

Strategies to manage challenging client behaviour

When it comes to de-escalating challenging behaviour, there are some over-arching strategies the Healthcare Assistant can use to diffuse and respond to the situation.

It is important to remember that working with people who are living with dementia requires **flexibility**, **patience**, **heart**, and a little **creative flare**. These strategies should be applied with absolute sensitivity and under the guidance of a registered nurse.

Provide space

If the person is not harming themselves or others, then give them the space needed to calm down without interference.



Remain calm

People naturally mirror the mood of those around them. Attempt to control the situation by speaking in a calm, relaxed and quiet manner, providing comfort or reassurance as necessary.

Acknowledgement

Validate and acknowledge what the person is experiencing. Whether it is justified or not, it is very real to them, and to dismiss or patronise this would aggravate the situation.



Distraction

Provide a distraction such as a snack or alternate activity as opposed to confronting the behaviour. Confrontation may increase anxiety or aggravate a situation.

Identify the cause

This will not always be immediately apparent, but there may be a legitimate reason for the behaviour. For example, the room is too hot prompting someone to undress at an inappropriate moment.

