

Dementia Training for Caregivers

Learning Outcomes And Competencies

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I. Introduction to the Dementias

Why are these outcomes important?

Caregivers need a clear understanding of what is expected of them, and what they can expect to learn to be successful. Learning is more accessible when structured in small steps. A simple first step introduction to the complexities of dementia caregiving is a way to begin to reach the learning needs of a wide range of Caregivers.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will identify qualities and qualifications that are needed to be a competent dementia caregiver.
2. Learner will state basic information on dementia, including causes and treatments.
3. Learner will explore how dementia affects residents' needs and behaviors.
4. Learner will list typical behaviors and symptoms a person with Alzheimer's disease would most likely experience in early, middle, and late stages.
5. Learner will demonstrate the value of adapting caregiving to the specific type of dementia and a person's culture.

II. Dementia, Depression, And Delirium

Why are these outcomes important?

Caregivers need to know what to watch for to recognize important symptom changes, since depression and delirium can look like dementia and can be life threatening if not identified quickly and treated.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will describe main symptoms of depression and delirium, and list possible causes of both.

2. Learner will compare and contrast among common symptoms of dementia, delirium, and depression.
3. Learner will identify dangerous symptom changes that require immediate professional attention and how to access professional help.

III. **Resident-Based Caregiving**

Why are these outcomes important?

Caregivers have control over much of the world of a person with dementia. Current best practices in dementia care are resident-based, using validation and reminiscence with people with dementia, not reality orientation. Dementia caregivers need skills to monitor their own behaviors, values, and attitudes, and skills to provide validation to residents.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will demonstrate recognized caregiving approaches in creative problem solving for residents with dementia.
2. Learner will explore the caregiving process from the perspective of a resident with dementia.
3. Learner will demonstrate the ability to support the resident's strengths using caregiving techniques to support those strengths.

IV. **Dementia Caregiving Principles**

Why are these outcomes important?

It is essential that best practices in dementia care be used. They enhance the resident's level of activity and quality of life, maintenance of skills, and ability to stay in a less restrictive environment. The best practices also enhance caregivers' sense of well-being, job satisfaction, and provides them with the skills to respond to the changing demands of their caregiving.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will identify current best practices in dementia caregiving.

2. Learner will demonstrate current best practice caregiving skills when caring for/interacting with a resident who has dementia.

V. **Communicating With People Who Have Dementia**

Why are these outcomes important?

People with dementia rely on their caregivers to help them communicate. Caregivers need to know special communication techniques to be able to communicate with residents and help residents communicate with others. These are absolutely core, essential skills for every dementia caregiver.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will explore and discuss dementia-caused cognitive losses and how those losses affect communication.
2. Learner will demonstrate appropriate and inappropriate nonverbal communication skills and discuss how each impacts a resident's behavior.
3. Learner will demonstrate how to effectively initiate and conduct a conversation with a resident who has dementia.
4. Learner will describe ways in which culture impacts communication.

VI. **Sexuality And Dementia**

Why are these outcomes important?

Caregivers report this is a difficult area of caregiving. They must combine their own personal values and professional responsibilities with assuring the resident's legal rights, and managing unwanted sexual behaviors. Clarification is needed to help caregivers understand how dementia does, and does not affect someone's sexuality.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will identify ways in which dementia affects sexuality and sexual behavior.
2. Learner will identify a resident's rights as they relate to sexuality and sexual behavior, and discuss ways to support these rights.
3. Learner will appropriately respond, using nonjudgmental caregiving skills, to residents' appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviors.

VII. Rethinking “Problem” Behaviors

Why are these outcomes important?

Caregivers need to learn how not to blame the resident for the difficult to manage symptoms of their illness. Caregivers need structured practice to respond to troubling behaviors. Problem solving is an effective tool for caregivers to think through and respond to the frequent changes in residents' needs.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will review and demonstrate the use of a problem-solving method to intervene in challenging behaviors or situations.
2. Learner will identify some challenging behaviors, including aggression, catastrophic reactions, wandering, and inappropriate sexual behavior and explore their causes.
3. Learner will demonstrate how to respond appropriately to a resident who is expressing a challenging behavior.

VIII. Hallucinations And Delusions

Why are these outcomes important?

Dementia caregivers need to be able to identify and respond to hallucinations and delusions so residents can receive proper care in their residence (without needing to relocate). It is essential for caregivers to not mistake symptoms of dementia for what might be a resident's normal behaviors.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will define and differentiate between hallucinations and delusions.
2. Learner will list different types of dementia-related hallucinations.
3. Learner will demonstrate the use of appropriate intervention strategies with a resident who is hallucinating or delusional.
4. Learner will explore the possibility of cultural and/or spiritual influences on behaviors when evaluating hallucinations and delusions.

IX. Helping With Activities Of Daily Living (ADLs)

Why are these outcomes important?

Dementia caregiving approaches approach everything that happens in the 24-hour day as resident programming. This is a core area of best practices in dementia caregiving. This means that specialized dementia caregivers are able to use ADLs as meaningful and pleasant events. Caregivers need to adapt their caregiving to enhance the resident's self-esteem, and accommodate the dementia stage-specific care needs.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will identify and describe ways in which therapeutic activities can include activities of daily living.
2. Learner will demonstrate helping principles and techniques when assisting a resident with dementia with activities of daily living.

X. Working with Families and Friends

Why are these outcomes important?

Families are important partners in dementia care. Caregivers need to know they may be called on to "care" for the family as well.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learner will discuss common concerns that residents' friends and family have when a loved one has dementia.
2. Learner will demonstrate supportive and compassionate interaction with residents' family and friends.
3. Learner will identify local resources for family support needs.
4. Learner will demonstrate a method to gather cultural and life history information from a resident and/or resident's representative(s).
5. Learner will discuss how resident's cultural and life history information can be utilized to develop an individualized plan that will enhance care and services provided to the resident.