Exploring Nursing Home Staff Perceived Barriers to the Use of Reminiscence Therapy

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Local Problem

Antianxiety and hypnotic medications are used commonly in the elderly population and have risks related to safety issues and the mortality of patients. The problem identified was that the percentage of nursing home patients taking antianxiety and/or hypnotic medications is 40 – 50% in three nursing homes in rural West Tennessee. These percentages are twice the national average. Research has shown that reminiscence therapy is an effective non-pharmacological intervention to decrease anxiety in the nursing home population. Although the three nursing homes in West Tennessee use nonpharmacological interventions to address anxiety, no evidence was found that reminiscence therapy was being used. A gap in the literature was also identified based on barriers to the use of reminiscence therapy within the nursing home setting.

Project Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify if barriers to the use of reminiscence therapy exist within the nursing home setting and to develop recommendations to address any identified barriers.

Methodology

The Evidence Based Practice Model was used as the framework for this project. Step 1 included the identification of the problem. The problem was identified through researching nursing home data and discussions with nursing home administration. Step 2 included evidence gathered through a literature review and analyzed. Step 3 included identifying a gap in the literature and administration of a survey to identify barriers to the use of reminiscence therapy perceived by the nursing home staff within the 3 nursing homes in rural West Tennessee. Step 4 included the development of recommendations that were presented to the three nursing homes to address the identified barriers. The plan for steps 5 and 6 were addressed with the nursing home administration and staff for finalization of change.

Results

The survey results identified three themes. Findings indicate that perceived barriers related to staff knowledge, facility resources, and time are present. Meetings with the nursing home administrators, directors of nursing, and staff allowed for dissemination of the project information and identified areas of improvement of anxiety treatment for nursing home residents by using the nonpharmacological intervention of reminiscence therapy.

Implications for Practice

The information gathered from the study was used to develop plans for clinical change within each nursing home. The findings from this project provided an opportunity to develop interventions to increase the use of RT and provided a nonpharmacological intervention option to decrease anxiety in nursing home patients. Further benefit could be the decreased need for antianxiety medications within the nursing home settings. Short term evaluation of the DNP project was determined to be successful because barriers were identified and plans for clinical change were made. Long term evaluation will be performed by comparing CMS data of antianxiety and hypnotic use of the nursing homes over the next year. Continued training and evaluation of the recommended plan will also occur.
Title:
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Keywords:
Barriers, Nursing Home and Reminiscence Therapy

References:


Abstract Summary:
Antianxiety and hypnotic medications are used commonly in the elderly. Reminiscence therapy (RT) is an effective intervention to decrease anxiety. Barriers to the use of RT are explored. This study identifies barriers to the use of RT within the nursing home setting. Recommendations are developed to address the identified barriers.

Content Outline:

I. Purpose of DNP project

1. Identify barriers to the use of reminiscence therapy (RT) in the nursing home setting
2. Develop recommendations to address any barriers

II. Problem

1. Percentage of antianxiety and hypnotic medication use in rural West TN nursing homes compared to state and national averages
   1. 40 – 50% in three nursing homes in rural West Tennessee.
   2. These percentages are twice the national average.
2. Antianxiety safety issues in elderly population

III. Method
1. Betty Newman’s Systems Theory framework
   1. Primary Prevention
   2. Secondary Prevention
   3. Tertiary Prevention
2. Evidence Based Practice Model
   1. Steps 1-6

IV. Survey

1. Topics
2. Demographic Results
3. Barriers Identified
   1. Staff Related
   2. Facility Related
   3. Patient Related

V. Recommendations

1. Staff training on RT
2. Role play interventions with staff
3. Development of an RT program
4. Activities staff training on RT activities
5. Exploration of community resources to facilitate RT
6. Plan for Clinical Change
7. Nursing Home plans for incorporation of recommendations.
8. Increased knowledge for staff on purpose of RT and how to incorporate RT

VI. Conclusion

1. Overall project conclusion
2. Recommendations for future directions

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Professional Experience: The author has spent the last 19 years in nursing education at the college and university levels. During this time, 15 years were spent as a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner. The author has practiced as a Registered Nurse in the medical-surgical area, as a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner in primary care and long-term care, and as an educator in undergraduate and graduate programs. Areas practiced as a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner include internal medicine and geriatric psychiatry. Currently, the author is educating in the university setting full time.

Author Summary: Brandy Brown has focused on geriatric care most of her career. She has served
patients in the RN and advanced practice roles. As a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner, she has worked in outpatient and long-term care facilities. Her focus in practice and research, over the last 6 years, has been in geriatric psychiatry.