

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEMENTIA CARE IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The quality of life and care for persons with dementia isn't always optimal within the healthcare system and can be challenging for caregivers and healthcare providers. Patients with dementia suffer from memory loss and cognitive impairment, disabling them from making decisions. Often, decisions and treatment plans that are made by the caregivers are not originated from the patient's own will, creating turmoil throughout the care. Person-centered care for dementia focuses on creating a more positive environment for the patient and the caregivers by valuing patient's needs. This poster will discuss how person-centered dementia care should be implemented into clinical practice.

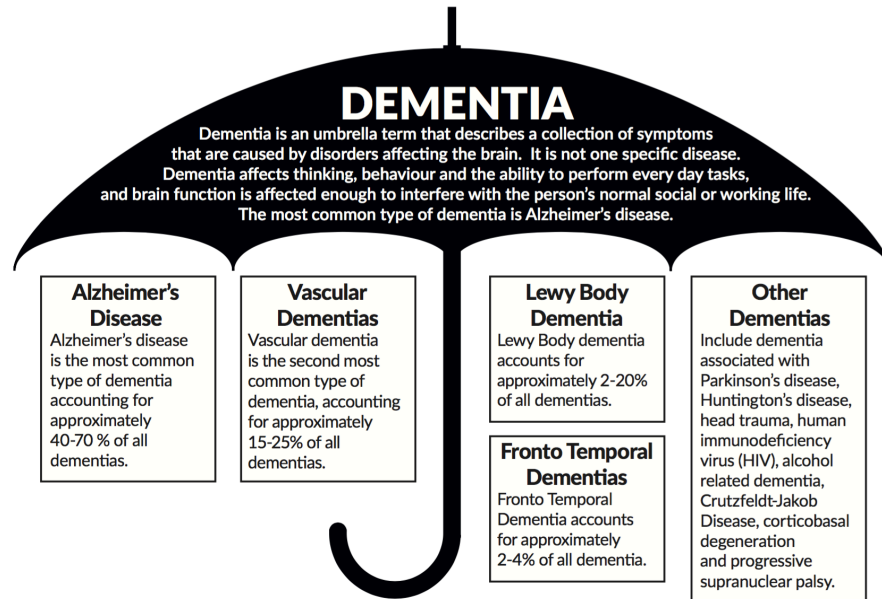
WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

“A syndrome due to disease of the brain, usually of a chronic or progressive nature, in which there is disturbance of multiple higher cortical functions, including memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, learning capability, language, and judgement. Consciousness is not impaired. Impairments of cognitive function are commonly accompanied, occasionally preceded, by deterioration in emotional control, social behaviour, or motivation.”

Common Symptoms of Dementia

- Memory loss
- Language and communication problems
- General confusion, disorientation in time and / or place
- Difficulty with abstract thinking / lapses in judgment
- Difficulty performing familiar activity
- Misplacing objects
- Behaviour and personality changes
- Sudden mood swings
- Loss of initiative/ apathy

TYPES OF DEMENTIA



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- Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Dementia with Alzheimer's disease
- Vascular Dementia
- Dementia with Lewy Bodies
- Frontotemporal Dementia
- Mixed Dementia
- Early Onset Dementia
- Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease

A 2019 WORLD ALZHEIMER REPORT SURVEY FINDINGS:

Carers

- Majority of carers expressed positive sentiments about their caring role
- 52% of carers said their health had suffered
- 49% of carers said their work had suffered
- 62% of carers said their social life had suffered
- Over 35% of carers globally have hidden the diagnosis of a person with dementia

Knowledge

- 95% of the public think they will develop dementia in their lifetime
- 78% are concerned about developing dementia at some point
- 1 in 4 people think that there is nothing you can do about dementia
- 2 out of 3 think dementia is caused by normal ageing
- 62% of healthcare practitioners think that dementia is a normal part of ageing
- 82% of people would take a genetic test to learn about their risk
- 54% of respondents think that lifestyle factors play a part in developing dementia
- Just under 40% of the general public think that there are adequate community services for people living with dementia and for carers
- Just under 70% of the general public think there are adequate competent physicians for the diagnosis and treatment of dementia

Behaviour

- Over 85% of respondents living with dementia stated that their opinion had not been taken seriously
- Around 40% of the general public think doctors and nurses ignore people with dementia
- 67% of people living with dementia in Africa, and 63% in South East Asia, said their dementia symptoms were joked about by others
- Between 35% in high income countries and 57% in low-middle income countries reported being treated unfairly in dating and intimate relationships
- Around 30% of people in Europe are willing to have a person with dementia move in with them, rising to 62% in South East Asia and 71% in the Eastern Mediterranean region

WHAT IS PERSON-CENTERED DEMENTIA CARE ?

- A “new culture” of dementia care that includes a more humane and holistic approach focusing on the person’s perspective and experience (Kitwood, 1997).
- The goal for this approach is to empower the patient to utilize choice, abilities, express feelings, maintain existing and develop new relationships (Kitwood, 1997).
- Underlines the importance of “personhood” and life story work through interaction based on one’s unique life story.
- Brooker and Latham (2015) described this concept as individualized care, consisting of four main elements:
 - Valuing patients with dementia and those who care for them.
 - Treating people as individuals.
 - Looking at the world from the perspective of the patient with dementia.
 - Providing a positive social environment for a patient’s relative well-being.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- According to the 2015 World Alzheimer Report, about 47 million people worldwide were living with a type of dementia and the number is bound to increase throughout the years (Prince et al., 2015).
- A meta-analysis study showed that person-centered dementia care reduced neuropsychiatric symptoms, agitation and depression and improved quality of life for patients in long-term care facilities (Kim & Park, 2017).
- Improve patient care and quality of life and satisfaction of patients at in-patient facilities, group homes and hospital settings.
- Provide education and proper training to caregivers, family members, and healthcare providers.



FUTURE DIRECTION

- Person-centered techniques and life story work should be embedded into the care plan when treating patients with dementia (Cooney & O'Shea, 2019).
- Standardizing the style of treatment in in-patient facilities, group homes and hospital settings.
- Measuring outcome of the person-centered care on:
 - Progression of dementia
 - Life quality and satisfaction in patients
 - Patient cooperation with medical professionals and staff
 - Relationship maintenance with family members and or caregivers

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