

August 2015

**“The Circle of Safety”
Adult Care Awareness Advisor
News and Tips to Make Your Life Easier, Safer and Happier!
For Friends and Clients of PCALIC, LLC**



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Finding Reliable Foster Caregivers

Let's face it, staffing shortages happen. If you're in the adult foster care field you have dealt with more than your fair share of staffing issues. Staffing shortages create stress and potentially hazardous conditions for both residents and caregivers. As an administrator, you do your very best to create an environment that helps maintain staff. But, you have to find and hire a good caregiver before you can retain him/her. How do you do that?

- Remember that a reliable and stable caregiver is the backbone of your company. Whether you're a non-profit or a for profit company, offering your caregiver the very best benefits you can afford will go a long way in attracting good employees and helping you keep them.
- When you review a potential caregiver's application, be sure they meet the state requirements for the job.
- Talk to the candidate's personal references. Ask questions that give you a solid idea about the person's dependability and personality. Talk to the candidate's job references.
- Don't be afraid to require every potential caregiver to submit to drug testing, if it's legal in your state. It's worth the added expense to eliminate active drug users from your pool.
- Actively recruit new caregivers through your local community college and university. These are especially good sources if those colleges offer programs in psychology, teaching, or nursing. Most colleges offer job placement assistance to students and recent graduates.
- If you have a technical school that offers CNA or other training/certifications as a medical paraprofessional, talk to their placement office about recruiting caregivers through the Student Services office.
- Offer current employees a referral bonus if they refer a new employee who stays with your company for 1 year.
- Ask current employees for ideas on how to best reach potential new staff. Caregivers are an important part of your business. Give recruiting new staff the time and energy it deserves.

10 Caregiver Tips

1. Know your limits. Don't over work yourself.
2. Make sure you schedule time for yourself.
3. Educate yourself about the progression of all diseases.
4. Learn how to communicate with your residents and develop a schedule early on. Routine is important.
5. Ensure you have support of the medical community to include social workers and other educational venues.
6. Ask for help when needed.
7. Find someone to talk to. Make sure to share not just the frustrations but the joys too.
8. Know that you make a difference.
9. Appreciate how special caring for others is.
10. Celebrate the tiniest victories.

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Impact of Art Therapy Programs in Assisted Living

For those seniors who are living in assisted living communities, art therapy programs are one of the highlights that make the golden years extra special. Among several types of resident activities, art therapy has been proven to be beneficial in limitless ways. Art programs vary within the assisted living community. There are some things you should know about art therapy programs and how they play a critical role in almost all assisted living communities.

Art is a great outlet, and anyone can be taught, regardless of natural ability. Most people feel that art is an essential function of being human, and there are different spiritual connections for many people to art. Art allows the feeling of freedom, and personal self-expression. It can empower one through beginning to cope with life's problems at a needed time in life.

Almost everybody who has ever had art therapy has benefited from it in some way. Among resident activities, it quickly becomes a favorite for most residents. People with special needs can find unique ways to work through their personal issues through self-expression where no other means would suffice to accomplish this. Because of the many vital components in art therapy, researchers have documented and proven that it can be therapeutic. In many assisted living communities you'll find an art department along with special rooms for the art therapy.

Art therapy programs are usually held in conjunction with the rest of the resident activities during the daily routines. Sometimes residents can spend additional time during the day other than just the art therapy session in which to do artwork. Individual art therapists are common in many larger facilities and usually someone who is quite familiar with art will head up the art therapy program. Art is very popular among seniors, and it is quite an accomplishment to complete something and receive the praise from staff and fellow residents they deserve.



*"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."
– Maya Angelou*

Meet our Team!

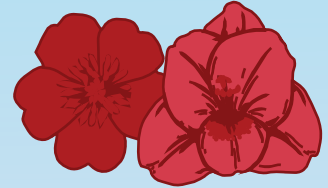


**Dawn Smith
Accounting**

Dawn brings 20 years of accounting experience to the PCALIC team. Being a mother of three she has to be detail minded and that has helped to make our team efficient in the ever changing insurance industry.

Fun Facts about August!

Fact 1- The birthstones for August are Peridot and Sardonyx.



Fact 2 -The birth flowers for August are the Gladiolus and Poppy.

Fact 3 -National Family Fun Month, National Golf Month, National Romance Awareness Month, and National Peach Month.

Fall Activities for Residents

Crafting with Leaves

With real leaves you can create an autumn wreath as a fall decoration. All you need is a wreath base, florist wire, and some leaves. Just tie the leaves in concentric circles to the wreath base. Or you could create an autumn sun catcher. All that is needed is translucent paper and black construction paper. Just sandwich the translucent paper between a black leaf border.

Fall-Themed Cooking

Residents can create a myriad of autumn inspired snacks. Create "acorn dough nuts" with donut holes, chocolate frosting, and toffee crumbles. You can use a pretzel stick on the top to serve as a stem. Create autumn themed cookies by cutting out cookies with a leaf shaped cutter and stuffing the dough with chocolate chips. Just bake for 12 minutes at 375 degrees and you will have a delicious fall-themed snack.

Fun with Apples

Autumn means apple harvest time! You can create fall themed stationary with your apples. Just cut an apple in half, brush the cut side with white acrylic paint, add a line of darker paint around the edges, and stamp on paper or card stock.

Fall Foliage Tours

Its time for the seniors to get out of the house and experience mother nature at her finest. Design a foliage tour through area parks and neighborhoods. Make sure to bring a camera to take photos so that you can create a scrapbook. There are also multiple companies that offer bus tours through areas like New England and upstate New York.



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12 Best Balancing Exercises for the Elderly

Balance training and exercises can improve the performance of elderly individuals. The exercises incorporate endurance training, balance and strength training to promote good balance. This will allow them to focus on their balance as they get used to the routine exercises. 12 of the best exercises for the elderly are:

Single Limb Stance

This is great exercise to start with. Simply have them hold a chair and balance on one leg. Their goal will be to maintain their center over their ankles.

Clock Reach

To prevent falling, use a chair. While holding on to a chair stand on one leg, while picturing a clock in their mind, have them move their arm around reaching to each position on a clock. Do not have them reach back too far if they have pain in their shoulder.

Eye Tracking

This exercise targets their vestibular and vision system. If they start to feel dizzy have them try smaller movements of the head.

Single Limb With Arm

Have them look up from their feet and find a spot to focus on at eye level to help maintain their balance. Make sure they breathe in through their nose and out through their mouth.

Knee Marching

This is a good exercise for leg weakness and cardio exercise.

Body Circles

Keep their hips and knees straight while circling (like a hula hoop). If they start to feel uncomfortable have a chair close by.

Staggered Stance

Have them stand next to a chair with a back and hold onto the chair with one hand. They then will step forward with one foot, hold for 30 seconds, and repeat with other foot.

Walk Heel to Toes

This allows the them to retain straighter line when doing the walking exercises.

Stepping

The stepping exercises are challenging and they may need someone to demonstrate the exercise to them first.

Grapevine

If they dance then they will be familiar with this exercise. Take steps in one direction and turn around and walk back.

Dynamic Walking

This exercise should be done when they have more confidence and it is fun to do with someone else.