



PERSONAL CARE WORKER (PCW) - Job Description

Definition

Provides unskilled personal care and household services for stable, maintenance clients in their homes in compliance with a service plan.

Level of Responsibility

Reports to Manager and/or qualified Supervisor.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. Completed agency training or have verified experience in the provision of home care tasks to consumers and passed a competency evaluation.
2. Observation and maintenance of the home environment that ensures the safety and security of the consumer.
3. Assistance with household chores including cooking and meal preparation, cleaning, and laundry.
4. Assistance in completing activities such as shopping, and appointments outside the home.
5. Companionship including, but not limited to, social interaction, conversation, emotional reassurance, encouragement of reading, writing and activities that stimulate the mind.
6. Assistance with activities of daily living, personal care and any other assignments as included in the service plan.
7. Completion of appropriate service notes regarding service provision each visit. Documentation shall contain services provided, date, time in and out, and confirmation that care was provided. Such confirmation shall be according to agency policy.
8. In order to delineate the types of services that can be provided by a personal care worker, evidence of training in and competency in understanding and identifying situations where skilled home health care would be needed to meet higher needs of the consumer.

(1) Skin care. A personal care worker may perform general skin care assistance. A Personal Care Worker may perform skin care only when skin is unbroken, and when any chronic skin problems are not active. The skin care provided by a personal care worker shall be preventative rather than therapeutic in nature and may include the application of non-medicated lotions and solutions, or of lotions and solutions not requiring a physician's prescription. Skilled skin care includes wound care other than basic first aid, dressing changes, application of prescription medications, skilled observation and reporting. Skilled skin care should be provided by an agency licensed to provide home health services.

(2) Ambulation. A personal care worker may generally assist consumers with ambulation who have the ability to balance and bear weight. If the consumer has been determined by a health professional to be independent with an assistive device, a personal services worker may be assigned to assist with ambulation.

(3) Bathing. A personal care worker may assist consumers with bathing. When a consumer has skilled skin care needs or skilled dressings that will need attention before, during or after bathing, the consumer should be in the care of an agency licensed to provide home health services.

(4) Dressing. A personal care worker may assist a consumer with dressing. This may include assistance with ordinary clothing and application of support stockings of the type that can be purchased without a physician's prescription. A personal care worker shall not assist with application of an ace bandage and anti-embolic or pressure stockings that can be purchased only with a physician's prescription.

(5) Exercise. A personal care worker may assist a consumer with exercise. However, this does not include assistance with a plan of exercise prescribed by a licensed health care professional. A worker may remind the consumer to perform ordered exercise program. Assistance with exercise that can be performed by a personal care worker is limited to the encouragement of normal bodily movement, as tolerated, on the part of the consumer and encouragement with a prescribed exercise program. A personal care worker shall not perform passive range of motion.

(6) Feeding. Assistance with feeding may generally be performed by a personal service worker. Personal care workers can assist consumers with feeding when the consumer can independently chew and swallow without difficulty and be positioned upright. Assistance by a personal care worker does not include syringe, tube feedings and intravenous nutrition. Whenever there is a high risk that the consumer may choke as a result of the feeding the consumer should be in the care of an agency licensed to provide home health services.

(7) Hair care. As a part of the broader set of services provided to consumers who are receiving personal services, personal care service agencies may assist consumers with the maintenance and appearance of their hair. Hair care within these limitations may include shampooing with non-medicated shampoo or shampoo that does not require a physician's prescription, drying, combing and styling of hair.

(8) Mouth care. A personal care worker may assist and perform mouth care. This may include denture care and basic oral hygiene. Mouth care for consumers who are unconscious, have difficulty swallowing or are at risk for choking and aspiration should be performed by an agency licensed to provide home health services.

(9) Nail care. A personal care worker may assist generally with nail care. This assistance may include soaking of nails, pushing back cuticles without utensils, and filing of nails. Assistance by a personal care worker shall not include nail trimming. Consumers with a medical condition that might involve peripheral circulatory problems or loss of sensation should be under the care of an agency licensed to provide home health services to meet this need.

(10) Positioning. A personal care worker may assist a consumer with positioning when the consumer is able to identify to the personal care staff, verbally, non-verbally or through others, when the positions needs to be changed and only when skilled skin care, as previously described, is not required in conjunction with the positions. Positioning may include simple alignment in a bed, wheelchair, or other furniture.

(11) Shaving. A personal care worker may assist a consumer with shaving only with an electric or a safety razor.

(12) Toileting. A personal care worker may assist a consumer to and from the bathroom, provide assistance with bedpans, urinals and commodes; pericare, or changing of clothing and pads of any kind used for the care of incontinence.

(13) Urinary Collection Devices. A personal care worker may empty urinary collection devices, such as catheter bags. In all cases, the insertion and removal of catheters and care of external catheters is considered skilled care and shall not be performed by a personal care worker.

