

Home Health Aide Skills Checklist

The following checklists contain the criteria used by the rater to evaluate each candidate's performance for each of the skills included in the Skills Exam. Each checklist begins with a description of how the skill will be setup to simulate a client situation for testing purposes. The criteria are not necessarily listed in the order that a candidate would perform the skill.

The checklists are not procedures and should not be used to learn the skills. The procedures for these skills are taught by training programs and can be found in textbooks (e.g., Revised Fundamentals of Care), and other learning materials. However, the checklists may be helpful for candidates and instructors in evaluating classroom performance.

When administering the test, the evaluator watches the candidate perform the skill and compares each candidate's performance to the checkpoints that make up the skill. Each checkpoint has a different value based on how critical it is to the safe performance of the skill. For example, the criteria for locking the wheelchair before transferring the client has a higher point value than the checkpoint for removing the gait belt at the end of the skill.

Candidates are required to pass all five skills to pass the test, but perfect performance is not required to pass a skill. The value assigned to each checkpoint is and how many points are required to pass a skill are secure test information. Even the evaluator who observes and records your performance does not know the value of each checkpoint or how many points it takes to pass a skill. The evaluator will enter the observations for a candidate's performance in the computer, and the computer will score the exam.

Handwashing Note: Your handwashing technique is evaluated at the beginning of the test. This skill is not prompted, which means you will not be told to wash your hands. Home care aides are expected to know to wash their hands before and after physical contact (touching) with the client. Demonstrating when handwashing is necessary is evaluated as a part of Common Care Practices.

Common Care Practices are practices that are part of every skill, such as client rights, communication with the client, client safety and comfort, and infection control. Common Care Practices are rated during your performance of each skill. You will receive a separate score for Common Care Practices.

Handwashing	
When the skills test begins, the candidate is evaluated on his/her handwashing technique. The candidate is not told to wash his/her hands, but is expected to know that before physical contact with the client, his/her hands should be washed.	
Does the candidate:	
1	wet hands and wrists under running water to begin cleansing?
2	apply soap to hands to begin washing?
3	lather all surfaces of hands and to wrists?
4	use friction rubbing soapy hands together for a minimum of 20 seconds?
5	rinse hands and wrists under running water to remove soap?
6	keep hands pointed downward while washing and rinsing?
7	use clean dry paper towel to dry hands and wrists?
8	confine drying to areas washed?
9	use paper towel to turn water off after hands cleansed?
10	dispose of used paper towel in trash?
11	end procedure with clean hands avoiding contamination (e.g., direct contact with faucet controls, paper towel dispenser, sink or trash can)?

Common Care Practices	
Common Care Practices are behaviors or actions that are part of all care the home care aide (HCA) provides to the client. During the test, Common Care Practices are evaluated as a part of every skill the candidate performs.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
3	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
4	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
5	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
6	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
7	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

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Feed a Client	
The client is sitting at a table when care begins for this skill. The client is unable to feed him/herself. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	ensure client is sitting upright in chair before begins feeding?
3	sit to feed the client?
4	offer the client fluid to drink during the meal?
5	talk to client during the meal?
6	wait to offer another bite of food or fluid to drink until client swallowed or client's mouth is ensured empty?
7	alternate the type of food offered with bites or ask about client's preference for each bite?
8	limit the amount of food on fork or spoon to provide as bite-size?
9	leave the client with a clean mouth area at the end of the skill?
10	offer or apply clothing protector before beginning skill and remove before completing procedure?
11	leave overbed table clean and dry and cleared of meal items (e.g., food, dishes, tableware) at end of the procedure?
12	dispose of clothing protector (if used) and trash appropriately?
13	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
14	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
15	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
16	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
17	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
18	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Help a Client to Walk	
The client is seated in a chair when care begins for this skill. The client requires stand -by assistance and does not use assistive devices to walk. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	explain walking destination before the client begins walking?
3	have client lean forward on the seat of the chair before standing?
4	cue client to push up with arms from chair to stand?
5	prepare client for standing by positioning knees at 90 degree angle with feet flat on the floor?
6	place hand on client's arm, back or waist when client stands?
7	cue client to stand?
8	walk slightly behind and to one side of client while walking?
9	ambulate client the required distance?

