



Lesson 5: Follow-Up, Communication, and Documentation

After completing this lesson you will be able to:

1. Describe why follow-up, communication, and documenting are important.
2. Describe types of situations related to medication support that require documentation, follow-up, and communication.
3. Describe the critical components of effective in-person communication and written documentation.
4. Correctly document medications as described on a medication administration record (MAR) and identify additional documentation, communication, or follow-up needed.
5. Recognize and respond to situations related to medications that are potential abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

OJT List

On-the-Job Training (OJT) statements are observable measures of skill that a person can demonstrate. These are the OJT statements for Lesson #5: Follow-up, Communication, and Documentation.

- The direct support professional can describe the systems for communication, documentation, and follow-up in the area of medication support required by his or her employer.
- The direct support professional effectively prioritizes communication and documentation needs when dealing with medications and medication-related situations.
- The direct support professional is familiar with all standard forms used by his or her employer for documenting medications and medication-related events.
- The direct support professional completes all medical-related documentation as soon as possible after an event.
- The direct support professional makes sure s/he does not leave the support situation before completing all necessary medical-related documentation.
- The direct support professional knows how to complete and update a medication administration record as required by his or her employer.
- The direct support professional can describe the terms abuse, neglect, and exploitation as they are defined by his or her employer and/or state.
- The direct support professional complies with all reporting requirements and with ethical standards related to the reporting of potential abuse, neglect, or exploitation of vulnerable people.
- The direct support professional can identify potential abuse, neglect, or exploitation situations that are related to medication supports.

Portfolio List

Portfolio samples are examples of work a person could place in a portfolio based on the content of this lesson. These are the Portfolio suggestions for Lesson #5: Follow-up, Communication and Documentation.

- The direct support professional (DSP) gathers samples of all the types of medically related documentation that he or she completes in his or her role as a direct support professional. A summary statement is included. This statement describes the samples and the situations in which they are used. The direct support professional describes which samples show effective documentation and which samples could be improved and how. The statement also includes the direct support professional's methods for insuring documentation is completed and how the DSP personally balanced these responsibilities with the other responsibilities of direct support.
- The direct support professional prepares work samples regarding a medication related situation in which the DSP must communicate with a variety of people and in a variety of ways. (Included could be incident reports, samples pages from an individual health record, phone log records, doctor's referral forms, etc.) The work sample includes a summary of what happened; who the DSP contacted as well as when and how; and how the direct support professional prioritized the communication. The DSP also includes a review of what s/he learned in the process, and what, if anything he or she would do differently in the future based on what was learned through the entire experience.
- The direct support professional includes a sample of a medication administration record that he or she has completed for a person that he or she supports. A summary statement includes a description of how the MAR is used, what type of shorthand is used on the MAR, and for what situations additional documentation is needed.
- The direct support professional provides documentation of a situation where he or she reported a potential medical-related abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a person to whom he or she provided support. The work sample includes a variety of documentation that was completed. The DSP provides a summary statement regarding the situation and why he or she chose to report it. The statement describes to whom the DSP communicated, what was communicated, and how s/he made this report. In addition, the DSP specifies what s/he did to determine the outcome of the Maltreatment report and to whom s/he shared the report. A reflection on whether the DSP would do anything differently now and why or why not is included.



Types of Documentation and Using the Toolkit Form

It is very important that you know all the types of documentation for which you are responsible. Check with your employer. Find out where and when any documentation needs to be completed. Ask the employer if they use standardized forms and formats. If so, ask to see samples of these.

On the next page is a form that you can use to organize your questions regarding medically related documentation, communication, and follow-up. You can print it up and use it during a discussion or training event regarding communication and documentation. Complete this form as soon as possible.



Types of Communications

Regardless of setting, direct support professionals must know four essential elements of effective communication, documentation and follow-up: What to communicate; how to communicate the information; to whom to communicate it; when to communicate it.

Directions: On this chart are several types of events or situations related to medication support. Ask your employer to review these situations with you. Ask which of these you will be responsible for (mark with a yes). If there is a standard form or format used, ask to see an example completed correctly.

