Dignity in care

To treat someone with dignity is to treat them as being of worth, in a way that is respectful of them as valued individuals.

When someone is being cared for their dignity can be promoted or compromised by their physical surroundings, the attitudes of those looking after them and the way care activities are carried out. The responsibility of maintaining dignity falls on carers, whether they are family members or health professionals.

People with their dignity respected feel in control, valued, confident and able to make decisions for themselves. Everyone has equal worth as human beings and dignity shouldn't be compromised because someone has dementia and may lack the ability to make decisions for themselves.

At Waypoints all our staff are trained and expected to respect dignity of residents at all times by following these key principles:

- **Give as much choice and control as possible to those in our care**

- **Communicate clearly with courtesy and crucially – listen and support residents to express their own needs and wants**

- **Ensure personal hygiene**

- **Encourage as much independence as possible whether it is safe free movement within the home environment or encouraging residents to make their own choices about their meals or which activities they would like to get involved with**

- **Encourage active participation in social and community life**

- **Respect the residents' right to privacy which can be as simple as knocking on the door before entering a resident's room or not having a sensitive discussion in a communal area**

- **Recognise and effectively manage signs of pain, discomfort or distress**

It helps greatly to know how to spot the triggers and early signs when a cared for person is agitated, confused or needs reassurance. Dignity can be maintained by the response to changes in behaviour. For example, someone with dementia may be in a time or place different to what is the reality. If their perceived reality is a good place and they are happy what would be the benefit of jolting them back into reality or correcting them?

Contact Waypoints Care Group on 01425 486 760 or visit www.waypoints-care.co.uk