Help a Client to Walk	
10	ask how client feels after standing or while walking?
11	cue positioning before client sits, with legs centered against seat of chair for safe seating?
12	cue client to reach for chair before sitting?
13	place hand on client's arm, back or waist when client sits?
14	leave client sitting safely in chair with hips against the back of seat?
15	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
16	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
17	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
18	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
19	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
20	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Help a Client to Take Medication	
The client is sitting at a table while this care is provided. The client is unable to open the medication bottle or pour his/her medication. The medication bottles contain candies that the candidate will pretend are medication pills for the test. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	check client's medication schedule?
3	advise client it is time to take medicine?
4	select the medication labeled with the client's name?
5	select the correct medication bottle?
6	review the medication label before removing medication from bottle?
7	pour pill(s) into cap of medicine bottle without touching medication?
8	give client correct medication dose placed into hand from the cap of the medicine bottle without the candidate touching the medication?
9	cue client to take medication?
10	assist client to take medication without having the candidate's hand over the client's hand, or tipping client's hand to place pill(s) into mouth, or placing the pill(s) directly into the client's mouth?
11	provide client cup of water to use for swallowing medication?
12	cue client to drink full cup of water?
13	ask client or check if medication is swallowed or check that swallowed?
14	close medication bottle and return to box before ending procedure?
15	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
16	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?

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Help a Client to Take Medication	
17	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
18	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
19	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
20	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Provide Mouth Care to a Client	
The client is sitting at a table while this care is provided. The client is unable to brush his/her own teeth. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	apply clean gloves before brushing teeth?
3	wet toothbrush with water before brushing client's teeth?
4	apply toothpaste to toothbrush before brushing client's teeth?
5	brush tops and side surfaces of client's teeth?
6	use gentle circular motions when brushing side surfaces of client's teeth and gums?
7	brush, or offer to brush, the client's tongue?
8	provide client clean water in cup to rinse mouth?
9	hold basin or a cup (separate cup) near client's chin to collect rinse water and spit?
10	leave client's mouth area clean and dry at completion of mouth care?
11	use barrier (e.g., towel) to protect client's clothing while providing mouth care and remove at completion of procedure?
12	rinse and dry basin and rinse toothbrush before storing?
13	dispose of used linen(s) and trash appropriately and leave overbed table dry at completion of procedure?
14	remove gloves without contaminating self after rinsing and storing equipment?
15	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
16	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
17	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
18	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
19	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
20	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Clean and Store a Client's Denture	
The client is sitting at a table or lying in bed while this care is provided. The client will hand the candidate a denture cup containing the denture. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	apply gloves before handling denture?
3	use cool or tepid water when cleaning and rinsing denture?
4	use toothpaste to cleanse denture?

Clean and Store a Client's Denture	
5	brush inner and outer surfaces of denture?
6	rinse denture in water to remove toothpaste after brushing?
7	place clean denture in denture cup filled with clean, cool or tepid clean water or denture solution?
8	prevent contamination of denture throughout procedure (e.g., floating in sink water or setting denture directly on unprotected surface)?
9	use technique to reduce the risk of denture breakage if dropped during cleaning (e.g., brushing denture directly over sink lined with washcloth/paper towel/towel, filled with water, inside basin)?
10	drain sink and remove liner (if used) at the end of skill?
11	rinse toothbrush, store equipment, and dispose of trash and used linens appropriately?
12	remove gloves without contaminating self after rinsing and storing equipment?
13	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
14	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
15	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
16	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
17	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
18	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Provide Fingernail and Hand Care to a Client	
The client is sitting at a table while this care is provided. For the test, the candidate is asked to provide care to only one hand. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	use water of safe temperature for soaking hand?
3	ask client if water temperature is comfortable?
4	soak client's fingers in basin of water before cleaning or shaping nails?
5	dry client's hand, including between fingers, after removing from water and before cleaning under or shaping fingernails?
6	dry client's hand by patting with towel, not rubbing?
7	use orange stick to clean under fingernails and remove residue?
8	wipe orange stick on towel to remove residue before cleaning under another fingernail?
9	use emery board to file fingernails?
10	leave fingernail tips smooth and free of rough edges?
11	offer or apply hand lotion to hand after fingernail care is completed?
12	wear gloves when providing fingernail care and while rinsing and drying equipment?
13	store equipment, dispose of used linen(s) and trash appropriately and leave overbed table dry at completion of procedure?

