

Consistent Assignment: ***Implementation, Practice and Experience***

Advancing Excellence in America's
Nursing Homes Campaign

June 3, 2008



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Advancing Excellence Goals

- Reduce Pressure Ulcers
- Reduce Use of Restraints
- Improving Pain Management – Short stay population
- Improving Pain Management – Long stay population
- Set STAR Targets
- Conduct Resident Satisfaction Surveys
- Improve Staff Retention
- Increase Use of Consistent Assignment



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To sign up...

- Go to www.nhqualitycampaign.org
- Upper right hand corner select “Join the Campaign”
- You will need your M/M provider #
- Choose three goals:
 - 1 clinical
 - 1 organizational
 - One other goal, either clinical or organizational



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Why Sign Up?

- Be a part of the national effort
- Evidence shows that participants in the Campaign are improving at a faster rate than non-participants in the Campaign...
- And when they set targets, the participants improve even faster!



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Objectives

- Provide Campaign Overview
- Discuss Process Framework for Consistent Assignment
- Learn how to implement consistent assignment
- Hear how consistent assignment improves care and resident and staff satisfaction



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Consistent Assignment

- Consistent assignment (sometimes called primary or permanent assignment) is defined as the same caregivers (RNs, LPNs, CNAs) consistently caring for the same residents almost every time (85% of their shifts) they are on duty.
- Consistent Assignment Implementation Guide
Go to [www.nhqualitycampaign](http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org), click on “nursing home”, and then “resources”. Scroll down to “Goal 8: Improving Consistent Assignment”



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***Consistent Assignment continues...
from the consumer perspective...***

***Elizabeth Gould, MSW, LCSW
Alzheimer's Association***



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***Consistent Assignment continues...
from the systems perspective...***

Steven Levenson, MD, CMD



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Implementation Framework

Key concept for all Process/Implementation Frameworks whether it's for a clinical or operational goal

1. Recognition / Assessment
2. Cause Identification
3. Management
4. Monitoring



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1. Recognition / Assessment

Identify consistent assignment as an area for potential improvement in nursing home performance

- Based on nursing home quality improvement data, quality measures, staff survey results, comparison to benchmarks, etc.



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1. Recognition / Assessment (cont.)

- Identify information available for the topic
- Review reliable and evidence-based performance improvement and quality improvement literature
- Review recommendations from professional associations and organizations



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1. Recognition / Assessment (cont.)

- Review the Campaign's Consistent Assignment Process Review Tool and Consistent Assignment Flow Diagram
- Evaluate your current staffing approaches with the steps identified in the Consistent Assignment Process Framework?
 - Who decides how staffing is done?
 - What method is used? Is a method used?



1. Recognition /Assessment (cont.)

Identify areas for improvement in your current staffing processes and practices

- Use the information gathered previously
- Compare current approaches to consistent assignment with desired ones



2. Cause Identification

- Identify causes (including root causes) of issues related to performance and practice
- Seek causes for why some units may not be doing consistent assignment, or why it may not have worked for them



3. Management

Reinforce optimal practice and performance

- Continually promote “doing the right thing in the right way”
 - In this case, follow steps of Consistent Assignment Process Framework, throughout the nursing home
 - Set a nursing home goal for Consistent Assignment.



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3. Management (cont.)

- Identify and use tools and resources to help implement the steps and address related issues
- Based on information and data collected about efforts to achieve consistent assignment, reinforce what is already working well



3. Management (cont.)

Implement necessary changes

- Address those things (including root causes) that have impeded your nursing home's successful attainment of consistent assignment; for example:
 - Why staffing of units was not relative to complexity of care on each unit?
 - Why nursing home does not retain staff in general, thereby affecting numbers available for consistent assignment?



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3. Management (cont.)

- Monitor changes being made to implement consistent assignment.
- Address issues of individual performance and practice where improvement could help you attain and maintain consistent assignment.
- Refer to Consistent Assignment Resources for resources and tools that can help to address this goal.



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4. Monitoring

- Reevaluate performance, practices and results
- Recheck for progress towards getting “the right thing done consistently in the right way”
- Use Consistent Assignment Process Review Tool to identify whether all key steps are being followed



4. Monitoring (cont.)

- Use Consistent Assignment Process Framework and related references and resources from Steps 2-4 above
 - Repeat Steps 2-4 (Recognition / Assessment, Cause Identification, and Management) until processes and practices are optimal
- Continue to collect data on results and processes
 - Document and celebrate measurable beneficial results for nursing home and for resident care



4. Monitoring (cont.)

- Evaluate whether changes in process and practice have helped attain desired results
 - Compare before and after
- Adjust approaches as necessary



Consistent Assignment: Implementation Framework

- Review for performance of these steps
 - Recognition / assessment
 - Cause identification
 - Set a goal for implementation
 - Management
 - Monitoring



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***Consistent Assignment continues...
from the Nursing perspective...***

Jennylynde Renteria-Packham RN, MSN, CDONA



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Overview of the Framework

- Process Framework comparable to the nursing process
- 4 main areas
 - Problem recognition / assessments
 - Cause identification / diagnosis
 - Management / treatment
 - Monitoring



Why even try?

For our Residents!

- Bottom line for all “care givers” is what is best for the resident.
- Much supporting evidence that consistent caregivers equals the best care. (David Farrell’s work)
- Families report greater satisfaction with consistent caregivers.
- Resident quality of life greatly increased.



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Why even try?

For our Staff!

- Our staff want to give the best possible care.
- Much supporting evidence that consistent caregivers equals the best care. (David Farrell's work)
- Empowering staff leads to ...
- Better work environments
- Consistent assignment promotes ownership of the care provided.
- A positive workplace will hold good staff longer than any other benefit.



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Why even try?

For our business!

- Increased resident/family satisfaction + increased staff satisfaction = increased revenue!
- More word-of-mouth recommendations from staff and families
- Longer employee retention=decrease in HR costs
- ALL other goals will be positively affected by consistent assignment.



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RECOGNITION = ASSESSMENT



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Assessment

1. Assess the consistency of assignments of direct caregivers



**RECOGNITION /
ASSESSMENT**

- Same as assessment in care planning
- Assessment should include feelings of the staff towards the change: Job satisfaction as evidenced by retention, sick time usage; Interviews with staff to assess desire to commit to less rotation in schedule. (Patchner, 1989)

Assessment: Calculating Consistent Assignment- The CNA perspective

CNAs	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Jane	3/5	4/5	4/5	5/5
Kiesha	4/5	5/5	2/5	4/5
Glen	5/5	5/5	3/5	2/5
TOTAL				46/60

- This example shows 77% (46/60) of consistent assignment.
- This example presumes all full time CNAs who are not rotated (quarterly or monthly).
- Could change the bottom of the fraction for part time staff.
- This is the viewpoint from which the 85% AE goal comes from.



Assessment: Calculating Consistent Assignment- The Resident perspective

Residents	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Mr. Jones	6/21	9/21	16/21	10/21
Mrs. Smith	16/21	11/21	12/21	9/21
Mrs. Doe	8/21	6/21	17/21	13/21
TOTAL				134/252

- This example shows 53% (134/252) of consistent assignment.
- This example demonstrates how many different CNAs care for a particular resident. The “best” result would be 28%. (3 weekday CNAs, 3 weekend CNAs = 6/21)
- In this example- lower % is better.



Assessment Details

- Pick the starting area: one floor, unit, hall, etc.
- Review recent past schedules, resident assignments, time cards and resident records.
- Gather the data which shows how the staffing is currently.
- **BE HONEST!** (Remember that the “problem” area is the starting point- no one expects perfection yet.)
- Don't place blame. Don't look for excuses.



Case Study

- My own experience:
 - One of my staff had to come to me with the idea.
 - Some staff already sticking to certain residents.
 - I (the DON) did not think this in everyone's best interests!



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CAUSE IDENTIFICATION = DIAGNOSIS



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Diagnosis

2. Consider factors that could influence the ability to provide consistent assignments



3. Identify underlying causes that influence ability to provide consistent assignments



CAUSE IDENTIFICATION

- Become alert to issues which could impede progress.
- Focus on staff availability and willingness.

Diagnosis- Are we stuck and why?

- Trends and patterns- What do we see?
- What are they related to?
- Root cause analysis:
 - An in-depth review of staffing budgets.
 - Wage and benefit comparisons.
 - Retention / turnover data, etc.
 - Availability of qualified individuals.



Diagnosis: Factors to consider



Case Study

- Staff on morning and night shifts were already doing some consistent assignment.
- Evening staff were seeing the most behaviors, and doing more alternating as personalities and situations dictated; This coping mechanism would not be discouraged.
- Our pay: Not the highest; Our benefits: Not the greatest; Our retention: Outstanding!



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MANAGEMENT = INTERVENTIONS



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Management

4. Establish a realistic goal that reflects the consistent assignment of direct caregivers to the same residents on at least 85% of their shifts

5. Develop an action plan for achieving the goal as determined above

6. Implement the action plan consistently



MANAGEMENT

- Realistic goal!
 - Start small: one unit or floor.
- Refer to the *Implementation Guide* for a list of resources and tools that can help to address this goal



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Management- Put the plan into action!

- Shoot for improvement - We have to start somewhere! (85% is arbitrary; pick the one that works for YOU!)
- Find a champion - both in direct care staff and management/administration.
- Promote sharing of opinions and feelings as the changes are implemented (Don't fear feedback!)



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Management (cont.)

- Celebrate the baby steps of progress!
- Use the care plan process as a model for the “roadmap” to success.
- Care plan for the residents, the care-giving team, and the nursing home.
- Be sure to identify the parties responsible for each intervention.
- Apply the interventions consistently and persistently.



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Case Study

- Had to convince management (ME!)
- Had to be ready for time off (summer vacations coming)
- Communicated to staff and families and residents.
- Resident council was instrumental in promoting our cause.



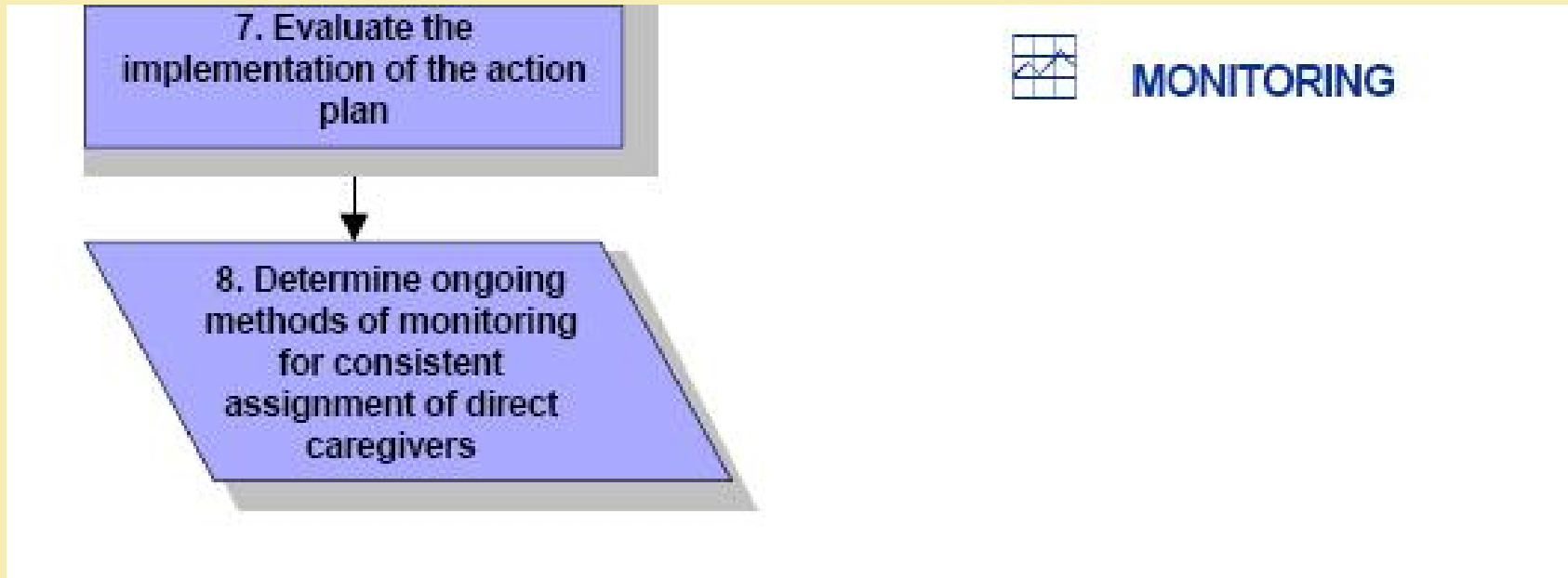
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MONITORING = EVALUATION



