

Improving workplace engagement for better care

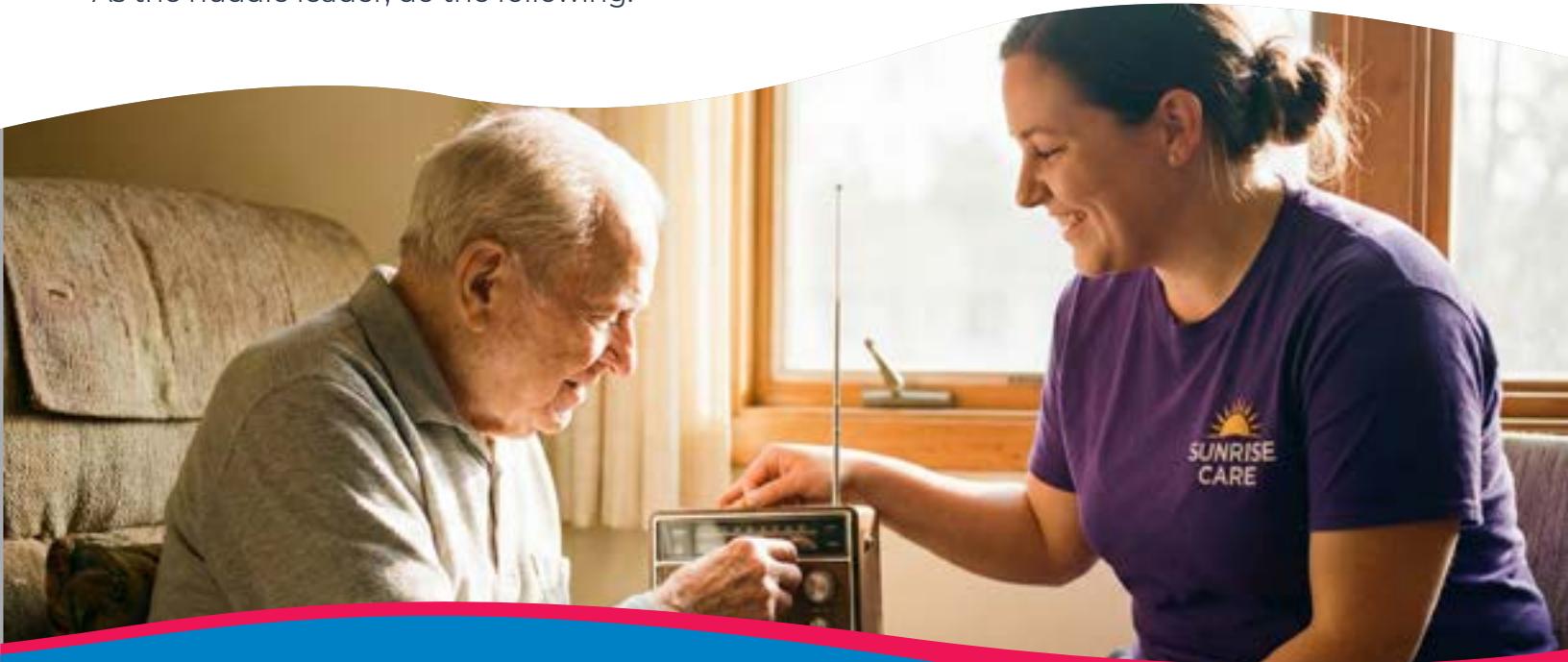
After this huddle, staff should be able to:

- **Describe** what engagement looks like in the workplace.
- **Recognize** how being engaged, or not engaged, affects their own well-being and resident or client care.
- **Identify** workplace factors that make it difficult to stay connected in the workplace.

How to run the safety huddle

As the huddle leader, do the following:

- Before the huddle, review the huddle content and huddle leader notes.
- Have resources ready, such as policies, employee assistance programs, or SafeCare BC resources.
- Choose a scenario that fits your workplace and read it aloud.
- Use the guiding questions to lead the discussion.
- Use huddle leader notes as support while leading the discussion.
- Keep the discussion short to about 5-10 minutes.



Definitions

Engagement in the workplace happens when employees feel a deep connection to their work and are motivated to do their job well. This connection can be **physical**, where you feel energized; **emotional**, where you feel passionate; or **cognitive**, where you are focused and absorbed in your tasks. Engaged employees are committed to their mission, which improves their own well-being and the quality of care provided to residents and clients.

Scenario for long-term care

Anika is a care aide at Bluebell Care Home. The unit is very busy today, and Anika finds herself rushing through her routines just to stay on schedule. While helping Mr. Thompson, who is usually cheerful but seems withdrawn today, she remembers he was a music teacher. She knows that taking five minutes to sit with him and find a jazz station on his radio would help him feel connected and calm. However, she is already 15 minutes behind, and her colleague, Priya, looks overwhelmed with her own heavy workload. Anika feels torn between her checklist and the human connection that makes her job feel meaningful. She stands at the door, wondering if she should stay or move to the next room.

