Orienting a New Home Care Worker

If you have never had paid staff in your home, you might not know how to orient and train someone you hire. In *Home Health Aides, How to Manage the People Who Help You*, Alfred DeGraff identifies five mistakes that can create problems between you and your worker:

• **Not providing clear instructions**

• **Expecting the worker to provide duties that were not agreed upon or adding extra tasks at the last minute**

• **Not recognizing work well done**

• **Comparing them unfavorably to other workers**

• **Being either too critical or too passive when providing feedback**

When training a worker to do a task, use this five-step process:

1) Tell the worker how to do the task.

2) Show the worker how to do the task.

3) Have the worker perform the task while you observe.

4) Praise progress.

5) Provide an opportunity to ask questions, and make sure the worker understands your answers.

The checklist at right can be used to help you provide a good orientation. Review all the information listed with the new worker. Also remember to show the worker the layout of the home, where the things he or she will need to do the job are kept and how to operate appliances or medical devices.

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ORIENTATION TASK

☐ Demonstrate how tasks should be done

☐ Information about the household routines

☐ Review emergency procedures and whom to contact

☐ Information about the care recipient's preferences
(e.g., prefers formal address "Mr. Smith" – not "honey")

☐ Clear instructions about what is out of bounds
(e.g., having visitors, changing the thermostat, smoking)

☐ A clear procedure for keeping track of cash dispensed and spent
if the worker is responsible for shopping or other activities that
require cash

☐ How to prevent/respond to potential problems such as wandering

☐ Information about what the person with Parkinson's enjoys doing
and what he or she is able to do independently

☐ Caregiving tips peculiar to your loved one – this allows the worker to
create a pleasant atmosphere and avoid doing anything disturbing

Notes: