

Title of Project

Changing the Culture of the Nursing Home: Pilot Project on Special Care Dementia Units

PI/Project Director

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Nursing Homes Involved

Sarah Neuman Center for Healthcare and Rehabilitation

Description of Intervention

The goal of the project was to examine the effects of a pilot culture change initiative on two nursing home special care dementia units based on the BASICS/EDGE model, which is a biopsychosocial framework of strengths-based care aimed at helping staff to support needs, remaining abilities, and relationships.

The intervention consisted of community building, environmental change, and communication/dissemination efforts. Two traditional nursing units were transformed into Our Communities of Caring, each with a centralized coordinator. Restaurant style dining replaced tray service. The décor, furniture, and plans were selected by consensus of staff, family, and residents. Spa renovations were undertaken to provide a calm/soothing environment for showering. More than 400 presentations/trainings on culture change and the EDGE model were provided to staff, residents, families, and the community. Newsletters were circulated to provide staff support, esteem promotion, recognition, and culture change information. An EDGE Training Manual/DVD was also developed and distributed to all nursing homes in New York State.

Additional information is available at: <http://www.nyhealth.gov/diseases/conditions/dementia/edge/>

Research Design

Research Method – Single group design with repeated measures (three intervals over a period of two years). It was hypothesized that the intervention would be associated with increases in resident satisfaction and indicators of positive affect, as well as decreases in behavior problems, medication use, unplanned weight loss, unplanned declines in activities of daily living, and physical restraint use. Staff and family satisfaction were also expected to increase, with decreased turnover/use of agency LPN/RN staff.

Sample – 62 residents from two special care dementia care units at Sarah Neuman. Informed consent was provided by an identified family member.

Measures – At each of three intervals, the Apparent Affect Rating Scale and the Cohen Mansfield Agitation Inventory were completed by two certified nursing assistants from the day/evening shift. A research assistant obtained data on the other resident outcomes via medical records. Staff/family satisfaction surveys were also administered.

Analysis Approach – A series of repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted on all measures. For comparisons between only two data collection points (due to attrition) independent samples t-tests were used.

Results

Significant improvements were evidenced for the positive affect of residents, declines in activities of daily living, and restraint use ($p \leq .05$). Behavior, medication use, and unplanned weight loss remained unchanged. Declining staff satisfaction over the course of the project was attributed to the process of culture change rather than any specific aspect of the intervention. Significant reductions in turnover rates and the use of agency nurses were reported. Families indicated a consistently high level of satisfaction with care, which may account for the lack of any other change findings associated with the project.

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