

The role of care staff in the pain management process

1. Pain Identification



Care staff are best placed to identify pain

Care staff should:

- Always be aware of the possibility residents may be in pain
- Ask about pain often
- Observe any changes in behavior that may be a sign of pain – at rest and movement, day and night
- Communicate signs of pain to a nurse, and document

2. Pain Assessment



Care staff may in some cases be required to assess pain through using scales and tools as part of a comprehensive pain assessment.

- After a comprehensive pain assessment, care staff may use a pain scale to assess the resident's progress after treatment.

3. Pain Treatment



Care staff can assist in a variety of non-pharmacological treatments for pain including:

- Creative activities
- Mindfulness
- Supporting sleep
- Supporting exercise
- Supporting nutrition and hydration

Care staff should also monitor how a resident is going with their medication, including being alert to side effects. It is important to report and document anything that is noticed.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Formal pain assessments using the same scales or tools should be used each week to monitor a resident's pain.

Care staff should monitor resident behaviours, mood and side effects after new medications or dose changes.