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Provide Fingernail and Hand Care to a Client	
14	remove gloves without contaminating self after rinsing and storing equipment?
15	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
16	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
17	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
18	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
19	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
20	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Provide Foot Care to a Client	
The client is sitting in a chair while this care is provided. For the test, the candidate is asked to provide care to only one foot. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	observe condition of skin on foot separating toes to check between toes and turns foot to look at heels before beginning foot cleansing?
3	soak client's foot in water contained in basin before cleaning or shaping toe nails?
4	use water of safe temperature for soaking foot?
5	ask client if water temperature is comfortable before foot completely submerged?
6	submerge foot in water with basin filled to level sufficient to cover foot completely?
7	keep water in basin soap-free for use as rinse water by: (1) washing foot with washcloth with soap applied directly to the washcloth instead of adding soap into basin of water; or (2) using two separate basins of water: one for washing and one rinsing?
8	wash client's entire foot, including between toes with soapy washcloth after soaking?
9	rinse to remove soap from foot and in between toes?
10	dry client's foot, including between toes, after removing from water and before cleaning under or shaping toenails?
11	dry client's foot by patting with towel, not rubbing?
12	use orange stick to clean under nails and remove residue?
13	wipe orange stick on towel to remove residue before cleaning under another toenail?
14	use emery board to file toenails straight across?
15	leave top edge of toenails smooth and free of rough edges?
16	apply lotion to foot after nail care, avoiding lotion in between toes?
17	wear gloves when providing foot care and while rinsing and drying equipment?
18	store equipment, dispose of used linen(s) and trash appropriately and leave floor dry at completion of procedure?
19	remove gloves without contaminating self after rinsing and storing equipment?

Provide Foot Care to a Client	
20	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
21	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
22	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
23	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
24	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
25	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Help Dress a Client who has a Weak Arm	
The client is sitting in a chair when care begins for this skill. The client is able to stand. The client is already wearing a clean T-shirt and underwear, and needs to be dressed in a shirt, pants, socks and shoes. The role of the client is played by another candidate, and for the test, will be dressed over his/her own clothing.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	include client in choice about what to wear?
3	place shirt sleeve over weak arm before putting on non-affected arm?
4	cue client to assist with dressing?
5	have client seated when putting feet and legs into pants?
6	provide support to client when pulling up and securing pants?
7	provide assistance to put socks and shoes on client while seated?
8	leave socks smooth and shoes secured properly?
9	move client's extremities gently and naturally, avoiding overextension when dressing?
10	complete dressing with clothing secured and aligned properly?
11	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
12	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
13	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
14	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
15	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
16	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Put a Knee-high Stocking on a Client's Leg	
The client is lying in bed when care begins for this skill. For this test, the candidate is asked to put the stocking on only one leg. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	prepare stocking for application by turning sock inside out to at least the heel area?
3	place foot of stocking over toes, foot and heel?

