



The Leadership Paradigm Shift Principles: Value, Respect, and Support of the Caregiver in Nursing Homes

- **People Paradigm**

The culture change focus is on relationships, leadership and people. Interdependent systems and processes cannot improve until there is improvement in interdependent interpersonal relationships.

Culture change meets the needs of the frontline caregivers and recognizes that Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) are central to good care. In the comparison of high and low turnover facilities the low turnover facilities were distinguished by the following management practices:

- Leadership visibility;
- Cared for caregivers;
- Primary assignments; and
- Rare vacant shifts.

- **Valuing and Respecting Caregivers**

Caring can produce or foster trust, empathy, understanding, respect, and staff support.

For example, value and respect:

- Helps with stress and burnout;
- Illustrates that management cares and will listen to employees; and
- Makes the workplace feel safe.

- **Caring Paradigm Results in Higher Employee Satisfaction**

Higher employee satisfaction can be observed or measured by:

- Fewer resident falls;
- Lower nurse and CNA turnover and absenteeism; and
- Higher occupancy rates.

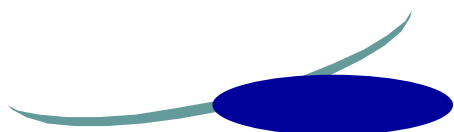
- **The Vicious Cycle and Patient Impacts**

A vicious cycle of vacant shifts, stress, and turnover signals employee dissatisfaction. **Vacant shifts** produce “stress” due working short staffed, causing resentment and anxiety. **Stress** leads to increased “turnover” as a result of more errors, injuries, and poor judgment. **Turnover** results in “vacant shifts” and causes lack of trust, poor outcomes, instability, and financial burdens.

CNAs report vacant shifts impact the patient because range of motion, hydration, feeding, and bathing may be neglected. This instability produces poor outcomes of incontinence, facility acquired pressure sores, urinary tract infections, and an increase in falls and fractures.

CNAs indicate the four major causes of stress are the lack of staff, time, good supervision, and education.

The most common reason for CNA turnover is rigid scheduling with little or no concern for “personal life” or problems or scheduling that is used as a means of discipline. Turnover adds to the facility’s financial burden with direct additional costs of advertisement, staff time to interview and check references, pre-employment physical, drug screening, orientation, and instruction in addition to the cost of the vacant position coverage.





- **Demonstrate Care for Staff through Four Key Principles**

Compensation

Family sustaining wages;
Affordable health insurance; and
Full-time hours, a stable schedule, and balanced workload.

Opportunity

Provide excellent training;
Allow participation in decision making; and
Provide opportunity for career advancement.

Support

Referral to services for staff such as childcare or rent assistance;
Commit to provide excellent supervision and mentoring; and
Strengthen the core caregiving relationship.

Trust

Reveal facility and management priorities daily;
Demonstrate respect versus contempt;
Recognize and correct inequities; and
Assist in covering vacant shifts versus leaving shifts short-staffed.

- **Providing Employee Support**

Facilities with Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) report 21% fewer accidents, a 35% reduction in turnover and a 59% reduction in absenteeism. EAP programs can include support for marital relationships, mental health or substance abuse, legal and financial issues, anxiety and mood disorders, or assistance in balancing work and personal life. Examples of EAP programs:

Earned Income Tax Credit - Offered thru the IRS. Facilities assist eligible low-wage employees in completing the IRS Form W-5 each year.

Employee Emergency Loans – Facility provided no interest loans to employees for emergencies.

Learning and Literacy - Provide English as a second language, literacy, and listening skills training.

Social Services Awareness - Raise awareness about governmental benefits and how to navigate through the Social Services System.

Child Care Assistance - Facility-provided reimbursement for a portion of childcare expenses and/or facility assistance in selecting quality child care providers.

Lunch and Learn - Provide short training programs on topics important to staff, such as wellness, money matters, or dealing with difficult people.

Other Ideas - Paid time off, allow all employees to cash out unused vacation or sick pay, offer free or low-cost meals to employees, provide no-cost vitamins or flu shots, develop a ride share program for staff.

- **Recommendations for Achieving Positive Results**

Provide all staff with interpersonal skills education.

Foster relationships among staff at all levels.

Fill the educational gap for frontline caregivers.

Link personal growth to internal (job satisfaction) and external (wages and benefits) rewards.

Allow for social interaction with residents.

Eliminate hidden sanctions.

Recognize complex problems require the commitment to work on complex solutions.



Reference:

Farrell, David, MSW, LNHA, Director, Care Continuum, Caring Produces Results, The Leadership Paradigm Shift, Power Point, (415) 677-2054