



Unit 18 — Elderly Care

Reading: Elderly Care

As a result of modern medicine finding new cures and treatments for illnesses and diseases which used to be incurable, a new challenge has presented itself in the form of an aging population. The increase in the number of people living into their 80s, 90s and beyond has led to a greater demand for professional eldercare workers and geriatric specialists.

If you are considering a career in either of these specialties, there are a few things you should know.

Working with the elderly, whether in a hospital setting, a hospice or in residential care can be incredibly rewarding but it takes a special skill-set to cope physically and emotionally. On the physical side, care workers need to have the strength to turn bedridden patients so as to avoid the patient developing bedsores and to help infirm patients to the bathroom when needed, while also being aware that patients who are suffering from osteoporosis must be moved in a careful manner. Whereas from the emotional side, all care workers need to be able to connect with their patients and offer them companionship.

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Discussion Questions

What are the specific challenges of working with the elderly?

Do you agree that eldercare work could be more rewarding than other areas of health care? Why/ why not?

In your opinion, should elderly relative live with the family or should they live in a specialist care home? Why?