have participants return to the large group, and ask:

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- *Do these signs of stress sound healthy?*
- *Does too much stress help you do good work?*
- *Does too much stress help you at home?*

[Desired responses – a resounding NO to each question]

19. Tell participants that now that they have some idea about what stress is and how to recognize it in themselves, they can move towards managing stress. It's important to recognize that stress is a part of life and it cannot be eliminated—but it can and should be managed so that it's helpful and not hurtful.
20. Ask participants to think back to Carline for a moment. Ask:
  - *Because of her busy schedule, what activities/things did Carline mention that she likes but puts off doing because of the other things in her life?*

⇒ **Teaching Tip**

Example: Carline didn't take up the offer to join this class and she mentioned she loves learning. And she chose not to cook, even though she enjoys it so much.

21. Ask participants to look at their list of things that make them feel good or give them energy, on their personal worksheet. Ask if anyone in the group does something similar to Carline—i.e., give up these things you like when you get too busy? Affirm that this is a very common practice. Ask:

*Why might we do this?*

Explain that people often see things that they enjoy as luxuries or “bonuses” in their lives, and they may think that these can be eliminated to reduce stress. But when they give up the things that energize them, they may become more tired and stressed. Keeping or adding those things back into one's life can increase one's energy.

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22. In addition to keeping some or all of those energizers in one's life, there are a few other ways to manage stress. Distribute and review Handout 20.10, "Ways to Manage Stress."

***Pairs exercise (5 minutes)***

23. Ask participants to return to their pairs from before and discuss ways that they can cope with or better manage stress in their own lives. Ask them to identify at least one strategy that they can use within the next week and write it down on their "Personal Worksheets." These handouts are for them to keep—not to be turned in—to remind them of what makes them feel good about life, and how they can start to reduce stress to keep feeling good.

***Large-group exercise (5 minutes)***

24. To wrap up this activity, ask participants:
- *What is one thing you have learned in this session that you would like to apply in your own life, whether to reduce stress or to practice time management?*

## **Instructor's Guide, Activity 20.2**

### **Interview with Carline Smith, Direct-Care Worker**

**Interviewer:**

Thanks for helping us out with this training. Is there anything you want to say to our students?

**Carline:**

Oh definitely! Congratulations on becoming a direct-care worker! I'm going to ask you to do one favor for me – once you get a job, don't quit! I can't tell you how many aides come and go – which makes my work more stressful because I have to pick up extra shifts and orient new people over and over again. And I'm so exhausted. I know it's not your fault. It's the lousy pay and sometimes we older workers get bitter. I admit it, I can get grouchy. But please know, under all of the grouchiness, we are nice people who want you there— we just don't know how to make your jobs easier those first couple of months.

**Interviewer:**

So you want our workers to stay in the field. Would you like to tell them a little about yourself and your work in the field?

**Carline:**

I've been working in a nursing home for 15 years, and I just took on a couple of home care clients, too. I didn't plan on having two jobs. It just happened when one of the residents who was there for short term rehab asked me to be his personal aide when he went home. I agreed and then did it for two more residents. But I love the work.

**Interviewer:**

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How do you feel at the end of the day?

**Carline:**

I should say “good,” so I don’t scare your students. But honestly, I’m exhausted. I don’t get a break—ever. Well, I guess it’s more like, I never take a break. If I’m not working at a job, I’m cleaning and cooking for my three kids, and the laundry piles never seem to go away. I can’t keep up and my house is a mess. I haven’t put a brush through my hair in weeks. I can’t even think straight. Sometimes I forget to lock my door because I’m so tired in the morning.

**Interviewer:**

You sound a little stressed.

**Carline:**

It’s nothing I shouldn’t be able to handle. I’m just adjusting to 2 jobs and 3 kids.

**Interviewer:**

How are you taking care of yourself?

**Carline:**

Well, you know, I don’t have a lot of time for myself with my schedule.

**Interviewer:**

How important do you think it is to take care of yourself?

**Carline:**

It’s very important! I know it is because I see what happens to people who ignore their bodies. That’s why I know I should be taking better care of myself. I just don’t know how to find the time to do that.

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**Interviewer:**

So you're saying you want to take better care of yourself, but you don't know how to fit it all in?

**Carline:**

That sounds about right. Got any ideas?

