



TOP5 – A tool to support people with intellectual disability

Carer Support Unit

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Local Health District

A life shared, a life valued



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When in hospital people with intellectual disabilities ...



can be disorientated, confused, frightened, agitated, and/or aggressive.

Communication and behaviour, can be difficult to interpret by staff.

Often carers worry that the hospital staff will not understand their child/relative/friend and will be unable to best care for them, or to settle and calm them.



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Carers and Family know ...

and understand what their family member means by their words and behaviours.

Carers know:

- established routines and personal preferences
- objects of significance and 'must haves'
- words or actions to comfort and calm the person
- information that would assist us to connect with the patient, such as interests, family, friends.



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TOP5 is best practice

A clinical staff member and the carer discuss the specific, unique strategies, that the carer knows will help settle, calm, and support their son or daughter, relative or friend.

This information is recorded on a TOP5 form.

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Facility: COM GOS LI WW WYG

TOP5 STRATEGIES

Staff Process: • Give patient/carer/family TOP5 brochure • Ask advice to personalise care • Record up to 5 strategies to improve care • Sign and date each entry

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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TOP5 STRATEGIES

AL15023

BINDING MARGIN - NO WRITING

WHAT action is needed?
Why does it matter to the patient?
How will safety and care be improved?

FAMILY NAME
GIVEN NAME
DOB
ADDRESS
M/C
LOCATION/ WARD

MRN
 MALE FEMALE
M.O.
PIN
AGE

COMPLETE ALL DETAILS OR AFFIX PATIENT LABEL HERE

A381(C04)





Where is the TOP5 form?



The information, strategies and tips the carer/family give are recorded on a TOP5 form by staff and placed on the bed chart for quick and easy access by all staff.



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What to include in a TOP5 tip

TOP5 strategies and tips include

1. An action or behaviour of the patient
2. The reason or meaning behind the action or behaviour
3. What staff should do to settle or support the patient
4. The outcome if staff do or don't do the suggested action



Examples of TOP5 strategies:



- “When Brett is thirsty he will click his tongue. When he smells food he squeals in anticipation.”
- “Tina eats anything, so all meals must be supervised or she will eat the containers and cutlery. Take great care to keep medical supplies etc. out of her reach.”
- “Jonathon has a unique sign for YES: He lightly taps his head with a closed fist. Sometimes he will shake his head to say no, but will then laugh and tap his head – he is joking with you.”
- “Suzanne will comply with you cleaning her teeth if she holds another toothbrush in her hand.”



TOP5 – it works for everyone.



In evaluating TOP5, clinical staff commented that TOP5 is:

- *“very effective, I highly recommend it”*
- *“a really good resource tool, promotes patient comfort”*
- *“a great initiative, easy to use”*
- *“it helps with knowing a patient”*
- *“makes my job easier, less pressure”*



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TOP 5 is Best Practice



- Identified in the *'Developing the NSW Carers Strategy'* Background Paper as best practice for Carer Engagement.
- in NSW Falls Prevention Policy as a best practice tool for hospital settings
- by Clinical Excellence Commission, Ministry of Health NSW, as best practice for patients with Cognitive Impairment
- by Alzheimer's Australia as successful initiative for carer involvement and person-centred practise