(14) Ostomy Care. A personal care worker may empty ostomy bags and provide assistance with other consumer-directed ostomy care only when there is no need for skilled skin care or for observation or reporting to a nurse. A personal care worker shall not perform digital stimulation, insert suppositories or give an enema.

(15) Transfers. A personal care worker may assist with transfers only when the consumer has sufficient balance and strength to reliably stand and pivot and assist with the transfer to some extent. Adaptive and safety equipment may be used in transfers, provided that the consumer and personal care worker are fully trained in the use of the equipment and can direct the transfer step by step. Adaptive equipment may include, but is not limited to wheel chairs, tub seats and grab bars. Gait belts may be used in a transfer as a safety device for the personal care worker as long as the worker has been properly trained in its use.

(a) A personal care worker shall not perform assistance with transfers when the consumer is unable to assist with the transfer. Personal care workers, with training and demonstrated competency, may assist a consumer in a transfer involving a lift device.

(b) A personal care worker may assist the informal caregiver with transferring the consumer provided the consumer is able to direct and assist with the transfer.

(16) Medication reminding. A personal care worker may assist a consumer with medication reminding only when medications have been preselected by the consumer, a family member, a nurse, or a pharmacist, and are stored in containers other than the prescription bottles, such as medication minders. Medication minder containers shall be clearly marked as to day and time of dosage and reminding includes: inquiries as to whether medications were taken; verbal prompting to take medications; handing the appropriately marked medication minder container to the consumer; and, opening the appropriately marked medication minder container for the consumer if the consumer is physically unable to open the container. These limitations apply to all prescription and all over-the-counter medications. Any irregularities noted in the pre-selected medications such as medications taken too often, not often enough or not at the correct time as marked in the medication minder container, shall be reported immediately by the personal care worker to the supervisor.

(17) Respiratory Care. Respiratory care is considered skilled care and shall not be performed by a personal care worker. Respiratory care includes postural drainage, cupping, adjusting oxygen flow within established parameters, nasal, endotracheal and tracheal suctioning. (a) Personal care workers may temporarily remove and replace a cannula or mask from the consumer's face for the purposes of shaving, washing a consumer's face. (b) Personal care workers may set a consumer's oxygen flow according written instruction when changing tanks, provided the personal care worker has been specifically trained and demonstrated competency for this task.

(18) Accompaniment. Accompanying the consumer to medical appointments, banking errands, basic household errands, clothes shopping, grocery shopping or other excursions to the extent necessary and as specified on the service plan may be performed by the personal care worker when all the care that is provided by the personal care staff in relation to the trip is unskilled personal care, as described in these regulations.

(19) Protective oversight. A personal care worker may provide protective oversight including stand-by assistance with any personal care task described in these regulations. When the consumer requires protective oversight to prevent wandering, the personal care worker shall have been trained in appropriate intervention and redirection techniques.

(20) Respite care and companionship. A personal care worker may provide respite and companionship in the consumer's home according to the service plan as long as the necessary provision of services during this time does not include skilled personal care services as described in this regulation.

(21) Housekeeping services. A personal care worker may provide housekeeping services, such as dusting, vacuuming, mopping, cleaning bathroom and kitchen areas, meal preparation, dishwashing, linen changes, laundry and shopping in accordance with the service contract. Where meal preparation is provided, the personal care worker should receive instruction regarding any special diets required to be prepared.

(22) The agency does not allow personal care workers to: (Colorado employees only)

- (1) Perform skilled home health services as defined in section 3.20 of 6 CCR 1011-1, Chapter XXVI.
- (2) Perform or provide medication set-up for a consumer; or
- (3) Perform other actions specifically prohibited by agency policy, regulations or law.

9. Observes and reports to the Manager and/or Supervisor any changes from normal.
10. Maintains timely records of home visits.
11. Practices standard infection control precautions, basic first aid and home safety.
12. Attends appropriate education meetings.
13. Attends and participates in appropriate care coordination conferences, staff meetings, and agency committee meetings.
14. Performs other related functions as directed.
15. Maintains confidentiality in all aspects of job performance.
16. Complies with all applicable laws, regulations and standards in performance of job functions.

Minimum Qualifications

1. At least 18 years of age.
2. Possess a high school diploma or GED.
3. Be able to communicate and understand return communication effectively in exchanges between the consumer, family representatives, and other providers;
4. Have successfully completed and passed a written competency exam related to the agency PCW training course.
5. Have successfully completed an supervisor-observed competency exam (tasks).
6. Additional related annual training that equals 12 hours each year.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

1. Knowledge of principles and procedures of personal care and safety practices in the home care setting.
2. Understanding of family interactions and aging process.
3. Beginning knowledge of nutrition and food service.
4. Beginning skills in personal care.
5. Ability to observe, report, and record client's care and condition accurately.
6. Ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing.
7. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with management, clients and families, and staff members.

Special Requirements:

1. Valid, current state driver's license & proof of automobile insurance and access to a reliable automobile, or
2. Access to a reliable automobile, public or other reliable transportation.