

This resource is a result of the collaborative efforts of NHPCO's Next Generation Leadership Council.

Provides direct and indirect patient care within the patient's living environment under the direction of a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse. Must assist residents with activities of daily living, provide personal care and comfort, and maintain a safe and clean environment for an assigned group of patients. Must also provide and maintain bodily and emotional comfort to Hospice patients/families and educate and assist the patient/family in maintaining the maximum level of independent living in a safe environment. Pledge to make the comfort and care of patients and families the highest priority; consistently provide a high level of personalized, sincere, and engaging service to patients and families at all times; ensure the complete satisfaction of patients and families; promptly and effectively address all concerns. The purpose of this document is to provide information on common skills that may be considered for the role of CNA/Hospice Aide.\*

## Required Skills

The following skills are considered mandatory for CNAs and Hospice Aides.

### ■ State Licensure / Credentialing as required by your respective State

### ■ Integrity / Ethical

### ■ Professionalism

- Ability to maintain professional composure at all times, most especially during challenging and stressful situations

### ■ Trustworthy

### ■ Compassion

- The ability to demonstrate understanding and concern for those suffering physically or emotionally.

### ■ Empathy

- Ability to use an empathetic approach when facilitating patient and family care.

### ■ Reliability

- Ability and willingness to complete assigned tasks and duties.

### ■ Collaboration / Team Player

- Ability to collaborate effectively with the interdisciplinary team.

### ■ Observation Skills

- Observing changes in the patient's behavior, speech, appearance, eating habits, and within the family can provide clues to other challenges that may be occurring.

### ■ Physical Strength

- It may be necessary to move a patient, shift furniture, carry food/supplies, etc.

### ■ Organization

- As a caregiver, you will be caring for multiple patients. The ability to keep care needs, communication, and schedules organized is essential.

### ■ Flexibility

- No two patients, no two days, and no two deaths will look the same. Flexibility will allow you to adapt to the situation at hand.

## Mid-level Skills

Ideally, CNAs will have experience with the skills noted below but may not be experts in this area.

### ■ Strong Communication

- Strong communication skills are necessary to work with the care team, the patient, their family, and any other medical professionals that may be involved in the patient or family's needs. The ability to be clear and answer questions as they're asked as honestly and as caring as possible.

### ■ Emotional Strength

- Caring for the terminally ill can become emotionally exhausting. Self-care is important to maintain balance.

### ■ Patience

- The ability to remain calm while in a potentially emotionally charged situation.

### ■ Interpersonal Skills

- Not everyone handles stress in the same manner. Interpersonal skills include knowing how to communicate with others, strong EQ, patience, observation, and compassion.

### ■ Problem Solver / Critical Thinking

- Demonstrated ability to assess and respond to the needs of patients and families in varied settings.

### ■ Ability to multi-task

- Ability to complete multiple tasks concurrently, as needed.

## CNA/Hospice Aide (cont.)

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### Preferred Skills

These skills are those that CNAs and/or Aides may have experience with; however, they are not required for this position.

#### ■ Cultural Awareness

- Having an awareness of other culture's customs, beliefs, and needs to help address end-of-life needs.

#### ■ Medical knowledge of end-of-life care

- Ability to demonstrate and relate medical knowledge in accessing hospice & palliative care services.

#### ■ Patient Advocacy

- Assist in facilitating freedom of choice.

#### ■ Teaching Ability

- Teaching and educating patients and caregivers is crucial in hospice & palliative care.

#### ■ Experience working with Electronic Health Records (EHR)

#### ■ Basic Tech Skills & Troubleshooting

- Able to use equipment fully in the field when needed and Ability to evaluate and assess basic technical issues such as poor connection, minor errors, etc.

#### ■ Experience with death and dying

#### ■ Ability to work on-call shifts (nights/weekends/holidays)

**\*Note:** State requirements may dictate specific skill sets for CNA versus an Aide. In that scenario, please default to the requirements of your state. Please also refer to CMS Conditions of Participation related to personnel requirements.