**Interviewer:**

Well, this part of our training is going to talk about how to manage your time and cut stress. Do you want to sit in?

**Carline:**

Thanks for the offer. I love learning and going to classes. But I've got to drop off my daughter at day care, do some grocery shopping for my ungrateful mom, and pick up some paint for a school project for one of my sons. Oh shoot, the project – I promised I'd help him tonight with the painting! That means I can't cook dinner tonight. I hate that because I love to cook. But I really don't have the time.

**Interviewer:**

Next time, then.

**Carline:**

Sure, next time.

**Module 20 Handouts:  
Consumer and Worker Rights;  
Managing Time and Stress**

**Activity 20.1: Consumer and Worker Rights**

**Handout 20.1  
Introduction to Rights of Consumers**

**Handout 20.2  
Rights and Responsibilities of Consumers**

**Handout 20.3  
Rights of Workers**

**Handout 20.4  
What If Your Rights Are Not Respected?**

**Activity 20.2: Managing Time and Stress**

**Handout 20.5  
Managing Time – Setting Priorities**

**Handout 20.6-a  
Putting Tasks in Order (Robert)**

**Handout 20.6-b  
Putting Tasks in Order (Mrs. Banerjee)**

**Handout 20.6-c  
Putting Tasks in Order (Helen)**



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**Handout 20.7**  
**Personal Worksheet for Managing Stress**

**Handout 20.8**  
**Stress and What Causes It**

**Handout 20.9**  
**Signs of Stress**

**Handout 20.10**  
**Ways to Manage Stress**

## **Handout 20.1—Introduction to Rights of Consumers**

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Rights are defined as powers or privileges that are granted by an agreement or law. In direct-care work, both consumers and workers have rights.

Consumers with disabilities have rights that are described in the “Americans with Disabilities Act.” These rights include the right to hold a job and to be able to easily use public facilities and public transportation. In that law, “disability” is defined as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.” This means that many, if not most, of your consumers would be covered by these rights.

In home care, community-based, and residential care settings, consumers (and/or a guardian) are told about their rights and are usually given what is called a consumers’ or residents’ “bill of rights.”

## **Handout 20.2—Rights and Responsibilities of Consumers**

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According to one state's Department of Aging (Pennsylvania)<sup>2</sup>, consumers in long-term care have the right to:

- Have a legal guardian represent them in their dealings with the provider
- Be fully informed of all rights and responsibilities by the service provider
- Receive appropriate, quality, and professional care
- Be informed of planned changes to their care and give their consent before it happens
- Refuse services
- Be treated with respect
- Complain and ask for reasonable changes in services or staff without retaliation
- Be informed about the provider, the provider's policies, and fees or charges for services

They also have the responsibility to:

- Express their wishes and preferences
- Inform their service provider about any problems with their care
- Let provider know if they are admitted to the hospital and when they are discharged and will need services again
- Treat workers with respect
- Provide all needed supplies and a safe environment (if service is provided in their home)

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<sup>2</sup> [www.aging.state.pa.us/longtermcar](http://www.aging.state.pa.us/longtermcar)

## **Handout 20.3—Rights of Workers**

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Workers have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to have a safe work environment.

Rights for direct-care workers are described in many places – policies of the places where you work, state and federal laws about working, and laws about civil and human rights. For example, the U.S. Civil Rights Act does not allow people to be denied work or a place to live because of their race or ethnicity.

### **Right to Dignity and Respect**

**As a direct care worker, I have the right to:**

- Be treated with dignity and respect by the consumer, their family, and anyone else who visits while I'm working
- Be treated with dignity and respect by my supervisors and co-workers

### **Right to a Safe Working Environment**

**As a direct care worker, I have the right to:**

- Work in a safe place
- Work without abuse or threat – physical or emotional, including sexual harassment

## **Handout 20.4—What If Your Rights Are Not Respected?**

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### **What should you do if your rights are not being respected?**

- State the problem objectively
- Express it respectfully
- Try to work it out with the person who is responsible for the problem
- Follow agency policies
- Go to your supervisor for support in problem solving
- Go to your supervisor's supervisor, if necessary
- Ask for another assignment
- Quit

## Handout 20.5—Managing Time: Setting Priorities

Page 1 of 2

Direct-care workers often report that they don't have enough time to get all their work done. Sometimes, without meaning to, that can put the consumer at risk. This is why "time management" is important.

