

RESPONDING TO VISITOR EMOTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS

- **Before the huddle:** print a few copies of the Responding to Visitor Emotions handout to share with staff.
- **During the huddle:** read the scenario aloud to staff. Then, using the handout as a guide, discuss how care staff could respond if they were in Jasmine's position.

AFTER THIS HUDDLE

Staff should be able to:

- Understand why visitors may experience different emotions during their first visit after a long absence.
- Be able to respond appropriately if confronted by visitors who is experiencing intense emotions.

NOTES TO THE HUDDLE LEADER

- Emphasize the importance of active listening and using validation to make the visitor feel understood.
- Consider asking the group to share their experiences with handling visitor conversations and the strategies they use.

SCENARIO

Julia, Mrs. M's daughter, has just arrived for a visit with her mother. Julia was not assigned as her mother's designated visitor during COVID-19, so it's been over a year since they've seen each other. After 10 minutes of sitting with her mother, Julia gets up to find the nearest care aide – Jasmine. Without introducing herself, Julia starts shouting at Jasmine. "What on earth have you people been doing with my mother over the past year! Have you even been feeding her? She is so thin and frail. She wasn't like that before! And she is so unhappy—she won't even look at me. Does she even know who I am?"

RESOURCE

[A. Responding to Visitor Emotions](#)

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What might be causing Julia's emotional reaction?
- How would you respond if you were in Jasmine's position?
- What strategies could you use to diffuse the situation?
- What policies are in place to promote respectful communication? If the situation escalates, what are your rights?