

Utilizing Resources to Support Independence and Quality of Life Issues in Older Adults – Caregiving Teaching Strategy

Overview of Teaching Strategy

Feeling productive, relevant, and independent are significant to the quality of life of most people. These qualities often become diminished with older adults as they are faced with maintaining dignity in the face of functional challenges. This teaching strategy focuses on working collaboratively with an older adult who has both physical and psychosocial challenges to find resources to maintain independence and strategize to optimize his quality of life. The student explores resources that may be helpful to the older adult, and develops a plan of care for this client based on the prioritized needs.

Download All Files for This Teaching Strategy

- [Red Yoder first monologue](#)
- [Red Yoder first monologue script](#)
- [Red Yoder second monologue](#)
- [Red Yoder second monologue script](#)

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Explore resources to address physiological and psychosocial challenges of older adults
- Describe a collaborative approach in planning patient care
- Demonstrate an awareness of resources to support quality of life issues in older adults
- Develop an increased understanding of the financial ramifications of caregiving
- Discuss the difference between grief and loneliness

Learner Pre-Work

Ask the students to listen or read Red's monologue. As the students think about what measures could be taken to support his independence and to also maintain a balance between safety and quality of life. Think about specific comments that Red mentioned that would be concerning:

- The possibility of depression
- The possibility of elder abuse
- The possibility of alcohol use
- Misunderstanding regarding his diabetes
- Loneliness

Suggested Learning Activities

1. Ask the students to explore the resources available on the [AARP Caregiver Resource Center](#). As you explore resources, identify those that would help to maximize Red's independence while also considering his limited finances. He is a veteran and may be eligible for additional resources based on this designation. Look at how [AARP connects with these veteran resources](#).
 - How do you think Red would feel about utilizing an app on his phone to assist with his care? [Read about the CareZone app](#).
 - What strategies might you utilize to help Red better manage his appointments with his primary care provider? [Explore the Caregiving at Home Care Guide](#) by AARP.
 - Let's assume that Red has Medicare A and B. How would you talk with him about maximizing this benefit? What does it cover? What does it not cover? [Read What Every Caregiver Needs to Know About Medicare](#).
 - What if Red is still driving? What concerns might you have and how would you help Red and his family manage these concerns? [Read Technology Aids Our Independence](#).
2. Develop a plan of care for Red using the resources and considering the issues he talked about in his monologue. Explore tools that will aide in a standardized assessment of specific concerns such as depression and elder abuse. What are your concerns for Red? Prioritize your concerns for Red and prioritize the resources that Red would most likely use and could afford. Think about how you would use a collaborative approach with Red and his family to coordinate and manage care and maximize functioning while maintaining his independence.
3. Read the blog on family caregivers and financial loss: [Family Caregiving Worth \\$470 Billion a Year, AARP Finds](#).
 - What are the benefits of having a family member as a caregiver?
 - Are there any negative aspects to having a family member as a caregiver?
 - How do you anticipate family caregiving changing in the future?
 - As a nurse how would you assess the needs of a family caregiver and how might you direct them for help?

Materials

1. The [AARP Caregiver Resource Center](#) offers diverse tools to address multiple concerns which affect older adults. The student should be directed to explore the site and search out resources that would be applicable to the Red case study. They will find a toolkit that may help their client with financial, organizational and insurance issues as well as practical information to negotiate challenges they may face.
2. The [Try This:® Series](#) from the Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing (HIGN) at the NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing contains many evidence-based assessment tools. Those listed below from the Try This:® are recommended for the content related to the Red monologue.

Some examples of assessment tools that can be used with Red are:

- [Geriatric Depression Scale](#)
- [Elder Mistreatment Assessment](#)
- [Alcohol Screening and Assessment for Older Adults](#)

Suggested Reading

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/alcohol-use-older-people>

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/elder-abuse>

Angell, R. (2014). This old man: Life in the nineties. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/02/17/old-man-3>

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