

Adult Care Glossary

Contents:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A

Abrasion

Medical term for a graze

Abscess

A collection of pus that forms in a tissue as a result of infection which often swells up

Absorption

The process by which food molecules are absorbed through the walls of the small intestine into the blood stream. As food passes into the large intestine water is then absorbed

Abstinence

When someone completely refrains from using a particular substance

Abuse

Mistreating or causing someone harm; this can be emotionally, physically, psychologically, institutionally, financially, sexually etc

Accident

An event that occurs by chance without an apparent or deliberate cause

Accountability

Acceptance of responsibility for your own actions and any related consequences

Accreditation

The formal recognition of the compliance with a standard

Acid

Any chemical that has a pH value of 0 to 6. They have a sour taste and may cause severe skin burns

Adverse Events, Incidents, Errors and Near Misses

Circumstances where unfavourable events have almost occurred, the recognition of which can help prevent them from occurring in the future

Active Listening

A technique of feeding back to the speaker what has been communicated to demonstrate understanding and engagement with what has been said

Active Participation

Enabling and supporting individuals to be included in the decisions and choices regarding their care provision; recognition of an individual's right to participate in the activities and relationships of everyday life as independently as possible

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)

The daily activities we perform for self-care (such as feeding ourselves, bathing, dressing, homemaking and leisure etc.) The ability or inability to perform these activities can be used as a measure of ability or disability in many disorders

Acute

A health problem that lasts for a short while from which the person recovers

Adapt

When someone fits in with new circumstances, situations etc

Addiction

A syndrome and pattern of substance misuse, the sufferer is unable to control their behaviour

Additive

A substance intentionally added to food for a specific purpose - it would not normally be there

Adjustment

That which is necessary to adapt to, or make a change

Admission

The formal commencement of providing care provision

Adrenal Glands

They produce hormones including cortisol, adrenaline and noradrenaline and are situated just above the kidneys

Adrenaline

A hormone produced by the adrenal glands in response to a person being frightened, angry or under stress. It prepares the body for "fight or flight" by increasing blood circulation and breathing

Advance Medical Directive/ Advance Statement

Documents that indicate a client's wishes about health care

Adverse Drug Reaction

Unexpected or dangerous reaction to a drug administered at normal dosage

Advice and Support

This can come from within or outside your organisation and will assist you in fulfilling your duties and may include raising concerns

Advocate

Someone who is formally designated to speak up for the interests of someone else

Advocacy Services

A service whereby an independent individual represents the wishes of another person whilst promoting their best interests without giving their personal opinion or views

Aerobic Exercise

Exercises which promote getting a good supply of oxygen into the lungs and then efficiently transporting it in the blood system to the muscles where it is used to provide energy

Ageism

When someone is treated unfairly because of their age

Agency

A group of people who have a shared specific purpose

Aggression

Actively making a forceful approach towards someone else

Agitation

Signs that show someone is becoming excited, troubled, irritated, aggressive etc

Agreed Ways of Working

Policies and procedures within an organisation based on sector standards and guidelines that need to be followed

AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome)

Caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) which attacks the body's immune system making its ability to fight infection difficult

Airborne Transmission

Transmission of infection from one person to another by being breathed in from the air

Alkali

These chemical substances are also referred to as bases. They may cause severe burns to the skin and have a pH value from 8 to 14

Allergy

An abnormal response of the immune system to an otherwise harmless substance

Alzheimer's Disease

A disorder in which there is a progressive loss of mental ability due to a deterioration of brain tissue. Memories are lost and, as brain cells die off, behaviour and personality changes occur. It is incurable

Amenorrhoea

Absence of menstrual periods in women who have not yet reached menopause. It is brought about by low levels of oestrogen

Amputation

The cutting off of a part of the body, usually a limb

Anaemia

A condition in which there is a deficiency of red blood cells or haemoglobin resulting in tiredness. It may be due to disorders such as heavy periods or lack of iron

Anaesthetic

Drugs that induce the total loss of sensitivity either in a localised area or in the whole body after loss of consciousness

Analgesia

Absence of pain in response to a stimulus that would normally be painful

Anaphylactic Shock (Anaphylaxis)

A severe allergic reaction which may be life threatening. It is rare and may be caused by insect stings, medication or a food allergy. It can cause swelling, anxiety, difficulty breathing and may be fatal

Anatomy

The study of parts of the body

Anecdotal Records

These record descriptions of anything that catches your attention, they may be noted at the time or at a later point

Aneurysm

Blood-filled sac in an artery wall caused by weakening of the wall or dilation

Angina

A feeling of pressure or pain in the chest caused by the heart muscle not getting enough oxygen because the coronary arteries are too narrow. It is usually brought on by exertion and relieved by rest

Anorexia

A psychological illness and eating disorder that is characterised by an obsessive desire to lose weight by refusing to eat and a distorted perception of body weight

Antibiotics

Drugs that inhibit the growth of, or destroy, micro-organisms

Antibodies

These are proteins that are produced by the body to fight a specific infection or illness. They attach themselves to bacteria and poisons that get into the blood to stop them from being harmful

Anticonvulsant

These are taken by people with epilepsy to prevent fits

Antidepressant

Prescribed drugs used to treat depression

Anti-discriminatory Practice

To actively work to avoid and eliminate discrimination

Antidote

A remedy to relieve, prevent, or counteract the effects of a poison

Antiembolism Stockings

Elastic stockings worn to prevent the formation of blood clots in the legs

Antipsychotic

Prescribed drugs used to treat psychosis

Antiseptic

Substance that reduces the growth of micro-organisms

Anus

The area where the large intestine opens to exit the body

Anxiety

State of intense worry and/or fear that affects the mind and body

Aorta

The artery from which blood leaves the heart

Aphasia

A condition whereby someone finds it difficult to put their thoughts into words

Appetite

A strong desire to satisfy a bodily need for food

Appraisal

Formal feedback about your job. This is an opportunity for both the employee and the employer to look at how the employee is doing in their role

Areola

The dark coloured ring which is around the nipple

Arousal Threshold

The level to which noise or pain, for example, needs to reach before the brain responds by waking you up

Arteries

Blood vessels that carry oxygenated blood around the body and, therefore, flow away from the heart

Arthralgia

Pain in a joint

Arthritis

A group of inflammatory and degenerative conditions which affect the joints causing pain, stiffness and swelling

Arthroplasty

Surgical technique in which all or part of a joint is replaced

Articulation

How words are spoken in order to be understood

Artificial Immunity

This is when a vaccine is introduced into the blood which causes white blood cells to make antibodies against that particular poison or infection. It also "teaches" the immune system how to produce more of the same antibodies quickly again if required

ASD or Autistic Spectrum Disorder (see Autism)

Asphyxia

This is when there is a failure of oxygen supply to the brain. If it is not treated rapidly it will lead to a lack of consciousness, permanent brain damage and eventually to death

Aspirate

To breathe in

Assault

To physically make contact with someone else's body without their consent and with the intention of harming them

Assertive

To act in a positive way. To be able to state your own point of view and express your feelings without unpleasantness and with respect for the views of others

Assessment

Evaluation of a need, requirement

Assisted Bath

A bath which is designed to permit side or end access for a mobile hoist, or other mechanism, to allow a patient to be transferred from a bed, couch or trolley and raised or lowered into it

Assistive Devices

Equipment or other items to help clients perform activities of daily living more easily

Assumption

Believing something to be right or wrong without checking it

Asthma

Intermittently the muscles of the airways spasm, making breathing difficult

Astigmatism

When the cornea – the layer over the front of the eye – is slightly misshapen. This means light is bent in slightly different ways and the lens can't focus everything properly so you get blurred vision

Asymptomatic

Showing no symptoms

At Work

The environment within which carry out your working duties, whether this be a care home or the home of the individual you support

Ataxia

The loss of the power to control movement or muscular action

Atherosclerosis

Narrowing of the arteries due to a hardening of the walls and the build up of fatty deposits which results in reduced blood flow. It is a major cause of stroke and heart attack and of poor circulation to the extremities

Athlete's Foot

A fungal infection of the foot, often affecting the skin between the toes which can have a cracked and sore or white and flaky appearance. It can be caused by several different types of fungi which thrive in warm, humid conditions

Atrophy

The decrease in size or wasting of an organ or tissue. It usually follows a period of disuse or immobility

Attachment

An affectionate bond between two people which joins them emotionally and is lasting

Atypical Depression

This is similar to "normal" depression except that the sufferer's mood can be temporarily lifted by something good happening

Audiologist

Assists people with hearing improvements – hearing aids etc

Audit

This is when the standards of the setting are monitored and evaluated by an independent agency

Autism (ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder)

A disorder characterised by difficulties in social interaction and communication. Many sufferers demonstrate repetitive patterns of thought and behaviour and can sometimes have a learning disability

Autoclave

A machine that sterilises medical equipment using steam pressure

Autoimmune Disorders

These are conditions where the immune system malfunctions and does not recognise the body's own tissues. As a result it produces antibodies and white blood cells that attack and try to destroy them

Autonomic System

A system of nerves which, together with parts of the brain and spinal cord, control what is going on inside the body without you having to think about it (e.g. heart beat, breathing, sweating)

Autonomous

Acting independently

B

Bacteria

Microscopic organisms that can cause infection

Barrier

Something that separates one thing from another. This can include barriers of culture, gender, religion, language, literacy, health issues, disability etc

Bed Cradle

Device to keep top bedding from resting on a client's legs and feet

Bedsore (see Pressure Ulcers)

Behaviour

The way in which someone acts or reacts – it is everything that a person says and does

Behavioural Difficulties

Needs related to aggression, challenging behaviour, hyperactivity, attention deficit, antisocial behaviour

Belief

An acceptance or conviction that something exists, is true or is real

Benign

Not recurrent or not tending to progress. Not cancerous

Benzodiazepines

A class of drugs that act as tranquillisers and are commonly used in the treatment of anxiety

Bereavement

The process of grieving after a loved one has died

Best Interests

Acting in a way advantageous to the individual, promoting their preferences, needs and wishes

Best Practice

The highest standards of performance in delivering safe, high quality care

Bias

To like or dislike someone or something without a good reason; prejudice

Biohazards

Anything of a biological, chemical etc nature that could put someone at risk

Biopsy

Removal and examination of tissue from the living body

Bipolar Disorder

A mood disorder in which a person's mood swings between deep, dark, possibly suicidal depression and terrifically energetic euphoria

Bladder

Where the body stores urine

Bladder Training

A plan of care that helps someone regain control of their urination

Bloodborne Pathogens

These are pathogenic micro-organisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease

Blood Pressure

The pressure of the blood on the arteries

Blood Tests

Blood is taken via a hypodermic needle from a vein in the forearm

Bodily Fluids

Liquids that are secreted from the body such as blood, mucous, semen, urine, etc and that have a capability of harbouring infection

Body Language

The non-verbal signals (movements, gestures etc) we give out and/or receive to/from other people

