

# Partners in Quality Care

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*In-Home Aides Partners in Quality Care* is a monthly newsletter published for member agencies.

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## What You Will Learn:

- ♥ The importance of a clean environment to the client's health and safety
- ♥ The role of the home care aide in maintaining a clean client environment
- ♥ Tips for basic cleaning and using supplies appropriately

## Happy Valentines Day!



### Environmental cleanliness in Home Care!

A person who needs Home Care for assistance with bathing, dressing, toileting, meal preparation and other Activities of Daily Living is often unable to maintain a clean environment on their own due to the disability or condition that causes them to need personal care assistance, yet, a clean environment is an important part of health care.

- **Clutter, disorder, dirt and odors are health and safety hazards and increase the risk for infection, disease, and accidents.**
- **Home management tasks for the Home Care aide usually involve the client's immediate environment such as the bedroom, bathroom and the kitchen (if used in client care), also, light housekeeping may be done throughout the house.**
- **The aide should be sensitive to attitudes of the client and family regarding maintaining a clean, neat home**
- **Specific duties for home management will be listed on the plan of care. If you are unsure of what tasks are appropriate or if you are asked to provide more home management tasks than the plan of care lists, be sure to contact your supervisor for clarification.**

Caring for your client's environment is not the same as cleaning your own home. The client may want things done his or her way. Some client's may be frustrated because they must depend on you. Others may be embarrassed by all the "mess" in their home. Not all homes are like your own home, some will be better equipped and there may be resources to help with cleaning the home, other times you may be working in a home with limited resources.

The In-home aide can lead by example and teach the family how to maintain a healthy home. The In-home aide can also encourage the family members to help maintain a healthy home.

The most common, least expensive chemical solution used in the home is soap or detergent and hot water. Friction caused by scrubbing surfaces with a brush or the rotating action of the automatic dishwasher or clothes washer loosens microorganisms from the surfaces.

**Below are common types of tasks that may be performed as part of a client's plan of care related to home management (be sure to check with your supervisor and know what is on the client's plan of care related home management, the frequency of the tasks and any special cleaning instructions!)**

### Client's Bathroom:

- May be private or shared with other family members
- May be down the hall and shared by unrelated residents of the building
- Clean the toilet and the raised toilet seat attachment daily
- The tub and shower are cleaned after each use and before care if needed
- Change and launder bath linens as necessary
- Replace toilet tissue, soap and facial tissue as needed and empty the wastebasket.

### Client's Kitchen (or family kitchen)

- Light cleaning of counter surfaces, dishes the client uses, and utensils and appliances you use to prepare the client's meals
- Clean the refrigerator if there is not one else to do so
- Clean the sink and drain
- Sweep the floor
- Remove and discard trash

### Clients Bedroom:

- Clean the immediate environment
- Empty and clean the bedside commode (if applicable)
- Make the bed
- Change and launder linens as necessary
- Care for the client's personal laundry as assigned
- Empty the wastebasket

Other areas for cleaning - vacuum carpets, dust furniture, empty ashtrays, water plants, and discard trash (as assigned).

### Product Safety

Incorrect use of cleaning agents can cause serious damage to the user, the surface to be cleaned, and the environment. Certain chemicals in cleaning products are thought to be ecologically (related to the environment) dangerous. Home safety hints:

- Know the surface you want cleaned
- Know what it is made of
- Ask the client if there are special cleaners to be used or any cleaners to be avoided
- **Know the cleaner - is it the right cleaner for the surface? Is it the right amount for the job?**
- **READ THE LABEL- know how to use products safely!**
- **NEVER mix chlorine bleach with ammonia because it creates a deadly gas!**

**Developing a work plan is important because your time in the client's home is limited. Your first priority is care of the client, so you are not able to spend a lot of time on housekeeping duties. Big cleaning jobs may need to be coordinated with other types of services that provide heavy cleaning. Typical everyday tasks include washing dishes, cleaning the kitchen counters and sink, sweeping the kitchen floor, removing trash.**

**Have a cleaning plan but be flexible. Organize your work and straighten up as you go along. Both the kitchen and bathroom require careful cleaning. Plan to clean the kitchen daily, toilets and sinks should be disinfected daily. (Disinfect means to destroy germs), check the client's plan of care for frequency of cleaning tasks.**

All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt.  
Charles M. Schulz



***Cleaning and disinfecting is not the same thing. Cleaning removes germs from surfaces – whereas disinfecting actually destroys them. Cleaning with soap and water to remove dirt and most of the germs is usually enough. But sometimes, you may want to disinfect for an extra level of protection from germs.***

