



Sandra Stimson

# ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

By Sandra Stimson ADC, CALA, CDP Executive Director,  
[Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#)



## Training Your Staff the Right Way

Often times we hire staff and place them on the units without proper training. Here are some tips to develop a trained staff.

Once the new employee has completed the facility general orientation they should then complete a job specific orientation. Once completed the employee should sign off on the job specific orientation form. The form is available at [www.activitytherapy.com](http://www.activitytherapy.com) web site. The job specific orientation covers everything from room set up to types of programs to documentation.

When new employees begin, have the new staff shadow a seasoned staff member for one week. This will help train the new employee on how things should be done at your facility, introductions of residents and staff, where products are located and documentation procedures.

The new employee should be provided with the Activity Department policy manual and allowed one day for them to read it and ask questions. This is often times overlooked but should be a very important aspect of the training. We recommend that you place a form in front of the manual for staff to sign when they complete reading the policy manual.

Always assign a mentor within the department who can invite them to lunch and answer their questions and concerns related to the activity department.

For the first 30 days meet with your new staff daily to review their concerns. That will you to address those potential problems immediately. You should have a daily morning meeting with all your staff to go over new admissions, documentation, announcements, big events, etc. The staff should always sign for staff meetings. Always ask if they have concerns, suggestions and recommendations. Document their input as this shows you take their input seriously.

At 10 and 2 take the time to observe your staff during programs to insure the activity is being conducted professionally and safely. Take the time to meet privately with suggestions and concerns as well as praise. You can never praise too much!

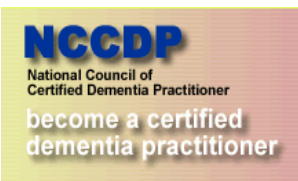
Observe your new staff in care plan meetings and when completing initial assessments. Until you are comfortable with the new employee, always ask to see progress notes, care plans, MDS and initial assessments before they are placed in the chart. It is better to correct mistakes now before you have to do damage control when the documentation becomes a part of the permanent record.

You will build a very strong department if you take the time and invest in a strong training program.

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Sandra Stimson has experience as a corporate consultant, Corporate Trainer and National Speaker. Her experience is in long term care, as Activity Director, Director of Alzheimer's Units and Assistant Administrator of a 550 bed long term care county home. She is Co-founder of Pet Express Pet Therapy Club, is a Life Replay Specialist. Sandra implements dementia units nationwide. Sandra has written several books, Volunteer Management Essentials for Long Term Care and Pet Express Pet Therapy Program. Sandra has been a facilitator for Alzheimer's support groups and is the Awards Chair for the NJ Association of Activity Professionals. Sandra is the Executive Director of **National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners**  
<http://www.nccdp.org>.

[Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#) offers resources for health care professionals in many areas of dementia care, care plans, Snoezelen products, dementia activity calendars, adult day care calendars, sensory calendars, reminiscence videos for dementia, activity books, and dates to remember, party supplies, resources and links.



for Activity Professionals  
 in Long Term Care Settings  
[admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com](mailto:admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com)

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