

Dignity in Care factsheet

June 2010

Personal hygiene in practice

- Support people to maintain their personal hygiene and appearance, and their living environment, to the standards that they want.
- When providing support with personal care, take the individual's lifestyle choices into consideration – respect their choice of dress and hairstyle, for example.
- Don't make assumptions about appropriate standards of hygiene for individuals.
- Take cultural factors into consideration during needs assessment.

Ideas you could use

Provide a footcare service

Provide a footcare service for people who cannot cut their own nails or tend to their feet safely.

Raise the bar for hygiene and cleanliness

Look at all aspects of hygiene and cleanliness and consider how you could raise standards. This might involve using different products (fabrics coated with anti-bacterial agent, for example) and different procedures (more frequent monitoring of cleaning standards, for example).

Key points from policy and research

- Having a clean and respectable appearance and pleasant environment is key to maintaining the self-esteem of older people.
- Cleanliness in hospitals is one of the top five issues for patients.
- Having a clean home is particularly important to older women in terms of maintaining their dignity and self-respect.
- The proper care of laundry is a key issue for many care home residents.
- Hygiene and cleanliness is seen as a key indicator of standards within a [care] home.