Boil

An infected hair follicle swells and becomes full of pus. As hair follicles are quite close together an infection can spread to form a cluster of boils (a carbuncle)

Bone Density

A description of bone mass

Bone Scan

These may be a radio-isotope type for tumours, infections and some fractures or an ultrasound type for osteoporosis and some soft tissue injuries

Boundaries

The lines that one must not cross – personally, morally, ethically etc

Bowel and Bladder Programme

An active, consistent programme of assessment of habit and retraining for elimination control

Brace

An aid that supports and/or strengthens a part of the body

Bradykinesia

A slowness of movement and the loss of voluntary or spontaneous movement, it is associated with Parkinson's Disease

Braille

A written language for blind people whereby letters are represented by patterns of raised dots to be felt with the fingertips

British Sign Language (BSL)

Signed English. It is a language of signs, gestures and expressions that is used by many in the deaf community

Bronchitis

The main branching airways leading to the lungs become inflamed and full of mucous. This reduces the airflow in and out of the lungs and can lead to breathing difficulties

Bronchodilator

This is a drug which relaxes the airways to open them up to help the passage of air during an asthma attack

Bruxism

This is when someone grinds their teeth and clenches their jaw while they are asleep

BSL (see British Sign Language)

Bulimia

The sufferer binge eats and then makes themselves vomit to get rid of the food

Bullying

Persistent, intentional, conscious cruelty against those who are unable to defend themselves

C

Cancer

A disease caused by the uncontrollable multiplication of certain cells which no longer work properly and increase to form a lump or tumour. Secondary tumours form when cancer cells break away and spread

Carbohydrates

Energy producing foods which include rice, bread, potatoes

Carcinogen

A substance capable of causing or producing cancer

Cardiac Arrest (see Heart Attack)

Cardiac Output

Volume of blood ejected in one minute by either of the ventricles of the heart

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (see CPR)

Cardiovascular

A term which refers to the heart (cardio) and blood vessels (vascular)

Cardiovascular Exercises

Those which make the heart beat faster, carrying oxygen to the muscles

Care and Support

This can include physical support enabling individuals to carry out everyday activities, emotional support during difficult or stressful times and state-funded support such as information and advice

Care Certificate

The government's statement of the standards of care to which care providers must adhere and which the inspectorate must take into account in carrying out inspections

Care Home

An establishment providing accommodation with nursing or personal care

Care Management

A system for organising the management and delivery of care services

Care Plan

A required document that records the wellbeing of a person and documents goals and objectives for the ongoing development of their wellbeing. The process of producing a care plan uses a team approach and includes the client, their family and friends

Care Record

A permanent written record of a client's progress

Care Worker

A person who provides care and support for another person formally – for example, a care assistant in a care home

Carer

A person who provides care and support for another person informally

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Tingling and pain in the hand and forearm due to the nerve which controls some of the hand muscles being compressed as it travels through a narrow space in the wrist

Cartilage

Tough, flexible connective tissue

Cataract

A clouding of the lens of the eye which causes foggy vision

Catheter

A hollow, flexible tube made of soft plastic or rubber that can be inserted into the body to withdraw or to insert fluids

Cellulitis

The skin and underlying tissues become infected by bacteria which causes redness and swelling. It most commonly affects the legs and is most often found in elderly people or those with poor circulation

Central Nervous System

This is the brain and spinal cord where all information coming into the body is sorted and the correct response is generated

Central Sleep Apnoea

When the airway remains open but the regulating mechanism that makes you breathe (the autonomic nervous system) is not working properly

Cerebral Cortex

This is the upper layer of the brain. It is responsible for intelligence, language and complicated motor skills

Cerebral Palsy

A general term to describe a group of disorders which affect movement and posture as a result of damage to the brain. There are three main types of cerebral palsy according to which part of the brain is damaged: spastic, athetoid and ataxic

Cerebrovascular Disease

When the arteries which supply the brain are diseased (hardened walls and fatty deposits) so blood supply is reduced

Certification

Recognition by a government or non-government agency that a person has met certain requirements

Challenging Behaviour

Behaviour that is seen as overtly disruptive, whether the person presenting the behaviour is aware of it or not. Types of challenging behaviour include aggression, attention seeking, bullying, crying, defiance, disobedience, jealousy, tantrums and withdrawal

Chemical Restraint

Medication used to sedate someone

Chemotherapy

Usually used to refer to an anti-cancer treatment which can be given by mouth or directly into the bloodstream through a drip

Chiropodist (see Podiatrist)

Chiropractor

A practitioner who manipulates the spine to relieve the pressure on nerves caused by poor posture, injury, disease or lack of exercise

Choice

Independently deciding between several possibilities

Cholesterol

A fatty substance found in animal fats as well as most body tissues. It is required for the body to function normally

Chronic

An illness or condition that has no current cure and is ongoing, usually for a long time

Circulation

The flow of blood around the body

Civic Responsibility

To recognise yourself as an individual member of a larger community and to act in ways that will not upset that community

Clarify

Making sure something is understood

Classism

When someone is discriminated against because of their class

Client

Person receiving care

Clinical Procedure

A clinical/medical activity involving a care worker and/or carer

Clinical Waste

Waste that is contaminated, in any way, with body fluid or material. This includes "sharps", such as needles, bodily fluids and used dressings

Closed Questions

Questions that are most likely to end in "yes" or "no"

Coccyx

This is the last bone of the spine that is made up of four tiny, fused vertebrae

Code of Practice

How the team of carers will put their values and aims into practice

Codes of Conduct

An agreed set of moral and ethical rules outlining the practices, or responsibilities, an individual or organisation must adhere to

Coeliac Disease

The lining of the small intestine is damaged by gluten – a protein found in anything containing wheat and rye. This has the effect of reducing absorption of food into the body

Coercion

Making someone do something against their will

Cognition

Thinking and having ideas

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

Works to correct a person's negative thoughts which have been triggering anxiety, depression and anger, and replace them with a positive attitude

Cognitive Impairment

A disorder where the person shows decreased abilities in memory, problem solving, orientation and/or judgement, reasoning

Cold Sores

These are painful clusters of tiny blisters, usually near the lips which are caused by a virus – herpes simplex. The virus, caught by close contact with an infected person, remains in the body and symptoms can reoccur

Collagen

A fibrous, insoluble protein found in connective tissue

Colonisation

The presence of harmful micro-organisms on or in the body which do not cause damage but can facilitate the spreading of infection and illness to others

Colonoscopy

Examination of the colon with an elongated speculum (an instrument for examination of canals)

Colostomy

A surgical opening in the skin from the colon or bowel to help someone defecate using a tube and bag

Comatose

When someone is unconscious

Combustible

Capable of catching on fire and burning

Comfort Zone

Conditions under which someone feels safe and secure

Commode

A type of chair with a hole in the seat that helps someone go to the toilet into a chamber pot underneath the hole

Communicable Diseases

Contagious, infectious diseases that can be transferred from person to person by direct or indirect contact

Communication

The exchange of thoughts, messages or information using spoken language, body language, tone of voice or gestures. Communication can take place face to face, by telephone, e-mail, text, via social networks, written reports and letters

Communication Barriers

Obstacles which prevent the effective exchange of ideas and thoughts

Community

The surrounding people with which a family have things in common, such as location and cultural background

Community Health Services

Health services, like domiciliary physiotherapy or nursing, provided to clients in their own home or at a local centre

Competency

Being able to demonstrate adequate capability based upon combinations of knowledge, experience and training

Complementary Food

Nutritional products providing all the nutrients usually present in a well balanced meal

Complementary Treatment

Various types of treatment which do not generally fit into mainstream healthcare

Compress

Gauze, washcloths, or small towels applied to a body area; may be moistened with hot or cold solution

Concentration

The relative amount of a substance when combined or mixed with other substances

Concussion

A temporary disturbance of the brain caused by a blow to the head or violent shaking, so that the brain is knocked against the inside of the skull

Conditions to Avoid

Conditions encountered during handling or storage that could cause a substance to become unstable

Confidentiality Agreements

A legal agreement between two or more parties signifying that a confidential relationship exists between them

Confidentiality

The protection of private affairs or restricted information relating to another person

Confined Space

Any area that has limited openings for entry and exit that would make escape difficult in an emergency, has a lack of ventilation, contains known and potential hazards, and is not intended nor designed for continuous human occupancy

Conflict of Interest

Where an individual or organisation has a vested interest or is in a position to exploit their professional capacity to benefit from a situation

Conflict

A serious disagreement or argument culminating in a clash or struggle between opposing forces

Confrontation

A argumentative or hostile situation between opposing parties

Congenital Condition

A condition which is present at birth. These may be inherited conditions, conditions due to developmental problems in the womb, or infections passed from the mother to child before or during birth

Conjunctivitis

An inflammation of the conjuction – the transparent covering of the eye and inside of the eyelid. It may be caused by bacterial or viral infection, an allergic reaction or a foreign body in the eye

Consent

The agreement or permission of a person to allow another person to do something for, with or to them

Constipation

When bowel movement is slowed down, consequently the person finds it difficult to expel faeces regularly and/or with ease

Constrict

To narrow

Contagious

A disease is said to be contagious if it is spread by physical contact

Contaminated

An object that is dirty or exposed to harmful organisms making it unsafe for use as intended

Context

The situation and/or background in which something said has its meaning

Continence

The ability to control urinating or defecating

Contract

A written and agreed statement of the terms on which a care home provides care to an individual client

Contracture

A deformity as a result of muscle that becomes permanently shortened, or due to scar tissue

Control Measures

The procedures put in place to manage risk

Convalescent

Gradual recovery of health and strength after illness

Convulsions

When the body jerks randomly due to uncontrollable muscle contractions

Coronary Arteries

Two blood vessels which supply the heart muscle with blood and therefore, a supply of oxygen and nutrients

Coronary Heart Disease

When the coronary arteries become narrowed, or even blocked, by deposits and thickening of their linings. This prevents a supply of oxygen and nutrients reaching the heart muscle

Cortisol

A hormone produced by the adrenal glands in response to periods of stress. Functions include: regulating sugar levels in the blood working with insulin, the sleep-wake cycle and the body's immune system

CoSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)

Legal obligations regarding the control of substances hazardous to health within a workplace to prevent or reduce worker exposure

Councils

Directly elected local bodies, also called local authorities, which provide a range of services, including social services, education and libraries, for people in their areas

Covert Discrimination

Discrimination which is unintended

CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

The learning activities and training undertaken to further a person's knowledge and develop their abilities throughout their careers

CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)

A procedure that maintains breathing and circulation when someone has had a heart attack

Creative Arts

Things such as dance, music, acting and painting which can help to show how somebody feels

Creativity

The personal and unique use of imaginative ideas

Crisis

A critical time

Culture

A collection of ideas, habits and ideals which are shared by a group of people

Curettage

Cleansing of a diseased surface

Cushing's Disease

The body over produces corticosteroid hormones, leading to a range of physical symptoms. It can be caused by long-term treatment by corticosteroid drugs