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Monitoring



- Reassess assignment and staff reaction regularly: walking rounds, comments box, staff survey
- Compare with previous assessments; families and resident reactions too!

Monitoring (cont.)

- Revise the plan/goals/interventions- Don't just give up if not immediately successful.
- LISTEN TO THE DIRECT CARE-GIVER!
- Ask detailed questions for quality results.
- Do something with the results of the evaluation!
- Revise the plan.



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Case Study

- Overall positive.
- Did have to make some adjustments for certain resident/staff preferences.
- Families VERY happy! Increase in naming direct caregivers and praising them in care conferences.
- Staff satisfaction improved.



Other Issues

- Resident and family reactions
- Covering time off
- What about those who do not wish to stay in one assignment?
- Patience with the process...
- This goal is one which, when achieved, will have far-reaching positive effects on many other resident care areas.



Compare to Care Plan

- Lack of consistent assignment due to staff habits and irregular scheduling
 - As evidenced by current assignment consistency of 57% to each resident during a 1 month period.
- Goal: Consistent assignment at least 85% of the time
- Interventions
 - Staff input on location of consistent assignment
 - Schedule according to appropriate assessment
 - Reassess quarterly



Other tools for evaluation

Goal #8: Consistent Assignment.

This document is intended to be used in conjunction with the **Process Review Tool** included with the **Consistent Assignment Process Frameworks** documents currently available on the Advancing Excellence website. It is an outline of the steps to follow as you embark on your journey toward assuring the consistent assignment of caregivers to residents at least 85% of the time. Included are references to documents, tools, and process available on the Advancing Excellence website or other recognized LTC professionals and resources.

CONSISTENT ASSIGNMENT PROCESS REVIEW TOOL

Abstraction Date:			
Nursing home Name:		Nursing home Address:	
How many workers involved?		What unit is being evaluated?	
	CNAs only		Entire nursing home
	CNAs/LPNs/LVNs only		Nursing home unit / hall(s). Please specify:
	CNAs/LPNs/LVNs/RNs and others		Shift:
How many residents involved?		How long has consistent assignment been used?	



Conclusion

- Establish a systematic approach.
- Assessment and re-assessment are key.
- Appropriate goal setting, in combination with buy-in from staff, will set the stage for success!
- Utilize the help that is available!



Consistent Assignment Continues...

From the nursing home perspective...

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Curwensville, PA

Mary Arthur, NHA

Patsy Turner, CNA

Hillcrest Manor
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Please stay on the phone! We would like to ask you some questions to help us evaluate this program.

THANK YOU for joining us and for all that you do to care for our elders!



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Thank You!

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