

STUDENT HANDOUT
Unfolding Case Study: Caring for Peter Schultz
Changing Client Health Status and Response to Care

DIRECTIONS: Read the following scenario. Then populate the table with observations based on the situation provided. For each observation, list possible responses that fall within the parameters of the HCA role.

You are an HCA who has been working at the same residential care home for the past five years. Today is your first day back after a two-month absence, and you are assigned to care for Peter Schultz. As you carry out the plan of care, you observe changes in Peter's health status and response to care.

You have always enjoyed providing care for Peter. When he first moved to the care home four years ago, you used several strategies to include him in the morning care routine. He especially enjoyed singing old tunes and reciting poems while you were helping him to get ready for the day. He enjoyed his meals and was a regular participant in the music and exercise programs and daily social hour. You always appreciated Peter's smile and hearing him laugh.

Since Peter has moved to the care home, he has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, in addition to the diagnosis of vascular dementia following a CVA. He now requires full assistance with his activities of daily living and is on a regular toileting schedule. Over the past year, Peter's legs have gotten weaker and he is no longer able to bear weight. He is on medication for blood pressure and bowel control.

Over the past year, Peter has become progressively less responsive during the morning care routine. He says very little and usually just listens as you sing his favourite songs. You have also observed that he smiles less often. Usually, when you try to involve him in simple care-related activities, such as washing his face or combing his hair, he will reach out for the face cloth or hair brush that you offer him, but will not use them unless you guide his hands for him. This morning when you offer him the face cloth, he does not reach out his hand to take it.

Since losing his ability to walk, Peter has used a wheelchair to ambulate. The foot pedals on his chair are removed and he uses his feet or the side rail to move himself up and down the hallway. Today when you look for Peter to bring him to the lunch room, you notice that he has not moved from the place where he was one hour ago. When you assist Peter with his lunch, he doesn't try to hold his cup as he used to. He eats very slowly and clears his

throat often. You observe that he finishes half of his mashed potatoes, but coughs when you offer him small pieces of minced chicken. He eats all of his chocolate pudding. It takes Peter 55 minutes to eat his lunch.

This afternoon, Eve comes to attend a special music program with Peter. When you walk with her to his room, you find that he has fallen asleep in his chair. Eve tells you that Peter has fallen asleep every day after lunch for the past two weeks. Eve has a difficult time waking Peter up to listen to the guest musicians. It takes an hour for Peter to drink a cup of thickened coffee and when Eve gives him a cookie, it drops out of his hand.

Documenting Observations and HCA Response to Changes

| Observation | HCA Response |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Peter did not reach out to take the face cloth when it was offered to him.</i></p> | <p><i>Continue to offer the face cloth to Peter. If he does not reach out for it, place it in his hand and guide him in washing his face.</i></p> <p><i>Minimize distractions during this care activity.</i></p> <p><i>Continue to monitor Peter’s response to this approach.</i></p> |
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