

LIFESTYLE QUALITY FOR THOSE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY LIVING IN COMMUNITY BASED SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

“BASIC CARE + INTERACTION + DEVELOPMENTAL CARE”

“The lifestyle field of those with limited intellectual ability is naturally narrowed in comparison with those of neuro typical ability. Every attempt should therefore be made to widen the person’s ability corridor by examining all interest areas, and actively motivating to the degree the person’s ability will allow”

Basic Care:

This is the resident’s socially acceptable basic living needs, consisting of:

1. Safe, dry, warm (cool), clean and pleasant living environment;
2. Adequate, nutritional, healthy, dietary suitable, religious and culturally acceptable and pleasant range of meals, with choice and menu mechanisms;
3. Adequate health care and hygiene facilities;
4. A range of fashionable clothing suitable for the environment, weather, and the person’s range of living situations and;
5. Acceptable and dedicated support staff to assist where and whenever necessary with the whole area of basic care, especially in respect to ensuring the supported person is appropriately dressed for the various situations in which the person may find themselves

Interaction:

This is the connection between the resident being cared for and the support person. Interaction is the key to lifestyle quality, is a necessary component in all activities from basic to developmental care and must be carefully balanced for mood. Interaction can range from simple or involved communications, to assistance with functional academics, to a friendly touch on the arm, to a smile. The range of this very important factor is limitless in connecting the lines of development.

Developmental Basic Care (informal activities):

The developmental component of basic care is that which assists the resident to develop the skills necessary to move towards undertaking basic care tasks with minimal assistance, providing the person with more self satisfaction. The degree of developmental provision to the basic care tasks is directly proportional to the resident’s ability, temperament and mood, and should be adjusted accordingly.

Developmental Progress (formal & informal programs and activities):

This is the factor which ensures the resident is moving forward in all life areas to the degree their ability will allow. Because a person with an intellectual disability has, by nature of their disability, a limited social and educational activity field, support staff should, through appropriate interaction, assist the person to widen their overall activity field through formal and informal programs and activities.

The resident's IPP and Program File, together with support staff skills and creativity, should be used to provide ongoing developmental activities necessary to enhance the persons lifestyle.

Balanced Work Role:

In achieving basic care, effective interaction and developmental care, support staff must assume a "balanced role" with their duties. They must be very flexible and balanced in providing domestic support, interaction and developmental activities with residents. This means doing what mothers do automatically when their family is young. She is constantly breaking from her various domestic duties to help and encourage the children with this or that developmental activity.

Lines of Development:

The development lines for a person with an intellectual disability flow from basic care, through basic interaction, to developmental care. This is achieved through support staff understanding the development-line principles, accepting the need for these and adopting a balanced work role.

It is important to ensure that there is potential within the service and facility for the residents to receive quality basic-care before examining if the level of interaction is adequate to ensure the potential for effective developmental progress. A good level of interaction, rapport and simple developmental activities should be achieved with the resident before embarking on formal and semi formal developmental activities.

There are considerable benefits in being consistent with "lines of development" of this nature. The resident's general ability is broadened, providing a more satisfying lifestyle and potential for the person to be far more contented. A person having a more satisfying life can be far less challenging, and more harmonious towards support staff.