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## **Pre-GPA Meta-Analysis of Perceptions of Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia (BPSD) Across Care Sectors**

Lori Schindel Martin<sup>1</sup>, Victoria McLelland<sup>2</sup>, Michele Bliss<sup>2</sup>, Jennifer Briand<sup>2</sup>, Patricia Boucher<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, <sup>2</sup>AGE Inc., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

**Purpose:** Responsive behaviours (RBs) occur in as many as 80% of people with dementia, causing healthcare workers distress in all care sectors. Research investigating effects of dementia educational interventions has not typically described participants' baseline perceptions prior to training. Here we present a comparative analysis of pre-learning qualitative findings from seven studies in 2014-2017. Findings inform the direction of entry-to-practice and continuing professional education programs needed for evidence-informed best RB practices.

**Method:** Written qualitative data was collected and emergent themes were identified from responses to the following: 1) "If I were to describe myself when I respond to older people with dementia who are agitated and upset, I would say..."; 2) "If I were to change anything about my ability to respond to older people with dementia who are agitated and upset, I would..."; and 3) "The best practice approaches to use when responding to older people with dementia who are agitated and upset are..."

**Findings:** Across seven studies, 599 individuals completed the questions. Three emergent themes common across all cohorts were 1) Emotional and Physical Safety, including feeling ‘intimidated, frightened, hesitant, vulnerable and at risk’, 2) General Strategies used, such as ‘smiling, staying calm, being respectful, staying at arm’s length, and empathy’, and 3) Learning Needs, which were specific to enhancing personal safety, application of new and innovative non-pharmacological interventions, and gaining confidence and knowledge regarding RBs.

**Conclusions:** Results show that both staff and students require formal education to provide specific knowledge about RBs, regardless of their healthcare sector.

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**For more information contact:**

Advanced Gerontological Education (AGE) Inc.  
88 Maplewood Avenue  
Hamilton, ON  
L8M 1W9

Phone: 905 777.8837 #12277  
Email: [info@ageinc.ca](mailto:info@ageinc.ca)

Website [ageinc.ca](http://ageinc.ca)