**GCE AS Health and Social Care – Unit 1**

**Task Sheet 6: Caring skills and techniques**

Carers use a wide range of skills in many different care settings. These include:

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| * Social perception * Observation * Encouraging * Creating trust * Gaining compliance * Setting challenges | * Disengagement * Physical contact * Distraction * Modelling * Working alongside * Showing approval |

**Exercise 1**

The exercise looks at the following five caring techniques:

1. **Observation**: This means collecting information about a client by taking measurements such as temperature and blood pressure. It also refers to noticing how a person is behaving, for example, whether they are eating or sleeping as usual or whether something has changed.
2. **Social perception**: This means being aware of a person’s likely feelings, needs and intentions, which can be shown by a person’s facial expression, posture and tone of voice, as well as by what they say.
3. **Working alongside**: This means working in close contact with a client by doing what they are doing, or by working next to them to encourage the client to start doing what you are doing.
4. **Modelling**: This means acting as a model, that is, showing behaviours you would like the client to copy.
5. **Setting challenges**: This means suggesting tasks or activities to clients, which will stimulate them, and perhaps help them to improve their abilities, skills or confidence.

Decide which of the examples in the table below illustrates which technique and write the technique (a - e) in the middle column. Then write a brief explanation of how the action described in each example could benefit the client.

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| **Example** | **a - e** | **Explanation** |
| 1. Barry’s carer says, “Why don’t you do the shopping on your own today, Barry?” |  |  |
| 1. Ted, who is autistic, is sitting at a table doing a jigsaw puzzle. A carer sits down next to him and starts doing a different jigsaw. |  |  |
| 1. Gordon notices that one of the residents has suddenly become very forgetful and confused. |  |  |
| 1. Mary is sitting in a hunched position with her eyes closed. Her hands are gripping the arms of the chair tightly. A carer thinks that Mary is anxious or upset about something. |  |  |
| 1. Gary is playing with a very shy toddler. The toddler gives Gary a beaker. Gary smiles at him and says, “Thank you.” Gary gives the beaker back, and the toddler smiles. The toddler gives the beaker back to Gary who smiles and says “Thank you” again. |  |  |

**Exercise 2**

This exercise looks at the following seven caring techniques:

1. **Encouragement**: This includes rewarding adaptive behaviour. Adaptive behaviour is a client’s behaviour that tends to increase his or her well-being. In contrast, maladaptive behaviour is a client’s behaviour that tends to decrease his or her well-being.
2. **Showing approval**: This means giving positive responses to a client’s behaviour, such as smiling and praise.
3. **Physical contact**: This can be used to comfort a client who is anxious or upset, as well as to show approval. Usually it takes the form of touching a person on the hand or arm, or giving them a cuddle. However, physical contact can be misunderstood: for example, if it is seen as a threatening or sexual approach. It is most appropriate between carers and clients who know each other well, particularly between parents and their children.
4. **Creating trust**: This means acting in such a way that a client judges you to be reliable: for example, behaving consistently (similarly in similar situations), following correct procedures and fulfilling promises.
5. **Gaining compliance**: This means getting a person to do something without forcing them to: for example, by giving reasons, persuading and offering choices.
6. **Distraction**: This means focusing the client’s attention on something else so as to lessen their anxiety, pain or distress.
7. **Disengagement**: This means temporarily breaking off an encounter with a client: for example, moving away from them, giving them chance to calm down.

Decide which of the examples in the table below illustrates which technique, and write the technique (a - g) in the middle column. Then write a brief explanation of how the action described in each could benefit the client.

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| **Example** | **a - g** | **Explanation** |
| 1. Lisa’s mother puts her arm round Lisa’s shoulders. |  |  |
| 1. A social worker is visiting a client. The client becomes abusive. The social worker says he has to go to see another client, but will come back the following day. |  |  |
| 1. When Stacey has told her mother about problems at school, her mother has never told anyone else about it without first asking Stacey’s permission. |  |  |
| 1. A babysitter asks two young children, “Would you like to go to bed at eight o’clock or half past eight?” |  |  |
| 1. Ben has finished a painting showing a black spiky blob on a red background. His father asks him what it is. Ben replies “My daddy.” His father says, “It’s lovely. Can I keep it?” |  |  |
| 1. A probation officer is running a residential course for young offenders. He comments to one of them, ‘You kept your anger under control all morning, so you get to captain the red team for football this afternoon.’ |  |  |
| 1. A parent holds up a picture book for her child to look at while a nurse gives the child an MMR vaccination. |  |  |

**Exercise 3**

This exercise looks at safe working practices.

You need to be able to describe two or three precautions for reducing risks, to clients or to their carers, of the following:

* HIV infection
* MRSA
* violence from clients
* hepatitis infection
* lifting injuries

A. From the list of risks above, identify **two** which are increased if a dentist accidently uses the same drill tip on two patients without sterilising the tip after use on the first patient.

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B. Suggest **two** reasons why informal carers might be at greater risk from lifting injuries than professional care workers.

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C. When a radiographer takes an X-ray of a patient, it is important that only the radiographer and the client are in the room. This reduces the risk of exposing other people to X-rays unnecessarily.

(a) Suggest **one** risk from the list above to which the radiographer might be exposed.

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(b) Suggest two precautions to reduce this risk.

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D. Plastic trays are used in a hospital to take meals to patients in bed. Patients sometimes pick up the tray to hand it back to a member of staff when they have finished. The trays are taken back to the kitchens, where the cutlery and crockery is machine-washed. The top surface of each tray is wiped with disinfectant.

From the list above, identify one risk that is created by this sequence of events. Justify your answer.

(a) Risk: .........................................................................................................................................

(b) Justification: .............................................................................................................................

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E. Explain three safe working practices a carer in hospital should follow to prevent the spread of infection.

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