**Time management:** figuring out what to do and when, so that things get done when they need to be done.

**Prioritize:** It helps to set priorities, or decide which jobs are the most important. Use 3 categories of priorities:

- 1) Which tasks or services must be done immediately?
- 2) Which tasks or services need to be done within a certain time period?
- 3) Which tasks or services should be done only if there's enough time?

**How can you set priorities?**

### **Maria's tip: Check the care plan**

"When I go to work with a consumer, I always check the care plan after I check in with the consumer. It always tells me WHAT I have to do, but sometimes it also says WHEN I have to do it."

## **Handout 20.5—Managing Time: Setting Priorities**

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### **Mohammed's tip: Talk with the consumer**

"I work as a personal care assistant with Mr. Nur three days a week. When I get to his place, we always sit down and discuss what he wants me to do today."

### **Be organized – plan your work in 3 phases.**

- 1) Get ready – gather everything you will need
- 2) Do the job
- 3) Clean up – clean work areas and put away what you took out

## Handout 20.6-a—Putting Tasks in Order

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**[Note to instructor: Give one case to each group.]**

### Robert

Robert is a 56 years old. He has multiple sclerosis. His body can do very little below the waist. He uses a wheelchair with a motor. You support him with home care.

When you go to Robert's room, he tells you he soiled himself during the night. He needs to be cleaned up, and his sheets are dirty.

**Look at the tasks below. Decide what order to do them in. Then number the tasks from 1 to 7 to show the order.**

- \_\_\_ Change Robert's bed linens.
- \_\_\_ Wash your hands.
- \_\_\_ Get the things you will need, such as clothes and linens.
- \_\_\_ Take Robert to the bathroom to help him shower.
- \_\_\_ Put on gloves.
- \_\_\_ Talk to Robert. Say, “It's no big deal. I'll help you get cleaned up.”
- \_\_\_ Make Robert's bed.



## Handout 20.6-b—Putting Tasks in Order

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**[Note to instructor: Give one case to each group.]**

### **Mrs. Banerjee**

You work in a nursing home. You just finished taking care of the fifth resident this morning. It is almost time for you to serve lunch.

Mrs. Banerjee rings her call bell. You go in to see what she needs. She is crying and has soiled herself. She has spilled her water jug on the floor near the bed.

**Look at the tasks below. Decide what order to do them in. Then number the tasks from 1 to 5 to show the order.**

- \_\_\_ Change Mrs. Banerjee's pads and bed linens.
- \_\_\_ Go help serve lunch.
- \_\_\_ Ask Mrs. Banerjee if she wants her lunch now.
- \_\_\_ Wipe the water up. Or find someone else to do it, if the rules say that's OK.
- \_\_\_ Ask Mrs. Banerjee if she is OK. Find out why she is crying.

## Handout 20.6-c—Putting Tasks in Order

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**[Note to instructor: Give one case to each group.]**

### Helen

You support Helen with home care for 2 hours a day, 5 days a week. Helen needs help with daily tasks, such as taking a shower and using the toilet. She has family who live nearby. But they do not visit her every day.

Helen wrote a long list of tasks she'd like you to do today. You tell her that you have just 2 hours and that you need at least 45 minutes to do the personal tasks on the care plan. Helen agrees.

The next step is to figure out with Helen which added tasks are more important, and which are less important, and why.

**Look at the tasks on the lists below. To prepare yourself to talk with Helen, think about which tasks you feel are more important, and which are less important. Then number the tasks to show the priority, in your thinking.**

### Helen's List

- \_\_\_ Plant tulip bulbs in front of the house.
- \_\_\_ Pack up my winter clothes. Put them in the basement.
- \_\_\_ Wash my spring and summer clothes. Put them in the closet.
- \_\_\_ Vacuum the living room, family room, and bedrooms.
- \_\_\_ Wash the dishes.
- \_\_\_ Do one load of laundry.

## Handout 20.7—Personal Worksheet for Managing Stress

Page 1 of 1

**I feel good about...**

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**My own signs of stress are...**

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**One thing I can do manage my stress in the next week is...**

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## **Handout 20.8—Stress and What Causes It**

Page 1 of 2

### **What is stress?**

“Stress” is the way we react to changes, challenges, or danger. In terms of our physical bodies, the endocrine system releases adrenaline during stress. This natural chemical gives us extra energy to fight or run away.

