

A comparison of nursing home staff who use a person-centered perspective to those who use a standard paradigm perspective on related stress

Author: Christian White, DO

Mentors: Stephen Scheinthal, DO, Sherry Pomerantz, PhD.

University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-School of Osteopathic Medicine

Abstract

Introduction: Literature indicates that staff attitudes towards aggression in dementia are complex and may adversely affect patient care and the caregivers' stress. Two general attitudes are described, the standard approach (i.e., behaviors are a manifestation of the disease itself) and the person-centered approach (i.e., psychosocial factors play a role in the patient's experience of dementia). The aim of this study was to explore the difference between caregivers with a person-centered approach (PCgroup) and those with a standard approach (STgroup) on perceptions of stress and the numbers of requests for psychiatric consultation in the long term care setting.

Methods: Nurses and nurses aides in six facilities provided demographic information and completed the Management of Aggression in People with Dementia Questionnaire (MAPDAQ) to assess their approach to patient care as well as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). **Results:**

Based on preliminary findings, of the 57 who completed the MAPDAQ, 37 could be categorized (25 (68%) in PC group; and 12 (32%) in STgroup). PSS scores differed between the groups (PCgroup 14.3 (sd = 8); STgroup 17.6 (sd = 8.3), $p > 0.05$) as did the frequencies in any psychiatric consult (PCgroup N = 11 (44%); STgroup N = 7 (58%), $p > 0.05$). **Conclusion:**

Taking a PC approach to a demented agitated patient may lead to less stress and fewer consults, however the limited number of subjects in this preliminary analysis prevent us from drawing any significant conclusions. The study suggests efforts could be taken to educate staff toward a PC approach and potentially lead to less staff turnover.