



Share your practical tips

Research from the TOP5 program has shown that writing down and sharing up to five important tips such as those listed below, can help others to support and care for a person with dementia¹

- Situations that might cause distress and what could help
- When the person is unsettled, the words or actions likely to help calm and settle them
- Routines and rituals that are reassuring
- Signs that indicate the person needs or wants something
- Names and photos of family, friends or pets that are important to the person
- Personal preferences for enjoyment such as music, radio, reading or gardening.

Think about the most important tips that will help others give reassuring and familiar care. Use the reverse of this page to write these down. Provide the 'why', followed by your practical tip and what will happen when this is followed (see examples).

Give a copy to anyone who helps support and care for your family member or friend including:

- Residential aged-care workers, if living in aged-care
- Home help, community groups, day care facilities, or respite care, if living in the community
- Paramedics, if using an ambulance
- Admitting nurse, if the person has a hospital stay
- Doctors, pharmacists and any other health professionals involved in the person's care

Example 1

Background/why:

Ken was a fireman for forty years.

Practical tip:

If Ken hears an alarm or loud ringing he will become distressed. Let him know that the car has been sent.

What will happen when followed:

Ken will calm down. Offer him a cup of tea and he will forget about the alarm.

Example 2

Background/why:

Mary has always prided herself on looking well presented.

Practical tip:

Ensure her hair is brushed and tell her she looks lovely today.

What will happen when followed:

Mary will be less anxious and more likely to engage with staff.



¹ Luxford K et al. Improving clinician-carer communication for safer hospital care: a study of the 'TOP 5' strategy in patients with dementia. International Journal for Quality in Health Care 2015; 1-8.



Date: / /

Carer's name:

Carer's Phone No: ()

Getting to know:

NAME OF PERSON

Practical tips on how to comfort and support them²

Background/why:
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Practical tip:
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What will happen when followed:
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Background/why:
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Practical tip:
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What will happen when followed:
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What will happen when followed:
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2 This has been adapted from the TOP5 program developed by the Central Coast Local Health District, NSW. Further information for carers about the TOP5 program is available at <http://www.cclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/patientsandvisitors/CarerSupport/top5/Pages/Carer-family.aspx>