



# ADVANCED<sup>TM</sup> COMFORT

*A philosophy of care for advanced dementia*

# ADVANCED-COMFORT

## *The 6M Care Planning Workbook*

Caring for a loved one with advanced dementia is a deeply personal journey. **This 6M Care Plan Workbook** is designed to empower you to provide the best possible care tailored to your loved one's unique needs and preferences. Use this workbook to provide information about your loved one that you are comfortable sharing.



**Leave blanks if you wish.** Not every question requires an answer, and that's perfectly fine! You do not have to reveal everything; this is your space to express what truly matters to you and your loved one. Feel free to skip any question that you don't have information for or that you prefer not to answer.

**Collaboration is key.** Your insights are invaluable alongside the care team's contributions. Share the worksheet with healthcare providers, nurses, family or friends involved in your loved one's care. Care team members can add important details and suggestions.

**Display for all to see.** Once completed, consider displaying the 6M Care Plan in a prominent location accessible to all caregivers. This fosters a shared understanding of what matters most to your loved one and how to make them most comfortable.

**Update to feel great!** We encourage you to periodically review and update the care plan to ensure it remains aligned with your loved one's needs and desires.

These items are provided solely for informational purposes and are not intended as a substitute for consultation with a medical professional. People with specific questions about items in the program or their situation should consult their physician or healthcare provider.



# WHAT MATTERS

Recognizing and addressing what's most important to individuals living with advanced dementia and their caregivers is crucial for building meaningful connections and delivering the best care possible, tailored to their needs and values.

What does the person like to be called? *Consider titles, nicknames, or other names.*

How would they describe themselves? *Consider personal identity, work, or family roles.*

Who are the important people in their life?

*Consider family members, friends, caregivers, spiritual leaders, pets, or community members.*

What are their biggest accomplishments? *What are they most proud of?*

What cultural, spiritual, or religious aspects are meaningful?

**Does the person with dementia have an advance directive?** *An advance directive is a legal document that allows individuals to express their healthcare preferences and appoint a decision-maker in case they become unable to make medical decisions themselves. For additional information on advance directives, talk to a health care provider.*

\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_ NO



# MEANINGFUL ACTIVITIES

To establish meaningful connections and engage individuals with advanced dementia, it's helpful to understand their favorite hobbies, interests, and activities. By adapting activities and their environment to their life experiences, we can provide comfort, encourage social interaction, and create a sense of connection and fulfillment.

What strategies are most helpful in ensuring effective communication?

Consider hearing, vision, and language.

What were their favorite hobbies or activities in the past?

What are their favorite activities now?

What activities, surroundings, or sensory experiences make them comfortable?

Consider TV, music, sounds, or aromas and scents.



# MEALTIME

Individuals with advanced dementia often struggle with eating and drinking, and they depend on careful handfeeding for nutrition and for the human connection and the joy of tasting their favorite foods. Caregivers play a crucial role in making mealtimes a social and enjoyable experience, and it's important that they understand how to assist with eating to ensure the person's comfort.

What part of mealtime brings the most happiness to the person with dementia?

What are their favorite foods and drinks?

Consider temperatures, consistencies, and food textures.

What methods or strategies work best when helping them to eat?

Consider communication techniques, utensils, pacing, and environment.



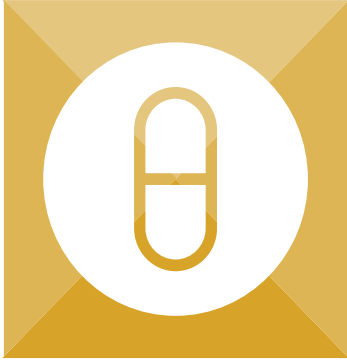
## MOBILITY

While losing the ability to walk safely is a feature of advanced dementia, we can identify strategies that help people remain mobile and comfortable in bed, chairs, and when moving around their surroundings.

What techniques are most effective in ensuring comfortable transfers and positioning in bed and chairs? [Consider adaptive equipment.](#)

What activities help them to stay as active as possible?

What type of surroundings or specific places do they find most pleasing or comfortable?



## MEDICATIONS & TREATMENTS

People with advanced dementia may find it uncomfortable to take medications or undergo certain treatments. They may also be more sensitive to certain medications and experience uncomfortable or harmful side effects such as dry mouth, dizziness, or loss of appetite. For these reasons it is especially important to carefully review their medications and treatments and consider which medications and treatments are necessary to their health, and which ones are causing more discomfort than benefit. Consider having a conversation with a healthcare provider to explore potential medications and treatment options.

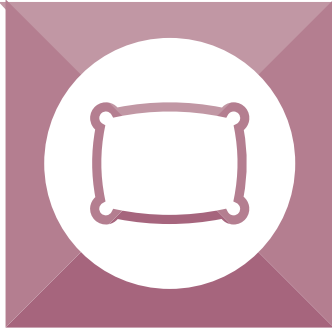
What is the most comfortable way for the person with dementia to take their medication?

What medication or treatments are they using that help make them comfortable?

Are there medications that may be causing them discomfort?

Are there treatments that they undergo that may be causing them discomfort? (Consider needle sticks, blood drawing, or weighing.)

Talk with a health care provider before changing medications and treatments.



## MAKE PERSONAL CARE COMFORTABLE

When individuals have advanced dementia, they struggle to use words to express their discomfort. That's why it's crucial for us to listen with both our ears and our hearts, particularly when offering personal care, to recognize and apply strategies that prevent any discomfort.

What signs or non-verbal cues help you identify discomfort or distress?

What strategies are effective in providing comfort when they are distressed?

What techniques or strategies make personal care activities, such as bathing, dressing, toileting, and positioning, more comfortable and distress-free?