

Dignity in Care factsheet

June 2010

Privacy in practice

- Ensure a confidentiality policy is in place and followed by all staff (including domestic and support staff).
- Make issues of privacy and dignity a fundamental part of staff induction and training.
- Ensure only those who need information to carry out their work have access to people's personal records or financial information.
- Respect privacy when people have personal and sexual relationships, with careful assessment of risk.
- Choose interpreters with the consent of the person using the service.
- Get permission before entering someone's personal space.
- Get permission before accessing people's possessions and documents.
- Provide space for private conversations and telephone calls.
- Make sure that people receive their mail unopened.
- Ensure single-sex bathroom and toilet facilities are available.
- Provide en suite facilities where possible.
- In residential care, respect people's space by enabling them to individualise their own room.
- Consider issues of privacy if a person requires close monitoring or observation.

Ideas you could use

Use an enuresis pad to maintain dignity despite incontinence

Incontinence can be a real threat to dignity. Using an enuresis pad, which issues an alert if someone is incontinent, can help save the embarrassment caused by staff 'checking' whether a person has been incontinent. It can also help identify patterns that make it easier to manage the incontinence.

Use 'Do not disturb' signs to respect people's privacy

To respect people's privacy at certain times, you could consider introducing 'Do not disturb' signs.