# Conflict Handout

Conflict

* Whenever two or more people disagree on an issue.
* Serious conflicts can be very stressful for the people involved.
* The positive side of conflict is that in the process of managing conflict, people can develop more open ways of working together.
* The goal of conflict is to come to a decision that is of benefit to both parties.

Causes of conflict

* Tension between groups (men and women; among team members)
* Increase workload
* Threat to safety and security (layoffs)
* Cultural differences
* Invasion of personal space

Groups in which conflict occurs

* Between two team members
* Between two groups (dietary and housekeeping)
* Between health care providers and clients/visitors
* Between two hospitals

Communication skills that are used when managing conflict

* Describe the problem as specifically as possible to avoid distortion
* Avoid describing solutions when identifying the problem
* Consider the problem to be mutual, not one-sided.
* Identify the differences between each party before solving the conflict.
* See the problem form the other side’s point of view.
* Use brainstorming to find solutions instead of the first or most convenient solution.
* Select the solution that meets all parties’ needs and all possible consequences.
* Reach an agreement about how the conflict is to end and not recur.
* Evaluate the solution.

Reference:

Tappen, R. , Weiss, S., & Whitehead, D. (1998). Essentials of nursing leadership and management. Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis.