



DEVELOPING STAFF PERSONAL ACTION PLANS TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO DANGEROUS CAREGIVER FATIGUE

What is a Staff Personal Action Plan?

A Staff Personal Action Plan is a documented plan developed through a discussion between a direct support caregiver and his or her supervisor. It identifies standard and individualized strategies to address specific risks or hazards. A Staff Personal Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Dangerous Caregiver Fatigue addresses specific strategies to prevent falling asleep on the job and other hazardous conditions related to caregiver fatigue.

What are essential elements of a Staff Personal Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Dangerous Caregiver Fatigue?

Staff Personal Action Plans are meant to reinforce policies and standards and should include customized strategies to help individual staff stay awake, alert and responsive to the needs of people receiving services. A Staff Personal Action Plan to Prevent and Respond to Dangerous Caregiver Fatigue specifically addresses the unique risks of an individual caregiver for falling asleep and strategies that attempt to mitigate those risks.

Staff Personal Action Plans to Prevent and Respond to Dangerous Caregiver Fatigue may include, but are not limited to tactics to address:

- Individual risks for dangerous fatigue which include the warning signs
- Internal coping strategies, peer support, environmental modifications and administrative supports to prevent and/or address dangerous fatigue
- What to do if you are having significant trouble staying awake
- How you should respond if you find yourself accidentally nodding off.

Other plan elements may include written reinforcement of relevant policies and expectations such as: staff awareness of agency expectations regarding the need to remain alert and attentive, and the penalties for sleeping on the job. The documented plan may also include progressive supervisory notes regarding the review and modification of the plan and/or other supervisory follow up regarding the plan.

SAMPLE STAFF PERSONAL ACTION PLAN TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO DANGEROUS CAREGIVER FATIGUE

Personal Action Plan for: Mary Smith; Alone Awake Overnight Staff at Waldorf IRA Sunday through Wednesday 10 p.m.- 8 a.m. (2 additional staff report at 6 a.m.)

Risks/Warning Signs:

- If I didn't sleep before the shift, this is rare, but sometimes it happens
- If I don't feel well but have to work because no one will cover for me, also rare, but sometimes it happens

I feel most tired:

- Between 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., when chores are done, it is dark and quiet, a.m. staff haven't arrived yet, and none of the residents are up yet
- On my Wednesday shift, my last shift of the week, it catches up to me at the end of the week
- If I have to work a double shift.

Making the Environment Safe: Internal Coping Strategies, Peer Strategies and Others I can call for help

To stay energized:

- Try to always get a good night's sleep, take care of my health, and use sick and personal time appropriately if I am not fit for duty
- Have a coffee and light breakfast break at 4 a.m.
- Open a window or step outside for a few minutes
- Turn on a light
- Sit in a hard chair or use the elliptical bike while watching TV instead of sitting in the recliner
- Save laundry or another cleaning task for between 4 a.m. and 6 a.m., or do some cooking/baking for the week's menu and freeze it with instructions to thaw/re-heat
- Bring in word puzzles or knitting for down time
- Set a timer for 10-15 minutes anytime I sit down to rest and I am at risk of falling asleep
- Have a phone-tree plan with a sister house; make/receive a couple of scheduled calls per night to keep each other alert
- Have my husband call me at 5 a.m. when he gets up

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If I am having significant trouble staying awake:

- I will notify my supervisor or the Administrator on Duty that I am having trouble staying alert
- If I cannot be safely relieved of all of my duties, I will make a contingency plan with my supervisor/AOD as to what duties are expected of me and make a communication plan to check in frequently for the remainder of my shift; I will not accept assignments to pass medications or to drive residents if it is unsafe for me to do so
- I may also use a timer or a buddy call system to help me stay awake
- I might make phone calls to friends or family or play a computer game if it is safe to do so, and there are no active chores left to be completed

If I accidentally fall asleep:

- I will immediately check on all residents to ensure their safety and I will report any unsafe conditions immediately
- I will also follow the strategies above for "significant trouble staying awake" including notifying my supervisor or the AOD

I understand that sleeping on the job may be addressed as an act of misconduct and may also constitute neglect under certain circumstances and I am making this personal action plan in a good faith effort to remain alert and attentive to duty.

Signed: Mary Smith

Date: 9/14/2019

Supervisory Notes:

9/14/2019

I have reviewed this Staff Personal Action Plan with Mary and we have agreed to review it and revise it as necessary during monthly supervisory meetings. In addition, to support Mary, as her supervisor I have made the following recommendations to be considered by administration:

- Mary has agreed that working only until 6 a.m. on Wednesdays would be beneficial to her well-being.
- Staff working double shifts will be asked if they need to be relieved of medication administration or driving duties on their second consecutive shift, before the supervisor makes assignments.
- The Residence Manager will ensure supplies are in the house so Mary can cook and bake for the week's menu on her night shift.
- The Residence Manager will purchase a timer bell/stop watch alarm for staff at the residence.

Signed: Jamie Farber

Date: 9/14/2019

10/08/2019

I stopped in at 4:30 a.m. this morning unannounced and found Mary to be alert and baking muffins for the morning breakfast. We had supervisory time and reviewed the plan. It is working for her and we made no revisions at this time. Administration approved Mary's schedule change to leave at 6 a.m. on Wednesdays and the new schedule will start next week. To make up the two hours, Mary has decided to start attending weekly staff meetings on Friday mornings.

Signed: Jamie Farber

Date: 10/08/2019