

## DICE: A Tool for Understanding and Responding to Behavior

<b>DICE:</b>	<b>Patient</b>	<b>Caregiver</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<p><b>Describe</b> what happens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the patient do?</li> <li>• How does the patient feel about it?</li> <li>• Is the patient’s safety at risk?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How distressing is the behavior?</li> <li>• Is the behavior threatening your safety?</li> <li>• Is the behavior causing harm or bringing up bad memories?</li> <li>• How do you respond to the behavior?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who was there when the behavior occurred?</li> <li>• When did the behavior occur and how did this relate to other events (e.g. while bathing or at mealtime)?</li> <li>• Where did the behavior occur?</li> <li>• What happened before and after the behavior?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Investigate</b> possible causes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any recent changes in medications?</li> <li>• Limits in ability to do things?</li> <li>• Medical condition (e.g. pain or infection)?</li> <li>• Unmet need (hungry, tired, bored, lonely, constipated, hearing or vision loss)?</li> <li>• Underlying mental health issue?</li> <li>• Severity of cognitive impairment or memory problems?</li> <li>• Fear, loss of control, embarrassment?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could you be misunderstanding the behavior (e.g. thinking the person is “doing this on purpose”)?</li> <li>• Could you try responding to the behavior differently?</li> <li>• Are your expectations realistic based on the person’s current abilities?</li> <li>• Are you dealing with other stressors or mood issues?</li> <li>• Are there family or cultural issues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over stimulating environment (noise, clutter, crowds, activities, distractions)</li> <li>• Boring environment (socially isolated, limited activity)</li> <li>• Disorienting environment or lack of helpful visual cues?</li> <li>• Change in routine or lack of a daily routine?</li> <li>• Activities or tasks do not match current abilities or interests?</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Create</b> a plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to possible unmet needs</li> <li>• Discontinue any high-risk medications</li> <li>• Follow-up with primary care provider about potential medical causes</li> <li>• Optimize treatment of mental health issues</li> <li>• Promote activity during the day and rest at night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek information and support</li> <li>• Enhance communication</li> <li>• Create meaningful activities</li> <li>• Simplify tasks</li> <li>• Practice self-care</li> <li>• Get more help (paid or unpaid)</li> <li>• Talk through worst-case scenario to determine real risks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the environment is safe</li> <li>• Simplify the environment (reduce clutter)</li> <li>• Set up the environment for the task at hand</li> <li>• Enhance the environment (labels, notes, pictures, color contrast or camouflage)</li> <li>• Create a “command center” for important things (keys, wallet/purse, phone, water, snacks, activities)</li> <li>• Improve accessibility (grab bars, raised seats)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluate</b> the plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any new treatments or strategies?</li> <li>• What worked?</li> <li>• Have there been any unintended side effects?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was tried? Was it helpful or not?</li> <li>• Are there any barriers to trying something else?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What changes have been made? Were the changes helpful or not?</li> <li>• Are there any barriers to making changes?</li> </ul>

Adapted from: Fraker, J., Kales, H. C., Blazek, M., Kavanagh, J., & Gitlin, L. N. (2014). *The Role of the Occupational Therapist in the Management of Neuropsychiatric Symptoms of Dementia in Clinical Settings*. *Occupational Therapy in Health Care*, 28(1), 4–20. doi:10.3109/07380577.2013.867468