Non-Pharmacological Interventions for Dementia

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Learning Objectives

• Identify alternative interventions for managing dementia as evidenced in the literature

• Engage other professions to assist with non-pharmacological interventions for people with dementia
Early stage awareness can be difficult

• Uncertain about own abilities
• Loss of independence
• Giving up activities
• Consequences for family

Johansson, Marcusson, & Wressle, 2015
Family Caregivers

- Thrust into the role
- Don’t always identify self as a caregiver
- Often no training or preparation for what to expect
- Can feel overwhelmed
- Own health suffers
- Challenged in managing everyday life
Interprofessional Teamwork

Person with Dementia

Community agencies
Care Managers
Therapists
Caregivers
Medicine
Pharmacy
Non-pharmacological interventions may not cease or reverse cognitive decline...

But may:

• Offer meaning and purpose for quality of life

• Support independence and autonomy

• Reduce caregiver burden
How do people spend their time?

• Depends on meaningful occupations/activities

• Depends on values, roles, routines

• Depends on environmental demands (physical, social, economic)
How much time do you need to.....

• Shower/bathe?
• Manage medications?
• Prepare meals & eat?
• Get to appointments?
• Make a phone call to a friend?
• Do your favorite hobby?
Why might these take more time for someone with dementia?

Meaning

- Activity looses meaning
- Does not understand purpose
Why might this take more time for someone with dementia?

Values

• Continues to value independence

• Doesn’t want assistance
Why might this take more time for someone with dementia?

Environmental demands

- Unsafe to do without assistance
- Unable to correctly sequence/complete tasks
- Family support is limited
- Not able to afford professional assistance/aid
How can a team help families reengage in meaningful activity?
Non-Pharmacological Interventions

• Education
• Social Supports
• Physical Activity
• Environmental Design
Education

• Make families aware of what to expect

• Provide strategies
  – e.g. Expanded/Spaced Retrieval  Creighton, Davison, van der Ploeg, Camp, & O’Connor, (2015).

• Decrease caregiver burden through education
Social Support

• Support Groups
  – Can mediate depression
    • Psychosocial interventions
    • Therapeutic touch  (Cabrera et al, 2015)

• PAIR support
  – Caregivers can also benefit from social program for persons with dementia  (Han & Radel, 2015)
Community Agencies

• Alzheimer’s Association

• KU Alzheimer's Disease Center

• Rebuilding Together
Physical Activity

• Decreases depression levels
• Decreases problematic behaviors
• Unknown if it reduces use of psychotropic drugs or if it mediates cognitive decline

de Souto Barreto et al., 2015; Vidoni & Burns, 2015
Environmental Design

• Increasing safety
• Decreasing demands
• Cueing

Struckmeyer & Pickens, 2016; Woodbridge, et al, 2015
Review of Interventions beyond medications

- Educate
- Involve a team
- Provide social support options
- Encourage physical activity
- Simplify spaces
Team to help live Life

• Be aware of personal values

• Determine activities that offer meaning and purpose

• Promote healthy repetition

• Mediate environmental demands
References


References