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Put a Knee-high Stocking on a Client's Leg	
4	complete application of stocking over foot with the toes and heel in proper position per stocking design?
5	pull stocking up leg ensuring stocking is not twisted?
6	leave stocking smooth (wrinkle-free)?
7	leave room at toe area so that stocking is not tight against toes?
8	leave stocking raised to knee?
9	move client's leg gently, supporting extremity, and avoiding overextension, when applying elastic stocking?
10	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
11	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
12	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
13	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
14	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
15	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Provide Passive Range of Motion (ROM) Exercises to Client's Shoulder, Knee and Ankle	
The client is lying in bed when the care begins for this skill. For this test, the candidate is asked to provide exercises to only one side of the body. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	support the client's arm holding under elbow and wrist joints areas while exercising shoulder?
3	raise client's straightened arm from bed towards head of bed (HOB) and return back towards bed as one repetition (shoulder flexion/extension)?
4	move client's straightened arm away from side of body towards HOB and return toward side as one repetition (shoulder abduction/adduction)?
5	provide rotation exercise to the shoulder?
6	support the client's knee and ankle joints while exercising knee?
7	bend the client's knee back to point of resistance and then follow by straightening knee as one repetition (knee flexion/extension)?
8	support the client's ankle, holding under ankle area and foot, while exercising ankle?
9	push the foot forward towards leg, and in separate motion push the foot pointed down toward the foot of bed (FOB), as one repetition (ankle flexion/extension)?
10	provide three (3) repetitions of each shoulder, knee and ankle ROM exercise?
11	ask client about comfort level throughout exercises?
12	provide controlled, slow, gentle movements when exercising shoulder, knee and ankle?

Provide Passive Range of Motion (ROM) Exercises to Client's Shoulder, Knee and Ankle	
13	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
14	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
15	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
16	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
17	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
18	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Provide Perineal Care to a Female Client	
The client is lying in bed while this care is provided. The client is unable to assist with this care. Perineal care is provided using soap and water. For this test, the client is a female mannequin.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	use water that is a safe temperature to cleanse client?
3	apply gloves before cleansing perineal area?
4	use pad or towel to protect bottom sheet from becoming wet during procedure?
5	use soapy washcloth to cleanse perineal area?
6	use clean area on washcloth for each washing and rinsing stroke?
7	wipe perineal area from front to back for all cleansing and rinsing strokes?
8	keep water in basin soap-free for use as rinse water by: (1) washing with washcloth with soap applied directly to the washcloth instead of adding soap into basin of water; or (2) using two separate basins of water: one for washing and one rinsing?
9	rinse perineal area using a soap-free clean wet washcloth or soap-free area of the washcloth used to cleanse?
10	dry perineal area by patting with towel moving from front to back?
11	provide cleansing, rinsing and drying to include labial folds and extending into groin (skin-fold) area?
12	position client a safe distance from edge of bed when turned on side during care?
13	wash, rinse and dry peri-anal area and buttocks?
14	wipe from front to back when washing, rinsing and drying peri-anal area?
15	leave client on dry underpad or sheet at completion of procedure?
16	minimize exposure of the client's body during the procedure?
17	wear gloves while providing perineal care, while rinsing and drying equipment, and handling soiled linens?
18	rinse, dry and store basin, dispose of used linen(s) and trash appropriately at completion of procedure?
19	remove gloves without contaminating self after rinsing and storing equipment?

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Provide Perineal Care to a Female Client	
20	leave client covered with top sheet at completion of procedure?
21	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
22	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
23	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
24	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
25	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
26	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Provide Catheter Care to a Client with an Inserted Urinary Catheter	
The client is lying in bed while this care is provided. The client is unable to assist with this care. Catheter care is provided using soap and water. For this test, the client is a mannequin.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	use water that is a safe temperature to cleanse client?
3	apply gloves before handling catheter, tubing, urinary drainage bag or beginning cleansing?
4	use soapy washcloth to cleanse catheter?
5	change spot on washcloth for each washing and rinsing stroke?
6	cleanse and rinse catheter using wet washcloth moving in one direction from the opening (meatus) and downward away from the body?
7	keep water in basin soap-free for use as rinse water by: (1) washing with washcloth with soap applied directly to the washcloth instead of adding soap into basin of water; or (2) using two separate basins of water: one for washing and one rinsing?
8	wash and rinse at least 4" of catheter from opening (meatus) downward?
9	rinse cleansed area of catheter using a clean, wet, soap-free washcloth or soap-free clean area of the washcloth used to cleanse?
10	hold catheter near opening (meatus) to prevent tugging when washing and rinsing catheter?
11	leave skin areas that became wet during care and bed sheets dry at completion of procedure?
12	dry skin areas by patting?
13	leave catheter tubing free of kinks at completion of procedure?
14	keep urinary drainage bag positioned lower than bladder throughout care and at end of procedure?
15	minimize exposure of the client's body during the procedure?
16	position client a safe distance from edge of bed if turned on side during care?
17	wear gloves while providing catheter care, while rinsing and drying equipment and handling soiled linens?

