Why Caregiver Training is a Priority

Training and development are not only necessary to provide quality care and reduce risk but are also a great investment in your people and organization.

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Virgin Group founder Sir Richard Branson suggests that the key to taking care of your clients or customers begins with a focus on employees: "If you take care of your employees," Branson has famously said, "they'll take care of your business." If we take the words of Branson to heart, then caregivers (employees) who are engaged will care even more about their patients. That's why investing in training and development is vital in home health care; it will create the kind of behaviors we all want in those caring for our loved ones when we can't be there. However, the majority of training in today's companies is ineffective: a Gartner survey found that 70% of employees reported that they don't have a mastery of the skills needed to do their jobs. Not to put too fine a point on it, you need to offer training and development that leads to career growth and advancement. This will not only help your agency meet licensing and certification needs for your staff and avoid serious compliance issues but also benefits your employees, patients, and business in the following ways.

Retention and Turnover

According to the 2019 Home Care Benchmarking Study by Home Care Pulse, the industry's median turnover rate for caregivers last year was a whopping 82%, an increase of 15% over 2018. And now, more than ever, the levels are even higher, as evidenced by the Home Care Association of America reporting that 60% of home care organizations at the beginning of the pandemic were experiencing staff call-offs due to COVID-19 concerns. Properly training and developing your current workforce is almost always going to be cheaper than recruiting and training new employees. Home Care Pulse projects that the cost of hiring and training a new caregiver to fill a vacancy is around $2,600. If you want to continue to successfully compete in this industry, you need to provide training to your biggest asset: your caregivers. With suitable training, they will feel more apt to tackle any challenge they find along the way, like caring for difficult patients – one of the top reasons caregivers leave agencies. If you take simple steps to encourage support, knowledge sharing, and the improvement of skills, you can equip your caregivers to overcome demanding assignments and situations, which will increase their satisfaction and retention.

Development

Beyond just getting hired, home health care workers want opportunities to learn, improve their skills, and advance their careers. While home health aides in many states are required to participate in annual in-service training, 72% of caregivers have said they'd also attend free weekly or

monthly training to gain new skills. Now, in the digital age and with current social distancing restrictions, you can provide trainings online that will allow caregivers to learn anywhere and on their own time. Alongside this, implementing organization-wide programs, such as train-the-trainer and mentor-mentee setups, are other great ways to provide development. In the same benchmarking study, a significant 43% of caregivers say that while they don't have a mentor or teacher to help them learn new skills and provide support at their current job, they would like one. These methods don't necessarily require face-to-face interaction as long as everyone follows social distancing rules, and all contribute to this main goal: supporting and ensuring that caregivers are not just providing care but that they themselves are also cared for and considered essential.

General Safety and Patient Satisfaction

Besides following requirements to maintain federal, state, and local compliance, presenting your caregivers with opportunities for continuous education gives them an arsenal of tools to deal with a vast variety of patients with different needs, ensuring they are confident and prepared. Better-trained caregivers are more likely to provide superior, safer care, have higher job satisfaction, and stay with their agency longer, keeping the patients they care for and themselves protected. If you have content, experienced caregivers providing high-quality care to your patients, the result will be more satisfied, happier clients. This – as you know – can easily lead to referrals, creating many more customers. In the long run, investing in your caregivers will give your agency a higher ROI, while simultaneously promoting general safety and patient satisfaction. James Cohen, CEO of Nevvon, a learning management systems company that partners with Viventium, says, "The most popular trainings we see our agencies administering are dementia, infection control, COVID-19, HIPPA, UTI, and ADL. Having training in these areas helps the caregiver provide the best service possible and keeps patients both happy and safe." Training and development are not only necessary to provide quality care and reduce risk but are also a great investment in your people and organization. It's the perfect opportunity to grow and drive the kind of engagement that will carry through to the care of others and lead to success for your agency. To find out how Viventium can help, check out our Learning Management System.

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