

SIMULATION SESSION ON SENSORY IMPAIRMENT FOR CARERS OF DEMENTIA PATIENTS

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BACKGROUND

Sensory impairments and dementia are prevalent among the elderly, posing significant challenges for carers. Despite their critical role, carers often lack enough knowledge about the psychosocial impact of dual sensory impairments.

Simulation-based training has shown promise in healthcare education for its live and practical approach, helping learners in real-life scenarios and improve long-term care practices.

“The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) emphasizes the importance of assessing and managing sensory impairments in individuals with dementia to improve their quality of life.” (NICE)



AIMS

This workshop aimed to simulate the sensory impairments experienced by elderly individuals with dementia, providing carers with a chance to practice sensory impairments & enhance their awareness and empathy. The goal was to improve carers' understanding and skills in managing sensory impairments in dementia patients.



METHOD

The project used a qualitative survey evaluation conducted before and after a focus group simulation session. Carers were divided into groups and rotated through three stations simulating sensory impairments:

Goggles/Earmuffs Station: Participants wore goggles to simulate visual impairments and earmuffs while attempting to draw a clock face.

Gloves Station: Participants wore thick gloves to write sentences on a whiteboard, simulating reduced hand coordination.

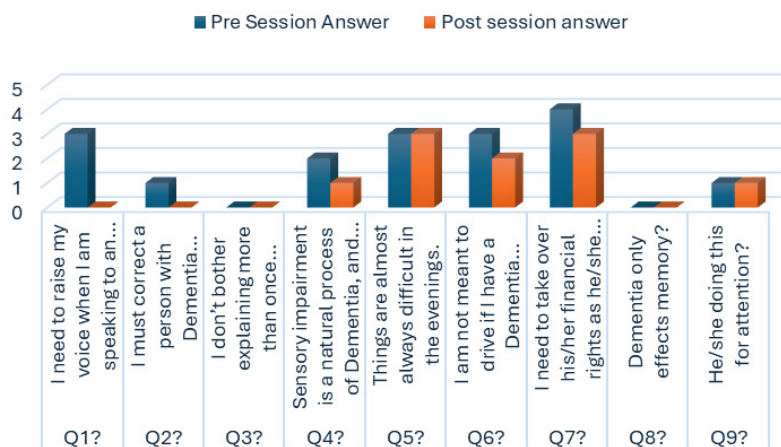
Weighted Straps Station: Participants walked with wrist and ankle weights to experience balance and gait challenges.

Pre- and post-session surveys assessed the changes in carers' understanding of sensory impairments.

RESULTS

Survey results indicated improvements in the carers' knowledge and attitudes towards dementia-related sensory impairments as shown below. The carers' improvement in knowledge went from 80% to 100% following the session.

Results to Pre & Post Session Questions



CONCLUSION

The aim of such educational session is ultimately to reduce stress, resources and workload for both carers and NHS by increasing awareness. Findings provide preliminary evidence that the workshop gave participants a real insight into how the visual impairment, sensory loss and hearing problems feel like in patients with Dementia.

The limitation of the project is the small sample size, we need a bigger sample size for the more precise estimate of the effect of simulation session and to assess the representativeness of the sample and to generalize the results. Recommendations for future is to consider evaluating mood of the participants immediately after the session in order to obtain a more objective view of the emotional impact of the simulation.

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