

PAC is Listening

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As we move into the cooler months of the year, PAC continues to keep things sizzling. We have worked hard to assess and reassess the services and resources which will meet the needs of those we serve. If you have checked out our website lately, you might have noticed changes in the *Store* tab under ***Dementia Education for Professionals***. Prior to COVID, we were developing online learning as an option that would allow facilities and organizations to stream video with a package of options that includes additional learning materials, a quiz, and a certificate of completion with individual access to the content. Organizations appreciate the convenience of a leader being able to monitor the learning progress of their staff digitally.

When COVID made its grand entrance in the spring of 2020, the need for convenient and remote learning became even more pressing. Dementia training requirements continued to be a necessity for those providing care in facilities. Staff began working longer shifts, doing some work from home, and restricting the size of gatherings for in-service training. We accelerated the process and worked even more diligently to provide a variety of online-group learning videos that would meet those needs. One of the most popular online group learning courses currently is our COVID series which addresses the issue of proactive approaches to keep staff and residents safe, while providing care and meaningful connections. Each **GEMS State** of dementia is addressed, with tips on adapting your response for each level.

We continue to hear from facilities about increased staff responsibilities and new time-consuming procedures. While PAC skills are valued and attempts are being made to consistently use **Positive Physical Approach™**, **Hand-under-Hand®** and **Positive Action Starters**, if those skills were not already being used, it becomes more challenging to integrate them into practice. Under stress, we typically default to our usual practices, the familiar, not a new skill we just saw on a video. The irony is that the use of PAC philosophy and techniques is needed now more than ever to make the most of brief interactions and provide care on a tight schedule. New skills and ideas, as spectacular as they are, will not be effective if never put into practice. In an attempt to help build new habits in small bites, we have developed mini-skills training sessions that are paired with the online group learning. Staff watch an online video, then meet weekly or monthly with a PAC mentor virtually to practice skills. The staff group can be up to six staff members per session. This allows the interactive coaching piece that helps to reinforce and integrate new skills into practice. We are hoping that by supporting organizations seeking to use PAC techniques in this new way, staff can build their skills conveniently with our support.

We will continue to listen and adapt to the needs of the professionals we serve. If you have a suggestion about a service or resource that would help you achieve your dementia care goals, [please connect with us!](#)