What to Communicate: Check yes by those things you are expected to communicate in your role as a direct support professional. For any "Yes" checked, complete the remaining columns.	Yes No		How to Communicate the Information: (e.g., written record, in person, both?)	When to Communicate It: (e.g., immediately, before leaving shift, within 24 hours?)	To Whom to Communicate It, in What Order: (e.g., EMS, Supervisor, RN, Family?)
	Yes	No			
Regular and routine situations:					
Tracking which medications are given and how much.					
Noting when supplies of medications are ordered or received from the pharmacist.					
Reviewing or preparing a new monthly medication administration record.					
Keeping track of behavioral responses to medications or certain vital signs (such as blood pressure).					
Sharing the results of medical and dental appointments.					
Tracking when medications are transferred to or from another person or facility.					
Keeping track of medications that are considered controlled substances.					
Other:					
Other:					
Other:					
Other:					



Types of Communications

Expected situations that are out of the routine:			
Mild and temporary side effects to a medication.			
Use of “as needed” (PRN) medications.			
The destruction or disposal of a medication.			
A change in medications including a change in dosage, timing, medication, or a temporary hold on a medication.			
The need to obtain consent for certain procedures.			
Medication holds			
Packaging and sending medications (Leaves)			
Other:			
Situations meant to be avoided, but that must be communicated:			
The possibility that a person has been abused, neglected, or exploited.			
Severe or serious problem reactions to medications.			
Medication refusals or errors.			
The need to be hospitalized.			
An unexpected or dangerous change in behavior or vital signs.			
Lack of expected treatment results (such as breakthrough seizures, or continued problem with blood pressure)			
Injuries, severe illness or death.			
Other:			



Understanding Your Roles and Responsibilities in Documentation

It is very important that you know all the types of documentation for which you are responsible. Check with your employer. Ask the employer if they use standardized forms and formats. Find out where and when any documentation needs to be completed. Earlier in this lesson, you were shown a form that you can use to organize your questions regarding medical-related documentation, communication, and follow-up. Be sure to ask specifically about standard forms and methods of documentation.



Policies and Procedures Regarding Documentation and Confidentiality

Ask your employer if they have any policies and procedures regarding documentation. Get a copy and review them. Ask any questions that you have.

Ask your employer about privacy and confidentiality practices. Find out what information can be shared and what cannot. Ask your employer how HIPAA is applied to documentation in a direct support situation.



New Orders for Medications

Find out from your employer how new orders are supposed to be handled. You may need to contact a supervising nurse or doctor. You may be responsible for updating the MAR or you may need to simply share this information with the correct person.



Use of PRNs

There are often regulations regarding the use of PRNs that must be followed. For instance, in some places, a direct support professional cannot assist with administering a PRN medication without calling the prescribing practitioner first. Find out from your employer what guidelines you must follow.

In licensed facilities, a doctor's signature often is required before using a PRN. In these cases, the employer will usually have a single list of approved PRN medications signed for each person. Be sure to review these carefully for each person you support. Different people will use different PRNs. In some cases, this is due to allergies or other problem reactions. Always make sure a PRN is safe for the person before using it.

Find out from your employer where and how PRNs are documented. Also determine what are the critical components of timing and where the reason for using PRNs are written.



Recognizing and Responding to Potential Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

The federal and state government and/or employer may have specific definitions regarding these terms and the term Maltreatment. Ask your employer to provide you with the definitions and any policies and procedures related to reporting of these incidents. Review these and ask any questions you may have.

If you are directly employed by a person with a disability and/or a family, ask them if they are aware of government policies regarding reporting these situations. You can check with local law enforcement agencies and/or your local department of human services to find out more about your roles and responsibilities.

In some cases, direct support professionals are mandated reporters of these incidents. This means if you are aware of a potential case of abuse, neglect, or exploitation you must properly report it. If you do not report, you may be held responsible. You can even face criminal or civil charges.

