

## Meeting Advancing Excellence Goals with The Eden Alternative®

### *Process Goal: Use Medications Appropriately*

*by Denise Hyde*

**Description & rationale:** Medications, when used appropriately, help promote the resident's highest practicable mental, physical, and psychosocial well-being. Inappropriate use of medications can compromise a resident's well-being and even cause death. Initially this goal will focus on medications that are used to control behaviors, such as anti-psychotic drugs. Working on this goal will provide the nursing home staff with alternative non-pharmacological interventions for residents who otherwise would be treated with anti-psychotic medications. The result will be better health for residents.



**How The Eden Alternative strengthens this goal:** This is Principle Seven of The Eden Alternative. Wise use of medications is something that Dr. Bill Thomas speaks about frequently. Medications can do amazing things to prolong and improve the lives of individuals. It is when they are given through the filter of genuine human caring that they provide their best effects. Principles One, Three, Four, and Five create awareness that medications are often being used to treat the pain of loneliness, helplessness, and boredom. Medications do nothing to eliminate these plagues. It is only through the implementation of all Ten Principles that personal and organizational transformation can take place and create home. Eden Registry Members find that when they are able to transform their organization and provide the antidotes to the Three Plagues, the need for medications goes down dramatically.

- The Eden Alternative has woven steps and tools into the Path to Mastery Milestones 3 and 4 to support ongoing efforts to optimize medication use to the needs of each individual.
- *Dementia Beyond Drugs*, 2-day training from The Eden Alternative, really focuses on the care of individuals living with dementia. This includes tools and ideas on how to assess the environment in order to implement changes that decrease the need for unnecessary medications.
- The Eden Alternative website has a Research and Data page where data about how the implementation of the Philosophy can reduce the use of unnecessary medications.
- *Life Worth Living* by Dr. Bill Thomas has data from the first Eden Alternative study done in New York State, which includes data on medication usage.
- Some Eden Alternative Mentors who have expertise in medication review and reduction can assist organization seeking to improve this measure.
- *The Art of Creating a Caring Community with Dr. Bill Thomas* is a 2.5 hour DVD has six vignettes specific to Principle Seven, including one entitled, "Wise Use of Medications."