

THE IMPACT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEED-BASED CARE IN NURSING HOMES ON FORMAL CAREGIVERS' WELL-BEING.

Background

Need-based care is a structured and standardized model that supports formal caregivers in nursing homes (NHs) in delivering person-centred care by responding with tailored non-pharmacological interventions on residents' unmet needs as well as having positive effects on behavioral and psychological symptoms on residents with dementia (BPSD) [1]. However, limited resources as well as the shortage of caregivers in NHs make the implementation of need-based care challenging [2], especially when it comes to finding ways to spend more time with residents.

Aim

To evaluate the impact of the implementation of need-based care on formal caregivers' sense of competence in dementia care, level of burnout and level of engagement. The hypothesis is that the implementation may have an inverse effect on formal caregivers' wellbeing.

Methods

A three-arm cluster randomized controlled trial was set up in 24 nursing homes: formal caregivers in the 'need-based care' group (intervention) spent time twice a week with residents who had BPSD focusing on their unmet needs; meanwhile, formal caregivers in the 'time' group were free to fill in the time they spent twice a week; a third group delivered standard care. An implementation strategy was built upon the Implementation Quality Framework and used in the 'need-based care group' [3]. A total of 741 formal caregivers completed the digital questionnaire at one or more of the five time points (every nine weeks) between November 2021 and July 2022; they rated their sense of competence in dementia care, level of burnout, and, level of engagement. Moments of time were registered in a printed registration book.

Results

Only formal caregivers from the 'need-based care' group experienced a higher sense of competence in dementia care compared with baseline. No differences in scores on burnout and engagement were found.

Discussion

The implementation of need-based care in NHs can be integrated in daily practice when all components of the Quality Implementation Framework are present alongside a supportive and strong leadership.

Implications and future perspectives

The study contributed to the development of innovative methods in delivering person-centred care. Despite challenging workforce circumstances in healthcare, implementation of complex interventions to enhance person-centred care is possible. Research on the sustainability of the implementation of need-based care is recommended.

References

2. Geng, F., Stevenson, D., Grabowski, D. (2019) Daily nursing home staffing levels highly variable, often below CMS expectations. *Health Aff (Millwood)* 38 (7): 1095-1100 Erratum in: *health Aff (Millwood)*. Sep;38(9):1598
3. Meyers, D., Durlak, J. & Wandersman A. (2012) The Quality Implementation Framework: A synthesis of critical steps in the Implementation Process. *Am J Community Psychol* 1 – 19