Cyst

A sac containing a liquid; most cysts are harmless

Cystic Fibrosis

An inherited condition which affects all fluid and mucous secreting glands (especially in the lungs and pancreas) causing the body's secretions to be abnormal and thick. This leads to clogged airways, chest infections and to difficulty absorbing food

Cystitis

A bacterial infection that causes inflammation of the lining of the bladder. The symptoms include frequent and painful passing of urine

D

Data Protection

The legal control over access to and use of stored data

Day Centre

A centre in which people can receive care, treatment or training during the day but continue to live at home

Day Hospital

A hospital where patients can receive treatment during the day but continue to live at home

Deafness

When someone is unable to hear due to decreased sensitivity to sounds

Debridement

Removing any dead or dying tissue in a wound to enable healing to take place. This will be done by someone who has been medically trained

Decomposition

Breakdown of a material or substance into parts, elements or simpler compounds

Decompression

Surgical procedure for relieving pressure, usually on a nerve or the spinal cord

Decontamination

The use of physical or chemical means to remove, inactivate or destroy bloodborne pathogens on a surface or item to prevent the transmission of infectious particles rendering the surface or item safe for handling, use or disposal

Deep Burns

These involve all layers of the skin that may appear charred. There may be no pain if the nerves have been destroyed. Medical attention is always required

Defecation

Evacuation of the bowels

Defence Mechanism

Unconscious reactions that protect a person from real or perceived threats

Deficiency

Lack of one or more essential nutrients in the diet

Degeneration

The process of change, usually with age, in bone or soft tissue. It is sometimes referred to as "wear and tear"

Degraded

To be humiliated, made to feel small, worthless, reduced in some way

Dehydration

Excessive water loss from body tissues resulting from not enough fluid intake

Delirium

Acutely altered level of mental state. It is characterised by confusion, disorientation, restlessness, clouding of the consciousness, incoherence, fear, anxiety, excitement and often by illusions

Delusion

When someone thinks that a thought they have had is real when it is not real

Dementia

A worsening condition due to brain illness that affects mental and physical ability. Sufferers can experience short term memory loss, changes in personality, deterioration in personal care, impaired reasoning ability and disorientation

Dependence

Where a drug is required to be taken in order to prevent physiological withdrawal response, this may be physical or physiological

Depressant

A substance that reduces a bodily functional activity or an instinctive desire, such as appetite

Depression

A mental disorder resulting in feelings of severe despondency, sadness, loss of self-worth and loss of interest

Dermatitis

A red, itchy rash, sometimes with blisters which happens because of sensitivity to something such as contact with nickel (metal present in cheap jewellery), stress and sometimes to light

Dermatome

An area of the skin that is known to be served by a specific spinal nerve

Deteriorate

Get worse

Detoxification

The period of time where a person stops using the substance which is causing a problem and their mind and body adjusts to being without it

Developmental Disability

A condition that causes a person to develop less well than others which impairs their ability to cope with daily living

Devitalised Tissue

Dead tissue

Dexterity

Skill in handling

Diabetes Mellitus

A chronic condition caused by a deficiency of insulin which results in a failure to metabolise sugars. Insulin can be given by injection and a diet should be followed to ensure carbohydrates are present in every meal

Diagnose

To determine the type and cause of an illness or condition based on a variety of information

Dialysis

Treats kidney failure by replacing the functions of the kidneys, which filter out waste and excess water from the blood. It can be a temporary treatment for acute kidney failure or a long-term measure used in end-stage kidney failure

Diaphragm

The sheet of muscle which separates the chest cavity, containing the lungs, from the abdomen. Movement of the diaphragm up and down causes air to be pulled into the lungs and then be pushed out again during breathing

Diarrhoea

The frequent passing of loose, almost liquid stools

Diastolic Pressure

The lower number of a blood pressure reading which shows the heart's blood pressure when the heart is resting

Dietary Requirements

Food and drink required to satisfy nutritional and other needs pertaining to an individual's health

Dieticians

Someone who provides specialist advice on nutritional needs. In the UK they have to be professionally trained and need to have passed examinations

Digestion

This is the body's process of breaking down and absorbing food. This is done physically by the action of the mouth and stomach and is done chemically by the action of enzymes in the mouth, stomach and first part of the small intestine

Dignity

The right to a recognition of the intrinsic value of a person through respect for their uniqueness and appropriate responses to their personal needs

Dilate

Expand or open wider

Dilemma

A difficult decision, problem or choice which has to be made

Diphtheria

A disease beginning with a sore throat and progressing rapidly to cause breathing difficulties, heart and nerve damage which can be fatal. It is caused by bacteria transmitted via airborne droplets which multiply in the throat and may release poisons into the blood

Direct Discrimination

If someone is deliberately treated less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances

Directive

An instruction that must be complied with

Direct Transmission

Direct transfer of micro-organisms from one thing to another

Disability

The loss of the ability according to that which is seen as "normal" ability to society

Disability Discrimination

When someone with a disability is denied equal opportunity with their non-disabled peers

Discharge

The formal ending of providing care provision

Disciplinary Action

Action initiated against a staff member by management to deal, under specified procedures, with unacceptable behaviour

Disclosure

Telling another person about something

Discrimination

The denial of equality based on personal characteristics such as race and colour. It is usually based on prejudice and stereotypes

Disinfectant

This is usually a chemical and is applied to objects to destroy germs

Disoriented

Unable to give correct information about time, place, identity of persons or objects or to perform activities correctly

Distraction

When a person's attention is drawn away from one thing to another

District Nurse

A nurse who visits patients in their own homes

Diuretics

Drug or other substance that causes an increase in the production and excretion of urine

Diversity

A celebration of, and respect for, people's individual differences and values

DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid)

The carrier of genetic information which is principally found in the chromosomes of the nucleus of the cell

DNR (Do Not Resuscitate)

An instruction given by a person that they do not want their heartbeat artificially restarted

Domiciliary Care

Care provided in a person's own home

Down's Syndrome

A condition present from birth that results from an individual having an extra number 21 chromosome. This leads to learning difficulties, shorter stature, distinctive features and frequently heart defects

Drop Attacks

A form of Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) in which a brief interruption of cerebral blood flow causes a person to fall to the floor without losing consciousness

Drug Holidays

Regularly scheduled short time periods when all non-essential medications are withheld

Drug Paraphernalia

Any item which can be associated with drug use

Dual Diagnosis

When a person has two disorders that affect each other, for example depression and alcoholism

Duties

Responsibilities, moral or legal obligations that are required to be fulfilled within a person's occupation

Duty of Care

A moral or legal obligation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of others, protecting them from harm and providing high quality care

Dysarthria

A muscle problem that makes it difficult for the person to speak

Dyscalculia

Problems in handling numbers and mathematical concepts, many of its features are shared with dyslexia

Dyslexia

A learning difficulty where the person has problems coping with written symbols

Dysmenorrhea

Painful menstruation

Dysphagia

A condition that causes difficulty chewing and swallowing food and drink

Dysphasia

The sufferer understands that which is going on around them but loses their ability to write and/or speak, either partially or fully. The frustration this causes can often be seen in challenging behaviour

Dyspnoea

A sense of difficulty in breathing; shortness in breath

Dyspraxia

An immaturity of the brain which means that messages are not properly transmitted to the body

Dyssomnia

Sleep disorders which cause problems in falling asleep or staying asleep and cause extreme daytime sleepiness

Dysthymia

A mild to moderate depression that gradually subsides to major depression

Dysuria

Difficult or painful urination

E

E-number

A food additive approved by the European Union and given an identifying number

ECG (Electrocardiogram)

A record of the electrical activity of the heart

Economy

Ideas of money relationships and needs

EEG (Electroencephalogram)

A record of the electrical activity of nerve cells in the brain

Egocentric

Someone who can only see things from their own point of view. This differs from someone who is selfish, as a selfish person can see another's point of view but chooses to ignore it

Eliminate

To get urine and/or faeces out of the body

Embolus

Blood clot that travels through the circulatory system until it lodges in a distant blood vessel

Emergency

Serious situation that comes on suddenly and threatens life or wellbeing

Emesis Basin

Kidney-shaped basin that fits against the neck to collect vomit

Emotional Difficulties

Needs related to conditions such as anxiety, fear, depression and ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder)

Emotional Needs

Wanting to be needed, loved, respected

Emotional Quotient (see EQ)

Empathy

The ability to put yourself into the place of someone else, to identify with them

Empowerment

Enabling people to make their own decisions for themselves

Enabling

Helping, encouraging, supporting someone to do something for themselves with and/or without appropriate aids etc

Endocrine Glands

Glands which produce hormones and release them into the bloodstream. Examples of this are the adrenal glands and the pituitary gland

Endorphins

A group of chemicals produced in the body which naturally provide pain relief. They also affect your feelings of wellbeing

Endoscope

A device consisting of a tube and optical system for observing the inside of a hollow organ or cavity

End-Stage Disease

Terminal or final illness

Epilepsy

A condition whereby a disorder of the central nervous system can cause seizures, there may be developmental problems as well. There are several types of epileptic seizure including petit mal and grand mal

EPS (Extra Pyramidal Symptoms)

Twitches and involuntary spasms

EQ (Emotional Quotient)

Measures a person's emotional health and stability

Equality

Having access to equal opportunity; being treated fairly

Equal Opportunities

Ensuring every person has equal access to the same opportunities

Ergonomics

Studying the relationship of job tasks and the worker's capabilities with a view to developing a worker friendly environment

Eschar (see Necrotic Tissue)

Essential Tremor

A tremor of unknown cause, often misdiagnosed as Parkinson's Disease. It generally happens when the hands are held in a particular posture or when they are moved toward an object – not when at rest as in Parkinson's Disease

Ethics

Awareness and application of issues that have rights, wrongs and moral dilemmas

Ethnicity

Depicts the cultural group which a person belongs to

Ethnic Minorities

Groups of people whose race, religion or culture differ significantly from those of the majority of inhabitants of the country in which they live

Ethos

Characteristic spirit or attitude of a community. Can be used to refer to the 'learning atmosphere' of a care setting

Aetiology

Cause of a disease

Eustachian Tube

Connects the middle ear to the throat. This means that the air pressure on each side of the ear drum can be kept even

Evaluate

To analyse and make judgements about the ways in which you currently work to better your practice

Evaluation

When it is decided if plans have been successful

Exacerbation

Return of symptoms of illness or disease after a remission

Exercise

A type of physical activity defined as a planned, structured and repetitive body movement done to improve or maintain physical fitness

Exploitation

Treating somebody unfairly or manipulating a situation in order to benefit yourself

Explosive

A chemical that causes a sudden, almost instantaneous release of pressure, gas and heat when subjected to sudden shock, pressure or high temperature

Exposure

State of being open and vulnerable to a hazardous chemical by inhalation, skin contact, or any other course

Exposure Incident

A specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that results from the performance of an employee's duties

Extinguishing Media

The fire fighting substance to be used to control a material in the event of a fire

Extra Pyramidal Symptoms (see EPS)**Eye Protection**

Recommended safety glasses, face shields etc to be used when handling a hazardous material

F**Facilitate**

To make something happening more possible

Fact

Information that is known or proved to be true

Faecal Impaction

If constipation is not put right, the faeces "compact" in the rectum

Faeces

Formed body waste that is discharged from the bowels

Fall

A sudden unanticipated change downward in body position with or without physical injury

Family

People related to each other by blood, marriage, adoption or legal guardianship

Fatigue

Loss of strength and endurance

Fats

Source of energy found in foods such as oil, butter and margarine

Febrile Convulsions

Convulsions or fits related to a fever

Feedback

Constructive reactions in relation to a person's performance used as a basis for improvement

Feeding Programme

A structured programme of nutritional assessment and feeding assistance to promote nutritional intake and resident independence

Fever

Abnormal elevation of body temperature

Fine Motor Skills

Skills of movement requiring the smaller muscles of the body and often involving manipulation. For example use of hands and fingers to do up buttons

First Aid

Immediate care given before treatment by a trained medical personnel

Fit For Purpose

The term used in the regulation process to identify the extent to which a home successfully meets its stated aims and objectives

Food Hygiene

The action taken in the storing, handling, preparation and serving of food to prevent contamination

Food Safety

The prevention of health hazards through the correct storing and handling of food

Food Supplement

A concentrated nutrient given to someone to "add value" to their meals

Footboard

Positioning device to keep client's feet in an upright position

Footdrop

Inability to keep the foot in a normal walking position

Foreskin

The skin that covers the end of the penis when someone has not been circumcised

Formal Social Relationships

These are short-lived relationships that are not about friendship, companionship or family. They demand a certain type of behaviour which has its own rules. For example buying a train ticket

Fortified Foods

Those that have had vitamins and minerals added to them

Foundation

The structured training period, generally for new staff, to ensure they genuinely understand and can demonstrate competency in the main aspects of their duties and job description

Fowler's Position

The position of sitting upright, usually in bed

Fracture

Broken bone

Fulfilment

A person's right to the realisation of personal aspirations and abilities in all aspects of their life

Functional Level

The essential elements of literacy, numeracy and communication skills you need to perform your work confidently and effectively

G

Gait

Manner or style of walking

Gallstone

A deposit formed in the gallbladder or bile duct

Gastritis

When the stomach lining becomes inflamed due to an infection or irritation

Gastroenteritis

When the lining of the stomach and the intestines become inflamed due to an infection. This often causes vomiting, diarrhoea, fever and cramps

Gender

Represents the socially constructed differences between man and woman

Generalised Anxiety Disorder

Excessive anxiety most days during several activities with at least three of the following: restlessness, poor concentration, irritability, sleep disturbance and muscle tension

Genetic

Pertaining to or carried by genes – hereditary

Genitalia

Organs of reproduction

Geriatrician

A person who specialises in the medical condition of elderly people

German Measles (see Rubella)

Germs

Very small organisms that cause disease. They are also referred to as pathogens or pathogenic micro-organisms

GI (Glycaemic Index)

This is a way of ranking carbohydrate containing foods in terms of their effect on blood glucose levels. The base line of 100 is represented by white bread against which other foods are measured

Glaucoma

The normal flow of fluid out of the eye becomes blocked and pressure rises inside which causes damage to nerve fibres in the retina and interferes with information being sent to the brain. It affects vision and can result in blindness

Glucagon

A hormone produced by special cells in the pancreas which acts to increase the level of glucose in the blood if it drops

Glucose

This is a sugar and the most important carbohydrate in the body metabolism

Glucose Tolerance Test

A test to determine a person's ability to metabolise glucose

Glue Ear

If there are repeated middle ear infections then a jelly like substance may gradually fill the middle ear which cannot drain away down the Eustachian tube. This "glues" the ear drum and can be treated by the insertion of a grommet – a small plastic tube inserted into the eardrum allowing fluid build-up to drain

Gluten

A protein which is found in barley, oats, rye and wheat

Glycaemic Index (see GI)

Glycogen

A carbohydrate stored in cells for future conversion into glucose. It is used in performing muscular work and liberating heat

Grand Mal

This is a type of epileptic seizure. It involves repeated attacks of seizures which result in breathing difficulties and loss of consciousness. The body stiffens, then the limbs begin to jerk, the teeth clench and there may be frothing at the mouth

Granulation

The phase in wound healing where the wound bed looks granular. It is a highly vascular progress due to the formation of new blood vessels and so the wound is red in colour

Grief

A feeling a person may experience when someone they love dies. This will include feelings of deep sadness and loss

Grievance

A formal complaint

Grooming

The actions of an abuser or sexual predator to establish an emotional connection with their victim and enable abuse

Gross Motor Skills

The skills of movement which use the large muscles of the body and includes walking, running, climbing etc. They require balance, control and coordination

Guardianship

A legal status given to selected clients by an order made under mental health legislation

Guilt

Feelings that someone has who believes they have done something wrong

Gynaecology

The study of the reproductive organs in women

H

Habit

Repeated pattern of involuntary behaviour or thought

HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point)

A preventative food safety system using analysis to reduce microbiological, physical and chemical hazards

Haematoma

A blood clot under the surface of the skin

Haematuria

When blood is found in urine

Haemoglobin

The iron containing pigment present in red blood cells which picks up oxygen molecules as the blood passes the lungs, and carries it to wherever it is needed in the body

Haemorrhoids

Varicose veins in the rectum or anus

Haemostasis

The blood supply to a wound is controlled and the process of clotting takes place to plug the wound against bleeding

Halal Food

Food that has been prepared according to Islamic laws

Hallucination

When someone hears and/or sees something that is not there

Handicap

A disadvantage for an individual resulting from an impairment or disability that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal for that individual

Handling Comments and Complaints

This includes the recording of comments and complaints in adherence with in-house, local and national policies

Handwashing Facility

A facility that provides an adequate supply of running water, soap and single use towels

Harm

This is ill treatment; the impairment of physical or mental health and the impairment of development

Hay Fever

This is acute allergic rhinitis. The linings of the nose are irritated by an allergen – usually pollen – they become inflamed and produce excess mucous which results in a runny nose and itchy, watery eyes

Hazard

Any source of potential damage, danger, harm or adverse health effects

Health

State of physical, mental, and social wellbeing

Healthcare Tasks

These include any clinical procedures carried out as part of a care or support plan, for example those relating to stoma care, catheters or injections

Health and Safety

This could be in relation to the health and/or safety of yourself, your colleagues or the people you support

Health Promotion

The active encouragement of others to improve their health and providing ways to do it

Healthy Balanced Diet

Choosing and eating a range foods which contain the necessary nutrients required for healthy growth

Heart Attack

Heart muscles do not receive their blood supply and oxygen cannot be pumped around the body; the person affected will collapse. Symptoms include a crushing feeling in the chest, pain down the left arm and sometimes their back

Heimlich Manoeuvre

The technique that is used to release a foreign body from someone's airway when they are choking

Hepatitis

Infectious diseases of the liver caused by a virus and spread through contact with blood, body fluids or unprotected sexual intercourse. It causes swelling, soreness and loss of normal function of the liver. Symptoms include weakness, fatigue, nausea, abdominal pain, fever, and headache

Hierarchy

An organised ranking

High Blood Pressure (see Hypertension)

Hip Protector Pads

A pad or a shell that is worn under clothing, covering the hip and held in place by specially designed underpants to minimise the risk of falls injury, specifically hip fracture. They absorb the impact of a fall and reduce the risk of fracture by shunting energy away from the hip region

Histamine

A chemical that is present throughout the cells of the body and is released in response to an allergen

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus)

A viral infection transmitted by direct contact with body fluids that causes AIDS

Holistic Care

Holistic care is a comprehensive approach to care that takes into account the whole person, their complete needs. For example, all their physical, spiritual, emotional, social and economic needs

Homeostasis

A process that is coordinated by the nervous system and hormones which is vital as it keeps the internal environment of the body stable and regulated

Homophobia

The fear and dislike of homosexual men and women

Hormone

A chemical produced in one part of the body that travels in the bloodstream to have an effect somewhere else

Hospice Care

Special care provision for someone who is very ill and expected to die within a few months

Human Rights

Basic entitlements to the meeting of universal needs and wishes, such as the right to privacy, freedom of speech, religion, and family life, which should be enjoyed by every individual

Huntington's Disease

An inherited brain disorder that causes personality changes, dementia and irregular and involuntary movements of the facial muscles and limbs

Hydration

Maintaining adequate fluid levels to promote healthy functioning

Hydrotherapy

Gentle exercise in warm water which helps to relax muscles

Hyperglycaemia

When blood glucose levels are too high. This may be due to a lack of insulin or an inability of the cells to take up the glucose from the blood

Hyperlipemia

The presence of excess lipids (fats) in the blood

Hyperlipidaemia

This is an abnormally high level of fats in the blood. It is a major cause of stroke, coronary heart disease and peripheral artery disease

Hypertension

Chronic high blood pressure, often caused by arterial disease, which can result in stroke

Hypnagogic Hallucinations

A disorder that relates to problems going from one stage of sleep to another, images appear just as you are falling asleep

Hypnopompic Hallucinations

A disorder that relates to problems going from one stage of sleep to another, images appear just as you are waking up

Hypotension

Low blood pressure

Hypoglycaemia

Blood glucose level is far too low and so the cells are deprived of glucose

Hypothermia

A person is not warm enough and their body temperature drops to a dangerously low level (below 35°C). Deep hypothermia (below 26°C) can be fatal as the organs of the body slow down so much they may stop working altogether

Hypothesis

A theory which can be tested to see if it is right

Hypoxia

Oxygen deficiency

I

Identity

How a person comes to understand themselves in the context of society around them

Ignitable

Capable of being set on fire

Illiteracy

Not being able to read and write

Illness

A disease or period of sickness affecting the mind or body

Immobilisation

Prevention of movement, presumably to allow for natural healing to take place

Immune

Resistant to infectious disease

Immunisation

A process or procedure by which resistance to infectious disease is produced in a person

Immunosuppressants

Drugs which suppress the immune system, stopping it from working at full capacity to prevent the body attacking cells it doesn't recognise as its own. They can be taken by transplant patients and to treat autoimmune diseases

Impaired Judgement

The inability to make logical, rational decisions and decide whether the given action is right or wrong

Impaired Mobility

Impaired gait or balance or inability to walk straight forward without support

Impairment

The loss or limitation of a physical, mental or sensory function on a long-term basis

Impervious

A material that does not allow another substance to pass through or penetrate it

Implementation

When a plan is put into action

Impulse

Sudden, uncontrollable urge

Incentive Spirometer

Instrument that is used to encourage the client to breathe deeply and correctly

Incidence

Extent or frequency of an occurrence i.e. the number of people with a pressure sore over a given period of time

