



This standard of practice is to support the PSW in providing safe, respectful and effective personal care to the public population in a dignified and ethical approach. Standards of Practice outline the expectations of the PSW and their responsibility in the delivery of care.

Dementia Care – Altered or changed sensory perception in the elderly person(s) is often exhibited in person(s) who have a dementia diagnosis and are presenting with symptoms and behaviours associated with this disease. An effective approach in providing care that will lessen the symptoms is to provide an environment that is more favorable and conducive to a person(s) diagnosed with this disease. Care will be delivered with the same approach as given to persons presenting with Alzheimer’s disease. All care will be delivered with respect, dignity and will be client centered care.

Dementia is a loss of mental function such as thinking, memory, and reasoning that is severe enough to interfere with a person’s daily functioning.

Forms of dementia might include:

Alzheimer’s Disease: Dementia affects 750,000 Canadians with over 500,000 of these people suffering from Alzheimer’s. It is the most common form of dementia. AD is a degenerative disease. One might see impaired memory, thinking and behavior and can last for 320 years. Will usually start seeing memory loss that affects job / home skills, difficulty performing familiar tasks, disorientations, poor judgment and marked changes in personality and mood changes.

Vascular Dementia: Is the second most common form of dementia. It is caused by chronic reduced blood flow to the brain, usually as a result of a stroke or a series of strokes (Multi-infarct). Sometimes multiple small mini-strokes or Transient Ischemic Attacks (TIA) may occur and sometimes without any signs or symptoms. Over time, the damage adds up leading to memory loss, confusion, and other signs of dementia.

Lewy Body Dementia: Degenerative dementia. Progressive cognitive decline with fluctuating cognition, Parkinson’s like syndrome, visual hallucinations, repeated falls, sadness, anger, and depression.

Pick’s Disease: Is rare and irreversible. Causes personality changes, lack of social skills, loss of intellectual function and speech disturbances. Can occur at age 20 but usually between the ages of 40 - 60.

Parkinson’s Disease: Progressive disorder of the central nervous system. In PD certain brain cells deteriorate. Late in the course of the disease some patients develop dementia.



Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease: A very rare disease that causes dementia and is more commonly known as “Mad Cow” disease. This is caused by a mal-formed protein that eventually clumps together and affects the brain matter. Person(s) with CJD will often start with fatigue, difficulty sleeping and insomnia. More symptoms will become more evident, and the most recognizable symptom of muscle spasm, poor balance and pain and the progress of the disease is very rapid at this point.

PSW – Personal Support Worker

RN/RPN – Registered Nurse/ Registered Practical Nurse

RHPA – Regulated Health Professions Act

ADLs – Activities of daily living

Resource – retrieved from the Alzheimer’s Society of Ontario

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