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Enhancing Dementia Care for Everyone



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Moving from Person-Centred Care to Relationship-Centred Care

Culture change is a term used to capture efforts to transform long-term care from health care institutions, where the focus is on residents' medical diagnoses, into person-centred homes, where the focus is on valuing each resident as a person who has continued strengths and capabilities (Koren, 2010). The guiding themes relating to person-centred care include:

- valuing all people who live in long-term care
- recognizing the uniqueness in each resident
- appreciating the perspective of each resident
- fostering a positive social environment so residents have opportunities to form meaningful relationships with others (Kitwood, 1997).

Person-centred care has been criticized for focusing too closely on the individual and failing to consider the social and political contexts of care (Nolan et al., 2008).

Relationship-centred care has emerged as a response to this critique. This approach recognizes that quality care happens when there are strong reciprocal and interdependent relationships among everyone involved in care, including the resident, family members, and staff.

Person centred-care	Relationship-centred care
The focus is on the resident rather than the medical diagnosis	The focus is on enhancing the care experience for residents, family, and staff
Efforts are directed toward nurturing continued strengths and abilities	Efforts are directed toward building and nurturing relationships
Attention is given to meeting the needs of the resident	Attention is given to meeting the needs of residents, family, and staff

(Dupuis, Whyte, & Carson, 2012)

Senses Framework

The Senses Framework developed by Nolan et al. (2008), includes six senses that are essential for strong relationships in the care context.

Quality care happens when the six senses are experienced by **all** involved in the care relationship:

A sense of security

Residents feel safe and receive knowledgeable and sensitive care; staff feel safe, free from threat, and work within a supportive culture; family feel confident in their ability to provide good care and have the support they need.

Example: Residents have things explained in a way that they can understand.

A sense of continuity

Residents receive consistent care from people they know; staff have consistent positive work assignments; family and residents maintain shared pursuits.

Example: Staff work with the same residents from day to day.

A sense of belonging

Residents experience reciprocal relationships and feel part of a community; staff feel like they are part of team; family maintain valued relationships and feel like they have a support network.

Example: Residents are supported in making friends within the home.

A sense of purpose

Residents have opportunities to engage in purposeful and meaningful activity; staff have clear, shared goals and direction; family have opportunities to contribute to life in the home.

Example: Family can actively take part in their relative's care.

A sense of achievement

Residents have opportunities to develop and meet goals; staff and family feel they have grown because of their caring experience.

Example: Staff have their work openly appreciated by others.

A sense of significance

Residents feel recognized and valued; staff feel like their work matters; family feel that their care role is valued by staff.

Example: Family are known by staff and staff make time for family.

References

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