



**“Providing care services for individuals to improve their independence.”**

## **DUTIES OF A PERSONAL CARER**

In consultation with the Care Co-ordinator and the client the Personal Carer may be expected to perform any of the following tasks.

### **1. Providing Social/Emotional Support**

Listening to and talking with a client is an important part of your role as a Personal Carer. Often you may be the person's only regular contact with the outside world and your presence gives the day some meaning.

### **2. Promoting Independence**

It is important for people to feel that they have control over their own lives. By assisting clients only to do what they are unable to do themselves, and to help people learn a new skill that will enable them to maintain their quality of life and independence you are helping them to maintain their independence and sense of self-worth. By doing something for clients that they could do themselves you are depriving them of their independence and self-worth.

### **3. Performing Personal Care Tasks (Non Nursing Duties)**

Procedures which can only be performed by PERSONAL CARERS who have had Personal Care training are:

- a) assisting with, and/or supervision of bathing, showering or sponging in bed;
- b) assisting with dressing/undressing;
- c) assisting with grooming, shaving and hair care;
- d) assisting with mobility;
  - In bed: to sit, to turn;
  - Out of bed: to stand and walk, to sit, to transfer to commode, wheelchair, chair or vehicle;
- e) assisting with eating and/or drinking, including cooking and preparation of special diets;
- f) assisting with toileting;
- g) assisting with prescribed exercise or therapy programs (only after individual instruction);
- h) fitting of aids, appliances such as splints and callipers (only after individual instruction);
- i) assisting with the administration of medication (refer to Best of Care's medication procedure or check with a Care Co-ordinator).

**Nursing Procedures (not to be done by PERSONAL CARERS):**

- a) dressings;
- b) injections;
- c) suction;
- d) oxygen and other respiratory therapies (including Tracheostomy Care);
- e) nasogastric and gastrostomy feedings;
- f) urine testing;
- g) collection of specimens for pathology, i.e.: blood, urine, faeces, sputum;
- h) administration of suppositories, enemas, and pessaries;
- i) catheterisation and bladder irrigation;
- j) manual bowel evacuation;
- k) colostomy, ileostomy, dressing and irrigation;
- l) blood glucose testing;
- m) dialysis;
- n) complex health care and counselling, eg. diabetes management.

**Personal Carers are NOT Permitted To Do the Following.**

For Occupational Health and Safety reasons Best of Care Personal Carers are not permitted to:

- a) wash floors on hands and knees;
- b) wash curtains (except terylene or net where practical);
- c) lift heavy furniture, e.g. fridges, beds;
- d) climb on furniture to perform a Personal Carer duty;
- e) personal care tasks which should be performed by a nurse (Refer to Nursing Procedures above);
- f) take children to work with them;
- g) take the client home to the personal carer's residence;
- h) drink alcohol or be intoxicated whilst in the client's home;
- i) drink alcohol or use behaviour altering substances prior to commencing work;
- j) smoke whilst in the client's home;
- k) remove rubbish from client's home;
- l) wash inside walls and ceilings, and wash exterior walls;
- m) work in client's home when the client is absent without prior consultation and agreement by a Co-ordinator;
- n) have keys to the client's home without prior consultation and agreement by a Co-ordinator;
- o) changing light globes. (The Personal Carer can exercise their own judgement in situations where light globes can easily be changed, eg whilst standing on a sturdy ladder or steps. You are not obligated to change light globes if you do not feel confident and competent at performing the task);
- p) buying alcohol or non prescribed drugs. Personal Carer should discuss client requests to buy alcohol or non prescribed drugs with their Co-ordinator if they are unsure whether it is appropriate or not;
- q) toe nail care should not be undertaken by a Personal Carer;
- r) any other task which may pose a threat to the rights, health and safety of the Personal Carer and client. If unsure whether the task is appropriate, discuss the situation with your Co-ordinator.

After training in the following areas, Personal Carers will be able to perform the following:

- G.E Gastric Feeding;
- continue prescribed exercise therapy (only after individual instruction and personal supervision);
- fitting appliances, e.g. splints, callipers (only after instruction);

#### **4. Providing Respite**

To stay with a person who is frail aged, confused, or who has a disability, or a child because the person cannot be left alone unsupervised. Generally this allows the person's regular Carer to have sometime to him/herself. It may also involve playing with children to stimulate them and keep them occupied.

NB: When providing respite for children or highly dependents clients Personal Carers are not responsible for undertaking general household duties.

#### **5. Providing Personal Assistance**

You may be required to assist with:

- a) shopping;
- b) paying of bills;
- c) banking;
- d) transporting the person to activity programs, shopping, family's, etc.

#### **6. Performing Household/Environmental Maintenance**

- a) Cleaning of:
  - all floor surfaces - sweeping, mopping and vacuuming;
  - showers, baths, toilets, basins and commodes;
  - stoves, fridges, cook tops and sinks;
  - benches, cupboards and dusting;
  - inside woodwork, windows and Venetians;
- b) Changing bed linen or making beds,
- c) Some ironing;
- d) Washing, hanging out, and folding of laundry;
- e) Preparing and/or cooking of meals.

**If you ever have any doubts about something you are asked to do please contact your Care Co-ordinator for advice first.**