Incident

Something that happens which is unusual

Incident Monitoring

A method of collecting detailed qualitative data about any unintended incident which could have or did harm someone

Inclusion

Providing the support needed to enable different people to be together in the community, treated equally and fairly

Incontinence

Not being able to control urinating or defecating

Incubation Period

The time gap between the entry of the disease-causing organism into the body and the first appearance of the symptoms. During this time a person is most likely to pass on the infection to others

Independence

The right to have the opportunity to think and act without reference to another person

Independent Sector

The commercial and voluntarily managed agencies involved in care, which are not part of central or local government

Indirect Discrimination

When a condition is applied which will unfairly affect, or disadvantage, a particular group of people when compared with others

Indirect Transmission

Transmission of micro-organisms from one thing to another via a third party, such as hands, equipment etc

Individual

Any adult, child or young person accessing care or support; it will usually mean the person or people supported by the worker

Individual Accommodation

The areas in a home which are private to a single client or a sharing couple, as opposed to shared facilities and communal space

Individuality

The sense of self that a person develops as their life experiences grow and change shaped by their beliefs, age, class, circumstances etc

Induction

The structured initial training period, generally for new staff, to ensure they understand the basic application of their duties and job description and that the employer is happy the employee understands these basics

Infantilisation

When an adult is talked to as if they are a child

Infarct

Area of dead, deteriorating tissue resulting from a lack of blood supply

Infection

The invasion and multiplication of micro-organisms such as bacteria, viruses, and parasites that are not normally present within the body resulting in signs of illness or diseases

Infection Control

Methods to prevent the spread of infection

Infectious Arthritis

Also known as Septic Arthritis, this is caused by bacteria, fungi or viruses which invade the body and settle in the joints causing inflammation e.g. tuberculosis, HIV and gonorrhoea

Informal Carer

Unpaid person, usually a family member, who cares for the client on a voluntary basis

Informed Choice

An independent decision based upon full evidence and information available to you

Ingestion

Taking in by the mouth

Inhalation

Breathing in

Insoluble

Incapable of being dissolved in a liquid

Insoluble Fibre

This is also known as roughage and cannot dissolve in water. It remains in the intestine acting as bulk and stimulating the intestine to push everything along

Insomnia

A condition where falling asleep or staying asleep are difficult to achieve

Instinct

A behaviour or response which is not learnt

Institutional Discrimination

When discrimination is expressed through the policies and procedures set by an institution

Institutional Racism

The failure of an organisation to provide a proper service to people because of their origins. This can be countered by having a policy of equal opportunities in the organisation

Insulin

A hormone produced by specialised cells in the pancreas. It acts to regulate the level of glucose in the blood when it rises above a critical level

Interdisciplinary

When two or more agencies work together in the provision of someone's care

Intermediate Care

Short-term care, normally not more than six weeks, provided in a care home or through a centre in the form of intensive rehabilitation. Designed to promote independence and reduce time in hospital

Internalisation

Learning that is deeply understood and, therefore, unlikely to be forgotten – at least not for some time

Intravenous (IV) Infusions

Administration of nutrients or medications through a vein or veins

Invasive

Entering the body

Involuntary Seclusion

Separation of the client from other clients or from his/her room against the will of the resident or legal representative

IQ (Intelligence Quotient)

Measures a person's intelligence, a score of 100 is the average

Irritant

A chemical that is not corrosive that causes a reversible inflammatory effect on tissue by chemical action at the site of contact

Ischaemia

A reduced blood supply to a part of the body caused by the narrowing of the arteries

Ischium

The lower and back part of the pelvis. It is the bone the body rests on when sitting

Isometric Exercises

Strength training exercise where the joints are not moved. Muscles contract and relax, often using another part of the body to work against. For example clasp hands in front and pushing them together repeatedly

Isotonic Exercises

This type of strength training exercise involves muscles being moved against the resistance of water, gravity, weights etc as the joints are bent and straightened e.g. swimming, dance, stair climbing, sit ups

J

Jaundice

Occurs when a waste substance called bilirubin is made faster than the liver can get rid of it. It can be a sign of a liver which is not functioning correctly and it makes the skin and whites of the eyes yellow

Jet Lag

A disorder of the body's Circadian rhythm caused by crossing many time zones in quick succession. The body's clock does not synchronise with the local time

Joint

A junction between bones. Usually formed of fibrous connective tissue and cartilage

Judgement

The ability to make considered decisions or come to sensible conclusions

K

Ketoacidosis

This is the result of toxic chemicals in the blood from the breakdown of fats, in the cells of the body, to obtain energy. This may be a dangerous condition and requires emergency treatment because it can lead to dehydration and coma

Key People

The people who are important to an individual and who can make a difference to his or her wellbeing. Key people may include family, friends, carers and others with whom the individual has a supportive relationship

Key Worker

A person with the main responsibility for the provision of a service to a client or clients

Kosher Food

Food that has been prepared according to Jewish laws

Kyphosis

The bending of the spine which leads to a hump in the upper back, tilting the head forward. Generally resulting from the bones of the spine becoming brittle and fracturing

L

Label

Notice attached to a container bearing information concerning its contents

Labelling

Applying stereotypical ideas to individuals rather than groups

Labia

The outer and inner fatty areas found around the vulva of a woman's genitals

Language

A method of communication which can be spoken or written

Lean Body Mass

The weight of the body minus the fat content

Learning Difficulty

This describes a wide range of needs and problems which act as a barrier to learning. It includes behavioural problems

Learning Disability

People with these have difficulties learning and find it particularly hard to understand new concepts and develop new skills. It is a lifelong condition that is usually present from birth but may not be apparent until later

Learning Styles

The different ways and techniques through which an individual learns

Legislation

Important legislation includes: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH), Data Protection Act, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, Equality Act, Fire Safety, First Aid at Work Regulations, Freedom of Information Act, Health & Safety at Work Act, Human Rights Act, Managing Stress, Mental Capacity Act, Mental Health Act, Moving and Handling Operating Regulations (MHOR) and Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

Lesion

Any injury or wound to a tissue

Lethargy

Sluggishness

Life Threatening Illness

A serious or terminal illness e.g. AIDS, cancer, leukaemia

Lifting/Turning Sheet

Folded sheet placed under client from shoulders to thighs

Ligament

Very strong fibrous tissue which holds bones together but allows for movement

Listening

Actively engaging the mind to understand what someone else is trying to say so that their communication is understood

Literacy

The ability to read and write

Living Will

Advance medical directive that specifies treatment to be given or withheld if a person becomes terminally ill or incapable of making decisions themselves

Locomotion

The ability to move around on your own

Lone-Working

An employee carrying out their working activities in isolation from their colleagues without close or direct supervision

Long-Term Care

Care provided by a home or other agency over a period of some months or more

Lubricant

Fluid, ointment, or other substance for reducing friction between parts that rub together and making a surface slippery it protects skin and prevents drying

Lumbago

An imprecise term for lower back pain

M

Maceration

Softening and whitening of skin which is kept constantly wet, leaving it more vulnerable to infection or damage from tearing

Makaton

This is a list of over 400 items with corresponding signs and symbols. It is based on British Sign Language but is used to support the spoken word and is used with facial expressions and movements

Malabsorption Syndrome

Inadequate absorption of nutrients from the intestinal tract, especially small intestine

Malignant

Tending to become progressively worse and to result in death

Malnutrition

A lack of proper nutrition often as a result of not eating the correct types of food or not eating enough food

Malodorous

Having a foul smell

Mammary

Pertaining to the breast

Managing Risk

Supporting individuals to exercise their choices and rights, recognising the balance between managing risk and enabling independence, choice and control

Mandatory

Required

Manual Handling

The movement or transport of a load by hand or bodily force

MAR (Medication Administration Record)

A written record of an individual's medication schedule and administered drugs

Mask

A covering that protects the face and/or mouth

Medical Advisor

The person(s) who advises upon an individual's health, for example a doctor or surgeon

Medical Model of Dementia

The medical model of dementia takes a clinical approach, focussing on changes occurring within the brain and the decline in previous functionality

Medical Model of Disability

The medical model of disability says that an individual is disabled by their impairment or difference. This is the opposite to the social model which says the way society is organised is what "disables" the individual

Medication

Drugs used in the treatment of disease or illness

Melatonin

A hormone produced by the pineal gland in the brain when it gets dark. It affects other glands in the body and the result is that you wind down and feel sleepy

Melting Point

The temperature at which a solid substance changes to a liquid state

Meningitis

An inflammation of the lining of the brain due to an infection

Menopause

The stage of a woman's life where hormonal changes occur

Menstruation

Periodic discharge of blood from the vagina of a non-pregnant uterus

Mental Abuse

Statements of humiliation, harassment, threats of punishment or deprivation

Mental Capacity

A person's ability to make their own fully informed decisions and choices

Mental Health

A person's condition with regards to their psychological and emotional wellbeing

Metabolism

Sum total of all chemical reactions in body cells that transform substances into energy or materials the body can use or store

Micro-Organisms

Viruses, bacteria etc that can not be seen by the eye

Minerals

These are essential for maintenance of a healthy body and include calcium, iron, sodium and zinc

Mobility

How capable someone is of moving about themselves

Motor Nerve

This carries the signal from the central nervous system out to the muscles to bring about a response

Motor Neurone Disease

Motor nerve cells are impaired which weakens them and they gradually waste away effecting the person's mobility, swallowing, breathing, etc

Motor Skills

The abilities regarding physical skills and abilities

Moving and Assisting

This is often referred to as "Moving and Handling", "Manual Handling" and "Moving and Positioning" in health and social care

Mourn

Process of grieving caused by great personal loss

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) Scan

A highly technical scanner that uses magnetic fields and computer technology to generate images of the internal anatomy of the body

MS (Multiple Sclerosis)

A progressive disease that affects nerve fibres which causes gradual disabling

Mucous

Sticky, thick fluid secreted by mucous glands and mucous membranes. It moistens, lubricates and protects

Mucous Membrane

Membrane lining all body passages that come into contact with the air including the respiratory and alimentary tracts. It contains cells that secrete mucous

Multilingual

When someone is able to speak more than two languages

Multiple Sclerosis (see MS)

Multi-Agency Approach

Different organisations, groups or services working together for the benefit of an individual

Muscle

An organ composed of individual muscle fibres and muscle cells

Muscle Atrophy

Wasting of muscle

Muscle Tone

Readiness of muscle to work

Muscular Dystrophies

A group of inherited conditions which affect the muscles so they become weak and wasted. The condition prevents production of an important protein needed for healthy muscle development

N

Narcolepsy

An extreme tendency to fall asleep during normal waking hours. Sometimes this is accompanied by vivid hallucinations immediately before a sleep attack. Some sufferers become paralysed and others collapse during such an attack

Narcotics

Substances which may induce drowsiness, sleep, stupor or insensibility

Nasal Cannula

Two-pronged device that delivers oxygen; short prongs are inserted into the client's nostrils

