

# Five Best PSW Job Interview Questions

*by Avtar Sidhu*

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*A website providing you all the information that you need related to the Personal Support Worker profession in Ontario, Canada.*

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“If at any point while you’re reading this guide you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

You can best reach me at

[avatar@pswhq.com](mailto:avatar@pswhq.com)

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## How would you know if a resident is ok to eat solids, or needs their food pureed to avoid choking?

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### How to best answer the question?

For this question it's important to take a holistic approach.

A patient's care is the responsibility of the Nurse, Doctor, and PSWs. All of these individuals must take a collaborative approach when determining how to best care for a patient or resident.

Make sure you demonstrate your knowledge of this in your answer.

### A sample response.

Typically, in the long-term care facility where I currently work the nurse prescribes the type of food consistency a resident should be eating.

I do take notice of residents and watch if their behaviors are changing and they are having more of a difficult time chewing or feeding themselves.

It is important to encourage self-care skills for as long as possible for a patient's longevity and dignity, but we also need to be careful that they are not at risk of choking.

Also, there are other health factors such as whether a resident has teeth or the cognitive or physical abilities to chew solid foods. Again, if I was not sure, I would speak with the nurse or doctor to confirm and ensure the resident receives the proper meal.

**The rationale behind the response included.**

This response is thorough and shows that as a PSW you are very concerned with ensuring a resident receives the proper meal.

Giving a patient who can eat solids pureed food will result in a frustrated resident and can negatively affect their dignity and enjoyment of their meal.

On the other hand, giving someone solids who should be eating puree could create a serious choking hazard.

*Demonstrating to your interviewer that you understand the impact that providing the correct food items has on the care of your patients or residents is extremely important.*

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## **What would you do in a situation where a long-term care resident's family member is upset and feels that staff are not attending to the needs of his or her family member?**

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### **How to best answer the question?**

It's important to demonstrate to your interviewer that as a compassionate caregiver you can extend this compassion and understanding to a patient or resident's family.

The family is likely in a vulnerable emotional state as they are dealing with a loved one who is sick and not the same as they once were.

The best answer demonstrates that you can take a big picture approach to this and not respond in a defensive manner.

### **A sample response.**

I would take the time to listen to the family member and express that I understand their concerns. I would try to offer solutions to their problems, and also ask what they feel the best solutions are. I would speak in a soft tone and show genuine concern.

I would try to work with them to come up with something that is mutually acceptable and reasonable.

**The rationale behind the response included.**

This shows that you can maturely listen and support family members who are going through an emotional time and not take things personally.

Often family members expect personal care workers to go above and beyond for their loved one, without always understanding that these workers are often caring for upwards of 30 patients or residents at one time.

Showing empathy, understanding, and offering a solution is the best response.

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**On your shift you notice two residents fighting. The fight is verbal but is quickly escalating. What will you do?**

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**How to best answer the question?**

In this case, the interviewer will want to see if you would be comfortable handling a difficult situation such as this.

There are two scenarios here, first, you may have experienced this problem before and can provide a specific example of how you effectively resolved this in the past.

The second scenario may be that you are fresh out of school and have only textbook knowledge of how to manage a situation like this.

If you have experience, explain what you have done and what you have found has worked.

If you do not have experience, it is best to be honest and say that although you have not yet encountered this scenario, explain how you would go about resolving the fight.

**A sample response.**

In my training at (Insert name of setting where your training occurred) I worked with a Senior PSW who had to intervene with two female elderly residents who were raising their voices at each other.

What I learned from this situation is that you need to approach the individuals and try to calm them both down and separate them if needed.

It is important to stop the disagreement as soon as possible as not only could it escalate to something physical, but also it is likely disruptive and upsetting to other residents in the area.

**The rationale behind the response included.**

This answer demonstrates that you have witnessed this type of situation occurring and you are confident that you would be able to resolve the problem should it occur.

Keep in mind with these types of questions, your interviewer could dig a little deeper and ask for more specifics, so it is important to be prepared.

Again, you want to demonstrate your ability to remain calm and professional in every situation.

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## How do you maintain a positive attitude in difficult situations?

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### How to best answer the question?

Working as a support worker can be tiring and trying at times.

Its physically and mentally demanding, so it is important to have stress coping mechanisms and a positive attitude to ensure that you always remain calm, courteous and respectful when dealing with your clients no matter how tough your day is.

### A sample response.

On days when I have a lot going on, and I encounter many obstacles, it is important for me to take a step back and take a deep breath.

I try to re-frame the situation I am in, and to look at the positive outcome of the work I am doing.

I am providing dignified care to people that need my help, and without me they would be much worse off.

I am providing care that their family cannot provide and for this their family is grateful.

I am doing good and continuing to be patient and positive with my clients will help ensure they are cared for and I can feel good about the work I am doing.

**The rationale behind the response included.**

The reason why this is a strong response is that you are demonstrating that you are realistic in that you understand some days will be tough, and you have been there before.

*You are also showing that you have ways to cope and stay positive when times get tough which shows the employer that you are resilient and will be able to provide the care required to the company's clients no matter what.*

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## **Have you ever worked on a team where someone wasn't holding up their end of the workload? How did you handle it?**

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### **How to best answer the question?**

The best response to this question shows that you are a team player. You want to demonstrate that you are capable of motivating others and inspiring others to work together as a team.

### **A sample response.**

If I felt overloaded and noticed that a team member appeared to be working with a lighter load, I would politely ask for help. I notice that when you create a mutually beneficial work relationship with someone its often quite effective.

I would point out that I could really use their assistance to get through the workload I have and that if they are able to help me I can also help them with their work if they ever are overloaded.

On days when I have a lot going on, and I encounter many obstacles, it is important for me to take a step back and take a deep breath.

**The rationale behind the response included.**

It is imperative to show that you are not going to run to management whenever you have a problem. Managers like to hire staff who can demonstrate maturity and can sort through their own interpersonal issues on their own as much as possible before escalating to them.

*Also, it is important to demonstrate that you are a team player in that if someone is able to help you out when you are in need, you will definitely return the favour.*

## Closing Remarks

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We at *Personal Support Worker Headquarters* want to wish you the best of luck with your next job interview!

We're confident that if you follow the tips above you will give yourself the best chance of landing your next job.

Good luck!

*The PSWHQ Team*

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