

## Recognising Signs of Deterioration

As a carer you will have a lot of contact with the people you care for and you may see them more often than their designated health professionals or even family members. That's why it's important to recognise and report any physical or behavioural changes.

To be able to recognise changes in a resident's condition or needs, you must be a good observer. And to observe people, you must use all your senses to look out for anything out of the ordinary. For example, you should look for any:

- Increase in drowsiness
- Increase in dizziness, weakness, feeling faint
- Increase in confusion or aggression
- New smells or sounds
- Unusual swellings or lumps
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Difficulty with swallowing

It's a good idea to ask residents whether they have noticed any changes as well. Talking to the resident may also explain why there has been a change (e.g. they are sleepy because they stayed up watching TV).

If you notice a change in a resident's condition you should always note it and report the change to the RN.



Figure 1 Photo Credit WACHS Photo Library