National Minimum Standards

The government's statement of the standards of care to which care providers must adhere and which the inspectorate must take into account in carrying out inspections

Natural Immunity

This is immunity which is the result from having had an infection, producing the antibodies and then being protected from further infection

Nausea

The feeling of sickness at the stomach

Needs

An essential or very important requirement in a condition or situation in order to maintain a certain condition or reach a desired state. Assessed needs can include a variety of physical, mental health, emotional, social, spiritual, communication, learning, support or care needs

Neglect

Inability or failure to provide needed care

Negligence

The failure to act in what would be considered a proper and professional manner by a group of reasonably minded people

Nephropathy

Kidney damage caused by, for example, a long period of high glucose levels and high blood pressure. It is a complication of diabetes and can lead to kidney failure if sugar levels are not controlled

Nervous System

The body works by the brain sending messages down the spinal cord which are then passed on to the nerves which stimulate the muscles. Messages can also be sent from the nerves, to the spinal cord and up to the brain

Neuroleptic Drugs

A group of drugs which are used in the treatment of psychosis and dementia

Neuropathic Pain

Pain caused by a primary lesion or dysfunction in nerve fibres, spinal cord or brain

Neuropathy

Any disease of the nerves

Neurotic Behaviour

When someone acts overly sensitively or obsessively. This can include rocking, self-harm and pulling their hair out

Neurotransmitter

A chemical involved in carrying nerve impulses from one nerve cell to the next

Nocturia

Excessive urination at night

Nocturnal Confusion

Confusion occurring during the night

Non-Flammable

Not easily ignited, or if ignited it does not burn rapidly

Non-Pathogenic

Micro-organisms that do not cause infection

Non-Verbal Communication

Sending and receiving messages without using spoken language and instead communicating through gestures, body language and facial expressions

Noradrenaline

A hormone produced by the adrenal glands in response to stressful situations which helps to prepare the body for "fight or flight". It increases alertness and mainly promotes the ability to fight back

Normal

Conforming to a standard or following the rule

Normalisation

Creating situations where a person can develop and function as close to that which would be considered "normal" by society in general

Nutrients

The chemicals in food which provide energy and provide materials for growth and repair. These are carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals

Nutrition

Process by which food is taken in and used by the body

Nutritional Supplements

A product intended to provide nutrients which may otherwise not be consumed in sufficient quantities to support healthy functioning of the body

Nutritionists

Professionals who are trained in nutrition

O

Obesity

Being so overweight that health is severely at risk. Having a BMI over 30

Objective

Not using personal feelings when making a judgement

Observation

Act of watching carefully and attentively

Obstructive Sleep Apnoea

A form of repeated temporary interruptions of breathing during sleep. The soft tissue where the mouth, throat, nose and airway to the lungs collapse and blocks the airway

Occupational

Job related

Occupational Exposure

Skin, eye or mucous membrane contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result from the performance of an employee's duties

Occupational Therapist

Someone who helps a person use their hands and arms better. Their primary role is to assist people to undertake day to day activities as best they can for themselves, with and/or without suitable aids

Occupational Therapy

The treatment of a disease or the promotion of good health by mental or physical activities

Oedema

Abnormal accumulation of fluid in the tissues which causes swelling, typically in the legs and ankles

Oestrogen

Principal female sex hormone

Older Adult

An individual 65 years or older

Ombudsman

Someone formally designated to investigate complaints independently

Open Questions

Questions that are not easily answered with a "yes" or "no", they need to be answered more openly, more fully, they do not have a specific answer

Open Recording

The process under which the inspection reports of homes are documents which must be available to the public

Opinion

A personal view or judgement formed about something that is not necessarily based upon fact or knowledge

Opioids

Analgesics used for moderate to severe pain, for example, morphine

Oppressed

If someone is oppressed then they are being prevented from exercising their rights

Optician

Assists people with eyesight improvements, spectacles etc

Optimise

To make the best of or get the maximum use out of an opportunity or situation etc

Oral

A procedure involving the mouth

Orientation

A training programme given by a care home to help generally new staff understand their basic responsibilities. It usually takes place within the first few days of employment

Orthostatic Hypotension

A decrease in blood pressure when standing up, it is also known as Postural Hypotension

Osteoarthritis

The most common form of arthritis, joint inflammation is caused by "wear and tear" where the joint has worn away protective cartilage

Osteopath

A practitioner who diagnoses and treats problems with muscles, ligaments, nerves and joints

Osteoporosis

Bones have become weak and brittle because of loss of minerals, particularly calcium. It is more common in women after the menopause but it can be found in people who have had eating disorders and after long-term steroid use

Others

For example, your own colleagues and other professionals across health and social care

Outbreak

A sudden, often unexpected, rapid increase of a disease or illness

Outcome

End result of a service provided by a care home to a client

Output

All fluids lost from the body that can be measured

Oxygen

Gas essential for life

P

Paget's Disease

A disorder in which the usual maintenance and replacement of bone tissue is disrupted. It leads to weakened, distorted and painful bones and affects 1 in 10 people over 80

Pain

An emotion which is experienced in the brain. It is an unpleasant experience in its sensation and emotionally. It is associated with actual or potential tissue damage

Pain Threshold

The lowest intensity of a stimulus at which someone feels pain

Pain Tolerance Level

The greatest level of pain someone can tolerate

Palliative Care

Special care provision that focuses on maximising comfort and pain relief for a person who is terminally ill and there is no hope of recovery

Palpitations

When the heartbeat becomes stronger, throbbing or irregular

Palsy

A temporary or permanent loss of sensation or loss of ability to move or to control movement

Pancreatitis

An inflammation of the pancreas. It may be a progressive, long-term problem where the pancreas gradually becomes too damaged to work properly or acute and caused by a leakage of digestive enzymes into the pancreas which start to digest the pancreas itself

Paranoia

The sufferer wrongly believes that other people are a threat to them, they can become very anxious, agitated and might retaliate to what they think has happened to them

Paraphrasing

Repeating back, in summary, what someone has communicated to you

Parasites

Organisms that live in or on another living organism either permanently or for a short period and take their food from the host's tissues. Examples of parasites include head lice, threadworm and all viruses

Parasomnias

Sleep disorders which usually occur at sleep stage transitions causing full or partial waking and involving some sort of physical activity that isn't usually associated with sleep

Parenteral

Administration of a substance by any way other than the mouth e.g. needles, human bites, cuts or scrapes

Parkinsonism

This term is used to describe a set of symptoms which are the same as those displayed by Parkinson's Disease. However, they are caused by something else such as a head injury or certain anti-psychotic drugs

Parkinson's Disease

A long-term, progressive disease of the central nervous system causing problems with muscle control and characterised by muscle rigidity, slow movements and tremors. It can eventually impair speech, daily activities, eating etc

Partnership

Working in association and/or conjunction with one or more people

Partnership Working

The development of inclusive, mutually beneficial relationships in order to achieve a common aim and improve the quality of care provided

Passenger Lift

A means of transport to travel vertically between a building's floors

Pathogenic

Capable of causing or producing a disease

Pathogenic Micro-Organisms (see Germs)

PDP (Personal Development Plan)

A written record which monitors an individual's on-going development based on awareness, values, reflection and goal-setting. It records information such as agreed objectives, proposed activities to meet those objectives and timescales for review

Peers

Persons who are one's equal in aspects such as, for example, age

PEG (Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy)

A feeding tube that passes through the abdominal wall directly into the stomach so that nutrition can be given without swallowing

People with Disabilities

The term for clients who have disabilities which effect their daily living

Perception

How we make sense of what we see, hear, taste, touch and smell. It is affected by previous experience, knowledge and by our emotional state at the time

Percutaneous

A procedure which is performed through the skin i.e. draining fluid from an abscess using a needle

Perineal

The area between and around a person's anus and genitals

Peripheral Vascular Disease (see PVD)

Peristalsis

Involuntary wavelike contractions that move food through the alimentary canal

Perpetrator

A person who commits an illegal or criminal act

Person Centred Care (Person Centred Approach)

An approach to care planning that empowers clients to make decisions about what they want to happen in their care. Their decisions then provide the basis of any plans that are developed and put into action

Person Centred Values

These include individuality, independence, privacy, partnership, choice, dignity, respect and rights

Personal

When something is private

Personal Care

Care received by clients in a home which includes assistance with bodily functions when required

Personnel Policies

Set of rules and regulations to be followed by employees. Normally these policies regard employer and employee rights and responsibilities

Perspiration

The salty fluid that is secreted by the sweat glands

Petit Mal

A type of epileptic seizure. It does not involve any abnormal movements etc but results in a second or two loss of consciousness where the eyes glaze over and control is briefly lost

Phantom Pain

Pain in a part of the body that has been surgically removed

Pharmacist

A person qualified in the understanding of drugs and their application

Physical Abuse

A non-accidental injury caused by direct attack or actions that put the client at significant risk of physical harm

Physical Activity

When the body moves enough to increase the amount of energy produced by the body

Physical Intervention

A response to violent or aggressive behaviour which involves using some physical force to limit or restrict movement or mobility

Physically Disabled

A person with a condition which permanently prevents normal body movement or control

Physical Needs

The need for food, water, warmth, shelter, etc

Physical Restraint

To physically restrict a person's freedom, their ability to move

Physical Therapist

A person who helps people retain and/or improve their overall physical abilities

Physiological

Regarding the normal functioning of the body

Physiotherapist

A medical professional who develops movement and mobility to improve a person's own capabilities

Physiotherapy

The treatment of disease, injury or disability by physical methods such as exercise, massage or heat

Pick's Disease

Dementia in the brain's frontal and temporal cortex which leads to personality and behaviour changes

Plan of Care

A written statement of a person's individually assessed care needs

Plaque

A rough, sticky coating on the surface of the teeth consisting of saliva, bacteria and food debris

Platelets

Small blood cells which produce a substance vital in blood clotting

Pneumonia

A serious inflammation of the lungs which can be caused by a virus or bacterium

Podiatrist

A health professional responsible for care and treatment of the human foot

Policy

Sets of rules and regulations regarding a situation which may occur in which staff and others will have to act within agreed guidance

Polygamous Relationships

Those where one partner has several partners of the opposite sex. It is illegal in the UK but accepted in other cultures

Polypharmacy

An excessive use of drugs, taking many at one time

Positive Action

Steps taken to better equal opportunities, for example making sure that applicants for employment from minority groups have a fair chance at every stage of the recruitment process

Post Falls Syndrome

After a fall the client has an exaggerated tendency to clutch and grab while walking and is not able to walk without assistance

Post Mortem

After death

Postural Hypotension (see Orthostatic Hypotension)

PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

Protective clothing, garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer from injury

Preference

Something someone likes better – their likes and dislikes

Prejudice

When someone holds a negative view about someone else because of their gender, cultural background, ethnicity or disability

Pressure Ulcers (Pressure Sores)

Any wound or lesion caused by unrelieved pressure resulting in damage to underlying tissue. They generally occur over parts of the body where the bones are nearer to the surface of the skin and vary from surface damage to deep craters involving muscle and bone

