

# Tips and techniques for reducing escalation



**TIP 1** Escalation is often an expression of unmet emotional and/or physical needs. Attempt to **discover underlying cause** for the concerning behavior.

**TIP 2** Don't worry alone. **Get help early and often** to support the patient and yourself.

**TIP 3** Remember your **resources** *Restraints and Seclusion Policy- Alternatives to Restraints and/or Continual Visual Observation (Appendix A)*

**TIP 4** Follow the **strategies below** when communicating with someone who is escalating...

## Remain calm

- Pause and breathe
- Maintain or lower the stimuli in the environment (low lighting, few people, low noise level)
- Speak clearly, directly, but softly – no arguing

## Listen

- Listen more than speak. Allow them to vent frustration
- Validate patient's distress as a normal response to a stressful situation

## Focus on the need, not the behavior

- What can you do or say to help resolve the patient's concern
- Comply with patient requests when possible
- Offer alternatives if what the patient is asking for is unavailable
- Keep your message simple

## Be Mindful of your body language

- Be aware of your own body language and facial expressions
- Keep your hands visible
- Don't let your "buttons" get pushed
- Respect personal space

## Show that you care

- Be patient
- Give your full attention
- Reassure the person that you are here to help
- Empathize

## Stay positive

- Expect an optimal outcome for the patient and yourself
- Use positive and helpful statements:  
"I want to help you."  
"What can I do to help you feel more comfortable right now?"