Guiding questions for long-term care

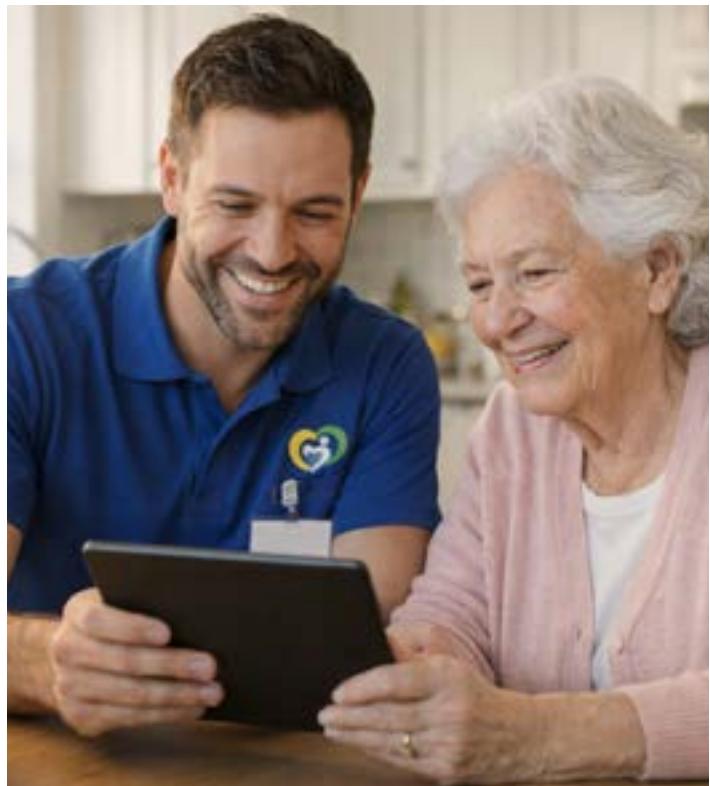
- How does Anika's connection to Mr. Thompson show she is engaged in her work?
- What workplace factors make it hard for Anika to stay motivated when things get busy?
- How would skipping this moment of connection affect Anika's well-being by the end of her shift?

Facilitation tip: If staff focus only on "not having enough time," acknowledge that the environment is demanding. Redirect the talk to how small "emotional" connections can actually provide a "physical" source of energy for the staff member.

Scenario for home care

Sam is a home support worker visiting Mrs. Kowalski to help with meal prep. Recently, Sam

has felt a bit disconnected, feeling like his work is just a list of chores. While cleaning, he notices Mrs. Kowalski hasn't touched her library books. She mentions her eyesight is failing, and she misses her book club. Sam knows his role is focused on the house, but he sees a chance to help her look into an audiobook program. However, he has a tight travel schedule and needs to get across town for his next client. He wants to be helpful but feels caught between his set tasks and his desire to improve his client's quality of life..



Guiding questions for home care

- How could Sam's interest in the audiobook program improve Mrs. Kowalski's well-being?
- What is one small change Sam could make to his routine to feel more connected to his clients?

Safety huddle | Improving workplace engagement

- How can Sam's supervisor support him in finding a balance between tasks and meaningful engagement?

Facilitation tip: Encourage the team to see engagement as a “shared responsibility”. If someone mentions feeling “burnt out,” share information about available resources like the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Huddle leader notes

1. Create a safe space:

- Listen, respect all views, and be mindful of others' challenges.
- Guide the discussion to focus on what participants can control.
- Move the conversation from complaints to solutions, strengths, and helpful actions.
- Invite anyone with specific concerns to talk with you after the huddle.

2. Key discussion points:

Use the objectives and key discussion points below to guide the huddle if needed.

- Start the huddle with a positive atmosphere and let everyone know their ideas are valuable.
- Share that everyone plays a part in

creating a motivating and supportive work environment.

- Discuss how being engaged acts as a key factor in psychological health and safety.

Additional resources

SafeCare BC | *Psychological health and safety policy*: A ready-to-use template to help employers support mental health in the workplace.

SafeCare BC | *Organizational culture safety huddle*: This safety huddle discusses how a strong organizational culture can foster employee engagement, collaboration, and productivity.

SafeCare BC | *Wellness and support guide*: Resources and services to support your well-being and psychological safety at work.

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health | *Putting engagement on the agenda*: Learn how to facilitate a team discussion to address and improve engagement in the workplace.

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health | *Evidence-based actions for engagement*: These actions and responses can be implemented with a minimal investment of resources or cost to the organization.



