

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS ON MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR THE ELDERLY

The C.R.P.N.M. believes that the following principles are basic to the care of the aging population:

1. The focus of health care for elderly persons should be the support and nurturance of normal healthy aging, including the promotion of good mental health.
2. All persons have the right to have a complete range of health care services available to them:
this implies a holistic approach with appropriate therapeutic, restorative, life enrichment and health maintenance programs, which may be utilized at any given point along the health care continuum, and which are provided by teams of appropriately prepared health care providers.
3. All persons have the right to care provided with empathy and with a nonjudgmental attitude. This includes acknowledgment of the uniqueness of individuals and respect for their rights, beliefs, and values.
4. All persons have the right to safety, privacy, optimum independence, confidentiality, personal respect, and maximum autonomy based on ability.
5. All persons have the right to complete health assessments to ensure early recognition and treatment of risk factors and symptoms of mental health problems. Included in the assessment is attention to physical, psychological, cognitive, emotional, social and spiritual strengths and needs.
6. All persons have the right to participate in developing the plan of care and to receive feedback about progress following participation in the regular evaluation of the care plan by the treatment team.
7. All persons have the right to care and treatment by individuals who have a complete understanding of the interactions of the physical and psychological health spheres and the effect of distress in one sphere upon the other. Those who provide this care must recognize the validity of emotional health problems and be committed to prevention and treatment.
8. Optimal health care is dependent upon the knowledge and skills of all care providers. Such expertise is developed through professional educational programs and orientation and continuing education opportunities which are current, appropriate, and relevant.

Health teaching, public awareness, consultation, and written/verbal communication are essential to the promotion of total health and the provision of care to the whole person.

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