For emergencies, our ability to respond to stress is good. But there can be problems when the “stressful” situation does not go away. The body is not meant to be ready to “fight or run away” on a long-term basis, and some body systems start to wear out.

The situations that cause stress are different for different people. And the way we react to stress is also different for different people.

**Everyone has times of stress in their lives.**

**You can predict some causes of stress.**

They include:

- Getting married
- Having kids
- Starting a new job
- Retiring
- Taking care of aging parents
- Taking tests

## Handout 20.8—Stress and What Causes It

Page 2 of 2

**You cannot predict other causes of stress.**

They include:

- Ending a marriage
- Flood, fire, earthquake, or tornado
- Getting sick or hurt
- Losing your job or your home
- Death of a loved one

**How do you react differently to these different causes of stress?**

## **Handout 20.9—Signs of Stress**

Page 1 of 2

**We all feel stress sometimes. Here are some signs of stress.**

### **Stress can affect your thoughts.**

It can make you:

- Confused or forgetful
- Have trouble making choices
- Make bad choices
- Think gloomy thoughts
- Think the same thing over and over

### **Stress can affect your feelings.**

It can make you feel:

- Tired
- Grumpy
- Like laughing or crying too much
- Nothing
- Restless, worried, sad, or angry
- Like you can't cope
- Like running away

### **Stress can affect your body.**

It can make you have:

- Chest pain or an uneven heartbeat
- Headaches or muscle pain
- High blood pressure
- Skin problems
- Trouble breathing
- Trouble digesting food
- Trouble sleeping

## **Handout 20.9—Signs of Stress**

Page 2 of 2

### **Stress can affect the way you act.**

It can make you:

- Bite your nails or grind your teeth
- Eat or sleep too much, or too little
- Lose your temper easily
- Lose interest in sex
- Not do the things you need to do
- Stay away from other people
- Use alcohol and drugs more

## Handout 20.10—Ways to Manage Stress

Page 1 of 3

**Being a direct care worker can be hard. Read how these workers cope with stress.**

**Dee's tip – Sleep well.**

“My body and mind work better when I'm well rested. If I get my 8 hours, I know the next day will be great!”

**Sara's tip – Get moving.**

“When my body moves, the stress just melts away. I feel better inside and out.”

**Bob's tip – Eat well.**

“The food I choose really affects how I feel. When I eat right, I'm stronger.”

**Emma's tip – Cut back on caffeine and sugar.**

“Coffee, cola, and sweets bring me up. But when I crash, I feel worse than ever. Plus, they make me tense when I have too much.”

**Jim's tip – Avoid alcohol and other drugs.**

“Drinking used to make me feel better, but only for a little while. It was just hiding the real problems – and making them harder to deal with. I'm glad I stopped.”

**June's tip – Treat yourself.**

“I try to do something I enjoy – especially on the tough days.”

**Manuel's tip – Get involved outside work.**

“My job is not my life. I sing at the church. And I help build houses for other low-income folks in my town.”



## Handout 20.10—Ways to Manage Stress

Page 2 of 3

### **Joe's tip – Get support – Talk with friends.**

“After a tough day, I call my friend Mike. Talking with him really clears my mind. And I can usually think of a way to make the next day go better.”

### **Asha's tip – Get support -- Lean on family.**

“My family keeps me going. When my kids meet me at the door with a hug, and tell me I'm the best mommy – it just lifts me up.”

### **Kofi's tip – Get support -- Have fun with friends.**

“My buddies know me inside and out – and they like me anyway! After I hang out with them, I feel like myself again.”

### **Joyce's tip – Get support -- Share with coworkers.**

“It's great to talk with other people who do what I do. They know just what I'm going through.”

## Handout 20.10—Ways to Manage Stress

Page 3 of 3

### Ways to Manage Stress -- Review:

- Sleep well.
- Get moving.
- Eat well.
- Cut back on caffeine and sugar.
- Avoid alcohol and other drugs.
- Treat yourself.
- Get involved outside work.
- Get support.
  - Talk with friends.
  - Lean on family.
  - Have fun with friends.
  - Share with coworkers.