Prevalence

How widespread or common something is i.e. the number of people with a pressure sore on one certain day

Prevention

Action taken to identify and tackle elements in the lifestyle of a vulnerable person such as smoking, lack of exercise or a tendency to fall which might lead to a health or social care crisis

Primary Health Care

Health services provided locally by GPs, dentists, pharmacists, community nurses, health visitors and similar practitioners

Privacy

A person's right to be alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention

Procedure

Steps that must be followed to put a policy into effect

Professional Development

Opportunities for staff to receive ongoing training to increase their skills

Prognosis

Educated guess about the expected outcome of an illness

Projectile Vomiting

Violent vomiting where the regurgitated food is projected so forcefully it may land several feet away

Prompting

Encouraging someone to do something for themselves, reminding them

Prone

To be lying in a face down position

Pronunciation

The way that words are said

Prosthesis

An aid that is made to replace a missing part of the body

Protein

A nutrient that builds and repairs cells and tissue; it comes from foods such as meat, fish, eggs and cheese

Protocol

A written way of doing something

Providing Inclusive Support

The provision of fair help and treatment to everybody

Psoriasis

Patches of red, scaly skin caused by new skin cells being produced faster than dead skin cells are shed

Psychiatrist

A doctor who specialises with diagnosing and treating mental illnesses

Psychogeriatrics

The medical specialism concerned with the mental health of older people

Psychologist

A doctor who specialises in working with people's behaviour

Psychosocial

The matters affecting the relationship between a person's mental/psychological state and their social interactions

Psychotherapy

Method of treating mental disorders, primarily by "talk therapy"

Psychotic Major Depression

A major depression which has symptoms that include delusions or hallucinations

Pulmonary

Relating to or associated with the lungs

Pulmonary Oedema

Fluid in the lungs

Pulse

The measure of heart beat, heart rate

Pus

Thick yellowish or greenish fluid at the site of a wound produced by infected tissue

PVD (Peripheral Vascular Disease)

Reduced blood flow to the arms and legs caused by hardening of the arteries and a build up of fatty deposits

Pyrexia

A fever with a body temperature above 37°C

Q

Quality of Care

A term which includes efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, client satisfaction, appropriateness of care and safety

Quarantine Period

The length of time someone who has been in contact with a disease is advised to remain at home or in isolation to prevent further spread

R

Racial Discrimination

The belief that things like skin colour make some people better than others

Radiotherapy

Treatment of a tumour using x-rays which destroy cancer cells

Range of Motion

The range of motion of a joint, their available ability to move

Ratio

The proportion of one quality to another

Raynaud's Phenomenon (Raynaud's Disease)

Where low temperatures bring about a sudden narrowing of the arteries in the hands or feet causing them to become pale with numbness and tingling. It is often the result of an autoimmune problem such as Rheumatoid Arthritis

Reactive Arthritis

An inflammation of the joints caused by the body's immune response to another infection elsewhere in the body

Recall Memory

When one can remember something without having any kind of sensory reminder of it

Recognition

Acknowledgement of importance

Records

The written documents which care homes are obliged to keep on the conduct of the home as well as the care given and planned for each client

Recreational Therapy

The organised use of social activities, with individuals or groups, to help them remain active and promote health and wellbeing

Rectal

A procedure involving the rectum (a person's bottom)

Recurrent Falls

Refers to a person who has fallen twice or more in the last three months

Referred Pain

When pain is felt in a different part of the body from where the damage has taken place. For example pain in the left arm during heart muscle spasms

Reflect on your own Practice

To look back at your current ways of working to ascertain where improvements can be made to further your development; thinking about every aspect of your work including identifying how and where it could be improved

Reflection

Consciously reviewing thoughts and actions with a view to understanding them better

Reflective Listening

A technique to test understanding by repeating back the last few words someone said to you

Reflex Action

An automatic physical response to something which is done without thinking

Registered Manager

A person who manages the home and is registered to do so

Registered Provider

A person who carries on the business of the home and is registered to do so

Regulation

The process of observing and checking organisations and individuals providing care

Rehabilitation

A programme of therapy and support designed to restore a person's independence and reduce disability

Reminiscence

Recollection of past personal experiences and significant events

Remission

Partial or complete disappearance of symptoms of illness or disease

Renal

Pertaining to the kidney

Renal Clearance Test

A test of kidney function that evaluates the ability of the kidneys to eliminate a given substance in a standard time

Reporting

This includes the recording of adverse events, incidents, confrontations, errors and issues

Representative

A person acting on behalf of a client, who may be a relative, a friend or an advocate

Reprisal

To retaliate against someone for something they have done

Rescue Breathing

Another person breathes air into the victim's lungs to maintain supply of oxygen

Resident

Someone who lives in a care home

Residential Care

Care provided within a home

Resilient

To be able to cope with lots of different challenging situations

Resistance Training

Exercises where the resistance against which a muscle generates force is increased progressively over time to benefit muscular strength

Resolving Conflict

To diffuse a hostile or argumentative situation

Respect

Demonstrating due regard for the needs, wishes and preferences of others

Respiration

Breathing

Respirator

A mechanical device used to assist breathing

Respite

A period of rest made available to people, usually family, who have been caring for someone

Responsibility

The ability to act independently and make decisions; being accountable for your actions

Restoration

Helping someone regain as much independence and mobility as possible

Restrictive Practices

The use of physical restraint, devices, medication or seclusion in the prevention serious harm; denying a person their rights

Resuscitate

Reviving someone who appears to be dead

Retaliation

Getting revenge against someone for doing something

Retina

The light sensitive lining of the eye where an image is formed and messages are sent back to the brain for interpretation

Review Process

Process within a care setting of regularly looking at the progress made in achieving objectives and setting new ones

Rheumatoid Arthritis

An inflammation of the joint due to a malfunction in the body's immune system. The immune system doesn't recognise the joint tissue as a normal part of the body and attacks it, resulting in damage and pain

Rights

The legal, moral or ethical entitlements a person has

Ringworm

A contagious fungal infection that produces itchy red circular patches on the scalp, groin or elsewhere on the skin and is caught from humans, cats and dogs. Each patch grows larger and forms a red ring around an area of normal skin

Risk

The likelihood of something bad happening; a situation in which there is a threat or probability of danger, damage or injury

Risk Assessment

A way to prevent accidents and ill health by getting people to think about what could go wrong and devising ways to prevent problems occurring

Risk Management

The planning, organisation, control and review of matters that could result in accidents or ill health in order to reduce and prevent them occurring

Rite

Formal ritual used in religious or solemn practices

Role

Usual function of a person

Rubella

Also known as German Measles, it is a viral infection spread by airborne droplets and direct contact. Symptoms include a sore throat, mild fever, swollen glands and a pink rash which starts behind the ears and on the forehead which is not itchy

S

Sacrum

The area of the spine at the bottom of the back that is usually made up of five vertebrae which are fused together

Safeguarding

To protect from harm, abuse or neglect

Safety

Being free, or protected, from harm, danger or threat

Scapula

The shoulder blade

SCD (Sickle Cell Disorder)

An inherited blood condition caused by abnormal haemoglobin in the red blood cells which become sickle shaped and more fragile often resulting in anaemia. The sickle shaped cells clump together and block blood flow in the narrowest blood vessels, the cells are easily destroyed so the oxygen carrying ability of the blood is reduced

Sciatica

Pain along the sciatic nerve that is down the back of the thigh, down the calf and into the foot

Sclerosis

A hardening of tissue

Scoliosis

A sideways curvature of the spine, which can be caused by a deformity or a temporary reaction caused by muscle spasm

Scrotum

The bag that holds a man's testicles

Secretions

Substances that come out of the body to serve a special function such as saliva, mucous, perspiration etc

Secure Systems

This includes both manual and electronic systems

Security

The right to an environment which allows comfort, assistance when needed and protection from danger

Sedate

Calm someone with drugs

Sedative

Substance, procedure, or measure that has a calming effect

Seizure

A sudden burst of electrical activity in the brain which causes a mix up or even a stoppage of the messages passing between the brain cells. This can result in convulsions or strange, confused behaviour

Self Abuse

Abuse that a person directs towards themselves

Self Administration

The process by which a client takes responsibility for handling their own medicines

Self Care

Supporting an individual to care independently and as much for themselves as possible, managing their care needs and maintaining their health and wellbeing

Self Determination

The freedom to make your own choices

Self Esteem

The extent to which we value ourselves – how we feel about ourselves

Self Harm

When someone physically harms their body for emotional satisfaction

Self Image

The way we feel about ourselves which is heavily influenced by how we think others see us

Self Medicating

When someone uses drink or illicit drugs to relieve pain

Semen

Body fluid containing sperm

Semi-Permeable Membrane

A membrane which contains tiny holes only big enough for water to pass through it and not the larger molecules of the substance dissolved into it

Sensory Deficit

A defect in the function of one or more of the senses

Sensory Impairment

Problems with sight or hearing

Sensory Nerve

Carries signals to the central nervous system

Septicaemia

An infection where harmful bacteria have multiplied in the blood, it is otherwise known as blood poisoning

Serotonin

A hormone which gives a sense of wellbeing. It is associated with higher brain activity and in helping us to wake up after sleep

Services

Services may include translation, interpreting, speech and language therapy and advocacy services

Sex Discrimination

When people of one gender believe they are superior to the other

Sexism

When a person is treated unfairly or denied an opportunity because of their gender

Sexual Abuse

Acts of sexual coercion, sexual harassment or sexual assault

Shared Facilities

The areas or resources of a home which are available communally to all clients

Shearing

Pressure against the surface of the skin as a client is being moved – one surface rubs against another

Sheltered Housing

Grouped flats that provide special facilities for older people or people with disabilities, they may have communal facilities and some staff

Shock

A sudden drop in blood pressure where not enough blood gets to the body's tissues. It can be fatal if not treated quickly

Sickle Cell Disorder (see SCD)

Significant Other

A person who is important to someone else, for example a family member, partner, close friend

Sinuses

The cavities in the skull around the nose, cheeks and eyes which connect to the throat and nose

Situational Depression

An extreme reaction to something bad happening that has many of the same symptoms as clinical depression but goes away within a couple of weeks

Sitz Bath

A special basin, usually fitted to a toilet or a commode, so that a person can attend to their own perineal care

Skin Care

A process involving regular inspection of a client's skin to identify signs of pressure sores and to instigate preventative measures

Skin Tear

The layers that make up the skin separate because of an injury. They occur mainly in elderly adults because the skin becomes more fragile and the layers don't stick together so well

Sleep Apnoea

Also known as Sleep Disordered Breathing, this means that a person stops breathing possibly hundreds of times a night – it is potentially life threatening

Sleeping In

The arrangement under which a staff member sleeps in the home and, if required by an emergency during the night, can be called to assist by a waking staff member

Sleep Starts

When you involuntarily jump just as you are falling asleep, sometimes accompanied with the feeling you are falling off of something

