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Evaluating the Effectiveness of Abilities Care Approach™ Training

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The burden of caring for an individual with dementia is significant due to associated cognitive, behavioral, and affective changes. Approximately 50% of US nursing home residents have a diagnosis of dementia (Daly, Bay, Levy, & Carnahan, 2015).

In skilled nursing facilities (SNFs), certified nursing assistants (CNAs) assume the majority of activities of daily living (ADLs) and primary care (Buice & Girod, 2015).

OTs are in a unique position to collaborate with CNAs in providing individualized care to reduce burden of care.

**ABILITIES CARE APPROACH (ACA)**

ACA is an occupation-based, stage-specific dementia care approach developed by occupational therapists (OTs) that promotes quality dementia care for SNF residents. Within Claudia Allen’s Cognitive Disability Model, OTs evaluate patients to determine their Allen Cognitive Level, occupational profile and retained abilities. ACA provides CNAs with standardized guidelines for individualized care to best facilitate occupational engagement based on patient’s dementia stage and retained abilities.

**ABILITIES CARE EXPERTS© (ACE)**

ACE is a six-week training program to prepare CNAs for implementation of ACA principles. ACA OTs lead ACE sessions to convey the importance of adaptive, occupation-based care approaches. ACE emphasizes the value of occupational engagement through individualized care approaches and meaningful interactions.

**METHODS**

The study involved comparing dementia care approach (ACA) with client-centered approaches (CCAs). The educational outcomes of ACE participants were compared to non-ACE participants.

**RESULTS**

ACE CNA participants scored consistently higher on each measure compared to non-ACE participants. ACE CNA-participants scored significantly higher in knowledge and self-efficacy compared to non-ACE participants.

**CONCLUSION**

This study provides initial evidence that ACE training can improve key caregiving factors associated with quality of care.

A training approach focused on applying individualized and stage-specific care strategies has the ability to maximize quality of care by facilitating resident engagement and meaningful client-caregiver interaction.

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**REFERENCES**