

Neuropathy Awareness – Carer Training Handout

This handout supports the Neuropathy Awareness Training session. It provides carers with a quick reference guide to understanding neuropathy, recognising symptoms, and supporting individuals safely and respectfully.

What is Neuropathy?

Neuropathy is damage to the nerves that affects how signals travel between the brain and the body. It most commonly affects the feet and legs but can also affect the hands and arms. Neuropathy can cause pain, numbness, tingling, weakness, or loss of sensation.

Common Symptoms

- 1 Burning, stabbing, or shooting pain
- 2 Tingling or pins and needles
- 3 Numbness or reduced sensation
- 4 Weakness in arms or legs
- 5 Sensitivity to touch

Why Neuropathy is a Risk in Care

- 1 Clients may not feel injuries such as cuts or pressure areas
- 2 Higher risk of falls due to weakness or balance issues
- 3 Increased risk of pressure sores when mobility is limited
- 4 Pain may limit repositioning and movement

How Carers Can Support Safely

- 1 Explain all care tasks before touching or moving the person
- 2 Move slowly and follow the moving and handling care plan
- 3 Use the correct equipment such as slide sheets or hoists
- 4 Work as a team when multiple carers are required

Skin and Pressure Care

- 1 Check skin regularly for redness, swelling, or damage
- 2 Pay particular attention to heels, ankles, legs, buttocks, and sacrum
- 3 Ensure limbs are fully supported and not hanging from the bed
- 4 Keep bedding clean, dry, and crease-free

Medication Awareness

Clients with neuropathy are often prescribed medications such as Pregabalin or Gabapentin to reduce nerve pain. Possible side effects include drowsiness, dizziness, fatigue, or confusion.

Carers should report any unusual changes in alertness or behaviour.

When to Escalate Concerns

- 1 Sudden increase in pain
- 2 New wounds or pressure sores
- 3 Swelling, redness, or signs of infection
- 4 Changes in mobility or ability to move limbs
- 5 Changes in alertness after medication

Key Points for Carers

- 1 Neuropathy affects nerve signals and can cause pain or numbness
- 2 Clients may not feel injuries, so regular checks are essential
- 3 Movement may be painful – always follow the care plan
- 4 Report any changes or concerns immediately