

Senior Sensitivity Training Kit - Facilitator Instructions

Inside the Kit:

1. Patient information sheet
2. Pill bottle filled with M&Ms
3. 1 set of vision Impairment glasses (can be obtained from www.lighthouse.org)
4. 1 set of garden gloves
5. 1 pair of earplugs
6. 2 tongue depressors
7. 1 ace bandage
8. 1 snack-size baggie of popcorn kernels
9. Pen

Suggested Session Duration: 30 – 60 minutes (depending on the number of activities)

Objective: To become sensitive and knowledgeable about elderly patients.

History: Developed originally by a non-branded department of Pfizer in the mid-nineties and adapted by SCAN.

Activities:

I. Disability Experience (4 versions)

Supplies: Vision impairment glasses, gloves, pill bottle with M&Ms, tongue depressors, bandage.

Exercise 1: Have participants put on gloves and glasses and attempt to remove a blue, yellow and green M&M out of the pill bottle. Discuss the experience.

Exercise 2: Have participants put some corn kernels in their **left** shoe. At the same time have them put the 2 tongue depressors on either side of their **right** knee and wrap it with a bandage. This activity is to simulate foot pain due to arthritis or other conditions as well as knee immobility. Have participants walk down the hallway. Discuss the experience.

Exercise 3: Instruct participants to immobilize the wrist of their dominant hand using the tongue depressors and bandage and ask them to perform simple tasks like buttoning their shirt. You can also ask them to write something with their non-dominant hand. Discuss the experience

Exercise 4: Instruct participants to immobilize their dominant arm with the bandage and attempt to use the restroom. Discuss the experience.

Discuss: Prompt discussion of how these various experiences change understanding of and sensitivity to elderly conditions, and how they affect day to day activities of the elderly.

Prompt Question:

II. Vision Experience

Supplies: Vision impairment glasses, gloves, the patient information sheet and a pen

Exercise: Set timer for 2 minutes. Have participants put on the gloves and the vision impairment glasses and attempt to fill out the patient information sheet in 2 minutes time.

Discuss: Have participants discuss their experience in trying to fill out the form. What kind of vision impairments did different participants experience? What are the lessons from this about the patient? Review some of the most common vision impairments (refer to PPT).

If time allows go into more detail about how many people have these conditions and expand discussion into diabetes, the association of vision impairment with falls, etc. Note that some falls are a direct result of vision impairments.

Prompt Question: What can you do? Ex. Geriatric clinics should have vibrant contrasting colors that are easier to see. Good illumination in waiting area where patients may be filling out forms; high intensity lights, low glare; forms should be clear and legible, etc.

III. Hearing Experience

a. *Lip Reading/Hearing Exercise*

Supplies: Earplugs

Exercise: Have participants insert earplugs into their ears. Say different phrases at different volume levels, first facing the participants, then facing away from the participants.

Discuss: Have participants discuss their experience in trying to hear what is being said. Discuss most common types of hearing loss (refer to PPT)

Prompt Question: What can you do? Make sure you enunciate and speak clearly. Face the person to whom you are speaking so they can read your lips while trying to hear and so that sound is traveling more directly.

b. *The “Unfair Hearing Test”*

Supplies: CD with test audio (in your binder), paper with columns A-C, pen

Exercise: Have participants insert earplugs into their ears. The audio will play the same 10 words 3 times. The first to simulate slight high frequency hearing loss, the second just soft spoken but as if you have normal hearing and the third as if you were using a hearing aid with more high frequencies added in.

Discuss: Have participants discuss their experience in trying to hear and write down the words correctly.

Prompt Question: What can you do? Make sure to assess hearing in patients to make sure they can actually hear what you are saying to them and any medical instructions you may be giving.