

Interventions to Improve the Nursing Care of People with Dementia in Hospital: An Environmental Scan



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Background

- Estimates of as many as 25-30% of acute care patients have dementia.¹
- People with dementia are at a greater risk than those without for complications in hospital such as urinary tract infections, delirium, falls, and pneumonia.¹
- Growing focus on improving the care of people with dementia in hospital,^{2,3} including improved nursing care.⁴
- Implementation science is demonstrating the importance of understanding factors contributing to successful interventions.⁵

Aims and Objectives

To identify nursing interventions aimed to improve nursing care of people with dementia in Canadian hospitals, and to examine how they are evaluated and the factors affecting their successful implementation (barriers and enablers).

Methods

Design: Environmental scan including review of published and unpublished literature and stakeholder interviews.

Data collection: Extraction of intervention characteristics, evaluation method, outcomes measured, effectiveness, and sustainability over time.

Analysis: The Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)⁶ was used to categorize the barriers and enablers to successful interventions.

Findings

Sources	Number included
Published literature 	10
Unpublished literature 	6
Stakeholder Interviews 	20

Table 1: Categories of Nursing Intervention Findings

Category	Examples
Dementia education for nurses	GPA, P.I.E.C.E.S, general dementia education
Methods to promote individualized care	Care planning, getting to know the patient, behavior tracking.
Activity and sensory stimulation	Music therapy, iPad stimulation therapy, sensory lounge, robots
Changing team dynamics	Dementia specialists, recreation, consistent staffing.

Table 2: Barriers and Enablers (CFIR)

Inner Setting	Staff-patient ratios, manager support, access to equipment.
Outer Setting	Funding/Gov. support, policies, more pressing healthcare needs.
Characteristics of Individuals	Staff burnout, staff self efficacy/confidence, motivation.
Process	Ability to hold education sessions, intervention follow-up, ability to train leaders.
Intervention Characteristics	Implementation costs, intervention complexity and adaptability.

Effectiveness

- Limited to published literature

Findings Continued

Measurement of Effectiveness	Number of articles
Staff reports of increased knowledge and confidence in dementia care.	7
Patient reports of positive experience and person-centered care.	1
Reduction of observed responsive behaviors	2

Sustainability

- Limited evaluation of sustainability over time.
- GPA measures sustainability through 1 year post implementation focus groups⁷ with staff reports of improved confidence in managing responsive behaviors.

Discussion

- There are a variety of interventions being implemented across Canada, however there is a need for evaluation and sharing of findings to identify effective and ineffective practices.
- Factors affecting the success of interventions have been identified across the CFIR domains suggesting implementation science can improve the success of interventions.
- Need for further research into the perspectives and experience of knowledge users (e.g. nurses) and health system leaders to better understand the implementation context.

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