Provide Catheter Care to a Client with an Inserted Urinary Catheter	
18	rinse, dry and store basin, dispose of used linen(s) and trash appropriately at completion of procedure?
19	remove gloves without contaminating self after rinsing and storing equipment?
20	leave client covered with top sheet at completion of procedure?
21	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
22	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
23	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
24	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
25	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
26	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Transfer a Client from a Bed into a Wheelchair	
The client is lying in bed when care begins for this skill. The client can bear weight, but cannot walk. The client's transfer requires a transfer (gait) belt. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	have wheelchair positioned near bed before assisting the client to sit?
3	assist client to apply non-skid footwear before standing?
4	provide support holding behind client's shoulders or back, and hips to help client sit up at edge of bed?
5	apply transfer (gait) belt before standing client for transfer to wheelchair?
6	apply transfer (gait) belt over clothing with fit to allow for placement of flat hand only between belt and client's body?
7	position wheelchair to allow for pivot with front interior wheel at side of bed, with chair parallel or slightly angled, before beginning transfer?
8	have the client's feet (wearing shoes) positioned flat on the floor before standing?
9	ensure footrests raised, removed or swung out of way before transferring client into wheelchair?
10	lock wheels before beginning transfer?
11	brace one or both of client's lower extremities when assisting to stand?
12	grasp gait belt on sides or around back when assisting client to stand and throughout transfer?
13	cue client to stand?
14	turn client upon standing so that back of legs are positioned centered against seat of wheelchair?
15	cue client to hold onto armrest(s) before sitting in wheelchair?
16	provide controlled gentle lowering into wheelchair seat?
17	complete transfer with client's hips positioned against the back of the wheelchair seat?
18	leave client seated in wheelchair in proper body alignment and with feet repositioned on footrests?

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Transfer a Client from a Bed into a Wheelchair	
19	remove gait belt after transfer complete?
20	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
21	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
22	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
23	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
24	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
25	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?

Turn and Reposition a Client who Must Stay in Bed, Onto His/Her Side	
The client is lying on his/her back in bed when care begins for this skill. The client needs help to turn and support to remain in a side-lying position. The role of the client is played by another candidate.	
Does the candidate:	
1	identify self to the client when beginning care?
2	hold client at hip and shoulder area when turning onto side?
3	position client a safe distance from edge of bed when turned onto side?
4	position device (e.g., padding, pillow) against back rolled and tucked to maintain client's side-lying position?
5	leave client in side-lying position, avoiding direct pressure on hipbone?

Turn and Reposition a Client who Must Stay in Bed, Onto His/Her Side	
6	use device (e.g., padding, pillow) to support top leg?
7	use device (e.g., padding, pillow) to maintain alignment of top hip?
8	leave top knee flexed?
9	leave ankles and knees separated?
10	leave client in side-lying position with head supported by pillow?
11	leave client's lower arm and shoulder free from being tucked under side?
12	support upper arm using padding or pillow?
13	leave client covered with top sheet at completion of procedure?
14	use infection control measures and Standard Precautions to protect the client and the HCA throughout procedure?
15	promote client's social and human needs throughout procedure?
16	promote client's rights throughout procedure?
17	promote client's safety throughout procedure?
18	promote client's comfort throughout procedure?
19	leave common use items within client's reach at end of care (e.g., phone, glasses, remote, tissues, glass of water)?