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Testing the implementation of the veder contact method, a theatre-based communication method in dementia care

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Statement of the Problem: People with dementia in nursing homes benefit from person-centered care methods. Studies examining the effect of these methods often fail to report about the implementation of these methods. A recently developed person-centered care method is Veder contact method (VCM). With theatrical tools VCM stimulates the communication between caregivers and residents. Our study aims to describe and test the implementation of VCM in daily nursing home care.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Caregivers (n=136) and residents (n=141) participated in a one-year quasi-experimental study. Foundation Theater Veder implemented VCM in six experimental wards and rated quality level of implementation. Six control wards delivered care-as-usual. Before and after implementation, caregivers' behaviour was assessed during observations using the Veder-observation list and Quality of Caregivers' Behaviour. Their attitude towards residents was rated with the Approaches to Dementia Questionnaire. Quality of life, behaviour and mood of the residents were measured with QUALIDEM, INTERACT and FACE. Their Care Plans were assessed on person-centered background information.

Findings: Significant improvements in caregivers' communicative behavior (i.e. the ability to apply VCM effectively and establishing positive interactions) and some aspects of the behavior and quality of life (positive affect, social relations) of the residents were found in favor of the experimental wards with a high implementation score, as compared to the experimental wards with a low implementation score and the control wards. No significant differences between the groups were found in caregivers' attitudes towards dementia, the residents' Care Plans and mood.

Conclusion & Significance: The positive changes in caregivers' behavior and wellbeing of the residents in the experimental wards with a high implementation score partly confirm the success of the implementation of VCM. Distinguishing wards with a high and low implementation score provided insight in factors which are crucial for successful implementation.

Biography

Petra Boersma is a Nurse and Lecturer at Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Department of Nursing in Amsterdam. Currently, she is finishing her PhD at the VU University Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry. In her thesis she focuses on the implementation of a theater intervention in daily care for people with dementia. She has published four papers (three related to this thesis) in reputed Nursing and Psychogeriatric journals.

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