Social Conventions

A set of recognised rules or ways of behaving which help society to function effectively

Social Model of Dementia

The social model of dementia focuses on the impact of dementia on the sufferer's emotions and behaviour, exploring the significance of social circumstances and background

Social Model of Disability

The social model says that it is the way that society is organised which leads to disability. This is the opposite to the medical model

Soluble Fibre

This dissolves in water and is absorbed into the blood where it helps to reduce levels of cholesterol. Whilst in the intestine, soluble fibre delays absorption of glucose so helps to keep blood glucose levels even

Solute

A substance dissolved in a solution

Sources of Support

These may include formal or informal support, supervision and appraisal

Spasticity

A long-standing paralysis of some or many muscles which can occur in Cerebral Palsy

Specialist Assessment

An assessment of a client's needs undertaken by a medical professional who specialises in a branch of medicine or care

Specialist Service

A service which specialises in the care of a particular group

Specific Language Impairment

The term used to describe a language difficulty which has nothing to do with intelligence, deafness or any kind of medical condition

Speech Difficulties

Problems in communication such as stuttering

Speech Therapist

A professional whose primary role is to help someone with communication difficulties both understand and be understood better

Sphincter Muscles

The muscles that control bowel and bladder movements

Spider Naevi

The small spider-like blood vessels that occur over the skin when someone has liver failure

Spinal Canal

The hole that runs the length of the spine containing the spinal cord, its covering and the nerves that leave it in pairs at each level of vertebrae

Spontaneous Pain

Unexpected pain with no apparent cause

Sputum

Material coughed up from the lungs and spit out through the mouth

Stair Lift

A mobile platform or seat fitted to a staircase that mechanically carries a person to a different level of a building

Standard

A measure by which quality is judged

Standards

These may include codes of conduct and practice, regulations, registration requirements (quality standards), National Occupational Standards and the Human Rights Act

Statement of Purpose

A written document which all care homes must produce outlining the aims, objectives, philosophy of care, services, facilities, and terms and conditions for residents

Status

Rank in relation to other people

Stem Cell Transplant

A procedure in which damaged or destroyed bone marrow is replaced with healthy bone marrow stem cells

Stereotype

Forming an instant or fixed picture of a group of people, usually based on false or incomplete information. Stereotypes are usually negative ideas

Sterile

Free from living organisms

Sterilise

The use of a physical or chemical procedure to destroy all microbial life

Steroid

Group of chemical substances including certain hormones

Stimulus

Something which causes a response

Stoma

An opening made by surgery to help someone expel waste

Stool

Another name for faeces

Stool Softener

Substances that act as a wetting agent to promote soft malleable bowel movements

Strength

The ability of a muscle to produce or resist a physical force

Stress

Physical and/or emotional reaction that causes mental tension

Stress Incontinence

The escape of urine following an increase in intra-abdominal pressure which may be caused by a cough, sneeze, laugh, standing, exercise

Stroke

When a blood vessel supplying part of the brain becomes blocked or bursts and prevents blood flow. This deprives part of the brain of oxygen leading to the damage or death of brain cells. It is associated with weakness, numbness and paralysis

Stye

When the base of an eyelash becomes infected forming a small abscess which becomes red and swollen. It may be sore and an antibiotic ointment may be prescribed

Subconscious

Thoughts and feelings that a person has that they aren't actually aware of

Subjective

Something that has been guessed at, an opinion

Sundown Syndrome

A condition where a person's mood and sometimes behaviour changes as the day becomes later, often as it starts to become dark

Superficial Burns

These burns involve only the outer layers of the skin. They cause redness, swelling and tenderness and will usually heal well

Supervision

The process of observing employees doing their jobs

Supine Position

The position when someone is lying on their back

Supported Living

Sheltered housing which has domiciliary care teams on site, access to services, emergency help and an enhanced level of shared activities for those living there

Symptom

A feature, either physical or mental, felt by a patient, indicating the presence of a disease

Syndrome

Signs and symptoms that together characterise an abnormal condition or disease

Synovial Joints

These are moveable joints in which the bones don't touch and are instead cushioned with synovial fluid

Systemic

Pertaining to the whole body rather than to one of its parts

Systemic Infection

Infection pertaining to the whole of the body, rather than to a localised area

Systolic Pressure

The upper number of a blood pressure reading that shows the heart's blood pressure when the heart is beating. It shows the force of blood pushing against walls of the large arteries when the heart is contracting

T

Tactile

Relates to touch

TB (Tuberculosis)

An infectious bacterial disease that mainly affects the lungs

TB Infection

Having the organism that causes TB in the body, but not having the active disease. A person with TB infection cannot transmit TB unless the organism converts to its active state

Temperament

A person's distinct nature or character

Temperature

The amount of heat produced by the body as it uses food for energy

Tendon

Tough material connecting a muscle to the bone

Tendonitis

A painful inflammation of a tendon which may result from injury or occasionally after infection

Tensile Strength

The maximum pressure that can be applied to the wound without causing it to break apart

Terminal Care

Care for a person who has an illness which will lead to their death

Terminal Illness

Illness that causes the end of life

Testosterone

The principal hormone produced in the testes of males

Tetanus

A painful disease which causes breathing problems due to muscles contracting and going into spasm. It is rare in developed countries due to an immunisation programme and is caused by a bacteria that lives in soil and in the intestines of animals

Theory

A prediction about how something will be which can then be tested out

Therapeutic Diet

A special diet in which a particular nutrient is replaced, regulated or left out because it causes illness

Therapy

Treatment for medical conditions, usually provided by a specialist such as an occupational therapist or a physiotherapist

Thermometer

Instrument for measuring temperature

Thrombolytic Therapy

Use of drugs to break up a blood clot

Thrombus

Blood clot

Timeframe

A period of time in which certain things are expected to happen

Tolerate

When someone has to put up with someone or something else

Topical Medication

Usually in the form of a cream or gel, this medication is applied directly to the site of a wound to treat it

Toxicology Screen

Diagnostic tests measuring drug levels in the blood. It is used to monitor, identify and measure toxic substances in the blood

Toxic Substance

Any substance that can cause injury to the human body, or which is suspected of being able to cause diseases or injury under some conditions

Toxins

A poison, usually one produced by, or occurring in a plant or organism

Traction

A method of relieving pain by pulling apart joint spaces and freeing trapped nerves. It can be done using weights and pulleys or motorised equipment

Tranquillisers

Drugs prescribed to calm anxious or agitated people

Transfer

When someone moves from one place or position to another

Transient Pain

A short-lived type of pain that usually consists of a sharp, intense, fast pain followed by a period of slow dull ache. It may not be related to any actual tissue damage

Transmitted

Passed from one person or place to another

Trauma

Injury caused by external force or violence

Traumatic Wound

A wound which is sudden and unplanned. It can range from a minor scratch to a severe injury

Tremors

Purposeless, continuous, quick movements of skeletal muscles

Trial and Error

Trying to solve problems by guessing the solution until the right one is found or you give up

Trial Visit

A short period of residence during which both a potential resident and the home can decide whether a long-term placement would be suitable

Triglycerides

Fats and oils composed of fatty acids and glycerol, they are the body's most concentrated source of energy fuel

Tuberculosis (see TB)

Tumour

An abnormal growth of cells to form a lump or swelling. It may be malignant (cancerous) or benign (harmless)

U

Ulcer

A lesion or erosion of the mucous membranes or the skin

Ultraviolet Radiation (see UV Radiation)

Universal Precautions

An approach to infection control where all human blood and certain human body fluids are treated as if known to be infectious

Unsaturated Fats

Fats that are in liquid form when they are at room temperature

Urethra

The passage that carries urine from the bladder so that a person can urinate

Urge Incontinence

The client feels the urge to go to the toilet but can't get there in time to pass urine or faeces in the toilet

Urination

Getting urine out of the body

Urine

The liquid waste that is secreted by the kidney before being stored in the bladder

UV Radiation (Ultraviolet Radiation)

This comes from sunlight and damages the skin. Excessive exposure to sunlight and its rays increase the risk of skin cancer

V

Vaccine

A suspension of inactive or killed micro-organisms given orally or injected into a person to give immunity to an infectious disease

Validate

To prove that something is right

Value Base

The agreed and recognised values that guide behaviour

Values

The principles and beliefs which are important to an individual and by which they conduct themselves

Valuing People

Recognising and respecting the worth of somebody and their right to access the same opportunities

Varicella

The medical name for chicken pox

Varicose Vein

A dilated, twisted, knotted vein, usually in the leg

Vasoconstriction

Narrowing of blood vessels

Vasodilation

Dilation or expansion of blood vessels

Vegan Diet

This completely excludes all foods of animal origin such as; milk, meat, fish, eggs, cheese, honey, plus any additives which may have come from animals

Vegetarian

A person who advocates or practices the exclusion of one or more of the following from their diet: meat, fish, eggs, milk, cheese

Vein

A vessel that carries blood to the heart

Venepuncture

The procedure of taking blood

Verbal Abuse

Oral, written or gestured language which is derogatory and abusive

Verbal Communication

Spoken communication through language

Verbal Reports

A spoken account of an event or activity etc

Vertebrae

The 33 bones of the spine, 24 of which are single and jointed, the others are fused together

Virus

Micro-organism that only survives in living things

Visual Impairment

The term used to describe limited or loss of eyesight

Vital Capacity

The volume of air that a person can breathe out from their lungs after taking the deepest breath they can

Vital Signs

The signs that are necessary for life, they include blood pressure, pulse, respiration and temperature

Vocabulary

The set of words which a person uses to communicate

Voluntary Organisation

A body that operates on a not-for-profit basis

Volunteers

People who provide services without pay, or for expenses only

Vomiting

The violent expulsion of the contents of the stomach via the mouth

Vomit

Material expelled from the stomach when vomiting

W

Waive

The giving up of some established claim, right or privilege

Wandering

The seemingly pointless movement from one place to another

Water

This is essential for life. It prevents dehydration, regulates body temperature and helps prevent strain on the kidneys

Wellbeing

The state or condition of being comfortable, healthy or happy. A person's wellbeing may include their sense of hope, their ability to communicate their wants and needs and to make contact with others

Wheelchair User

A person whose main source of independent mobility is a wheelchair

Whistleblowing

Making suspected misconduct or wrongdoing known to a higher authority so that its exposure will bring a halt to the misconduct. Things are reported that are not felt to be right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties. This includes when someone's health and safety is in danger; damage to the environment; a criminal offence; that the company is not obeying the law (for example not having the right insurance); or covering up wrongdoing

Wishes

A person's preference or desire for something to happen

Withdrawal

A syndrome that manifests itself when a drug is stopped or the dose reduced in patients who have been habitual users of a drug

Working Policy

Sets out the values of the team and the aims of its work

Wound

A break in the skin. The damage caused varies from a light scratch which breaks the top surface of the skin to deep damage involving muscle and bone

Y

Younger adults

Adults who require care or services, who are under 65 years of age