Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies

A Video Guide for Employing Breakthroughs in Clinical Care

Facilitator’s Guide

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Up to half of all long-term care residents suffer from some form of dementia, such as Alzheimer's disease. Their caregivers face many special challenges. Chief among them is making sure residents with dementia eat well, drink enough and achieve their nutritional goals. Caregivers can help by understanding residents’ capabilities and limitations, then using that knowledge to help provide individualized care and good nutrition.

Caring for your residents is your top priority. Residents and their families trust you to help protect them and their health. Understanding the impact of dementia on resident nutrition will help you to be proactive in preventing and managing nutritional and fluid deficiencies. Above all, being educated and informed can help you make sure your residents receive the best possible care.
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This facilitator’s guide will help you plan for and conduct sessions to help ensure that you maximize the material in this video. Consider your facility’s protocol for addressing the nutritional needs of residents with dementia, and consider topics to engage in meaningful discussion regarding dementia as well as nutritional and fluid deficiencies.

This program will focus on defining the unique nutritional needs of long-term care residents with dementia, preventing and managing nutritional and fluid deficiencies, and discussing the role of primary caregivers in maintaining resident nutritional health.

VIEWING GUIDELINES

“Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies” is a video-based learning program. It supports the needs and motivations of health care professionals and staff that provide direct resident care. Conduct learning sessions for:

- All CNAs
- All RNs
- All newly hired CNAs and RNs

“Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies” can positively influence care giving by helping you:

- Utilize prevention and management strategies for nutritional and fluid deficiencies
- Understand how dementia changes your residents’ ability to nourish themselves
- Help residents get the nutrition and hydration/fluids that they need
PROGRAM CONTENT

“Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies” is a practical educational tool. It demonstrates important skills necessary to help caregivers address the unique needs of residents with nutritional and fluid deficiencies as a result of the onset of dementia. Filled with practical information and useful instruction, this video explains prevention measures for overcoming nutritional and fluid deficiencies, how dementia can affect your residents’ nutrition and hydration, and so much more.

This video training provides a unique and interactive learning experience. In addition to the valuable learning information contained in the video and accompanying workbook, the video in-service provides opportunities for facilitated discussion to help participants understand how dementia can influence nutrition and overall resident health.
SAMPLE GROUP SESSION AGENDA

Use the following sample agenda to structure a session featuring “Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies”

Length of videotaped program: approximately 25 minutes

Suggested length of session: 1 hour and 40 minutes (including a 10 minute break)

Materials needed:
• This facilitator’s guide
• The “Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies” video program
• Optional paper and pencils for participant note-taking
• Optional flipchart and markers for writing key ideas

SUGGESTED SESSION AGENDA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 min</td>
<td>Welcome the group to your session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 min</td>
<td>Show first module of video program: Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>INTRODUCE the “Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies” topic by leading this discussion:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**ASK:** In your facility, how common is dementia?

**ASK:** How often do you experience challenges providing nutrition and fluids for residents with dementia?

**Review** the learning objectives -- after viewing this program you will be able to:
• Utilize prevention and early treatment strategies for nutritional and fluid deficiencies
• Understand how dementia changes your residents’ ability to nourish themselves
• Help residents get the nutrition and hydration/fluids that they need

**ASK:** How are these learning objectives relevant in your facility?
**DISCUSS** prior knowledge of nutrition for residents with dementia. Try to understand the group’s prior knowledge so you can help reinforce good practices and change those that are incorrect. (Encourage discussion to help uncover staff knowledge). With this baseline, you can better understand how to focus later discussion and follow-up exercises. You can also realize how the learning sessions have helped to improve training.

7 min  
Show first module of video program – *Causes of Inadequate Intake of Food and Liquids*

15 min  
Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 1. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the first module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** What percentage of your residents suffers from some form of dementia?

**ASK:** Do any of your residents with dementia suffer from short term – or “primary” memory loss? How does this affect their quality of life? How does it affect the level of care you provide?

**ASK:** Are there any strategies and protocols in place at your institution for recognizing signs of poor nutrition in residents with dementia? If so, what are they? If not, do you find yourself addressing your residents’ food and fluid intake in any other way?

**ASK:** What types of nutritional interventions do you use to address poor nutrition and dehydration?

**ASK:** Do you routinely check resident hydration? If so, using what method? Do you routinely check a resident’s ability to swallow? How often? How does any change in resident status affect their care?

**DISCUSS** the consequences of undernutrition and dehydration for the residents at the participants’ facility. Encourage participants to talk about some of the problems that they witness in their residents with dementia. Discuss their role in any nutrition and hydration strategy and how that role can either be expanded or altered to better suit the needs or the residents under their care.

10 min  
**BREAK**
Welcome the group back from the break.

Show second module of video program – *Getting to Know: Ask!*

Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 2. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the second module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** Does your facility encourage providing a resident’s favorite foods, or familiar routine when encouraging them to eat? If so, how do you find out what residents like? If not, how do you think the inclusion of personal touches could lead to better outcomes at mealtime?

**DISCUSS** the participants’ views on the effectiveness of their facility’s protocols for addressing undernutrition and dehydration for residents with dementia. What would they change? Offer suggestions to improve nutritional health of residents?

**ASK:** Have you had any positive or negative experience with introducing what you have observed to more sensitive residents? How did the resident react? What has been the long-term result?

**DISCUSS** and **DEFINE** structured daily programs as a technique for providing care to residents with dementia.

**DISCUSS** the participants’ roles in managing and revising a resident’s structured daily program based on what they observe. How involved are they in developing a care plan? What input is expected of staff? What could be changed to improve the process of modifying a resident’s care plan?

**ASK:** Do you routinely cue residents with dementia and involve them in eating activities? What examples of familiar items or actions do you -- or could you -- use to improve resident participation at mealtime?

**ASK:** What level of involvement do your residents have in their own nutrition? Do you take suggestions from residents to try to make mealtimes more familiar and enjoyable?

**DISCUSS** the participants’ roles during mealtime. Discuss their successes and challenges in attempting to maintain the nutrition of residents with dementia. What strategies do they use? Have they worked in the past? Allow all participants to talk about how individual strategies could be improved.
Show third module of video program – *Creating Routines*

Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 3. If group members are slow to respond, consider briefly recapping the main ideas emphasized in the third module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**DISCUSS** the nutrition and mealtime routines at the participants’ facility. How do staff caregivers implement individual care planning? How successful have these routines been in providing for the unique needs of residents with dementia?

**ASK:** Are residents evaluated by a speech therapist? How is any information regarding the residents’ eating and swallowing abilities presented to the frontline caregivers?

**ASK:** Are you routinely trained in the Heimlich maneuver, using suction machine, and providing portable oxygen delivery? Have you ever had occasion to use these tools? Do you feel that the use of these interventions could have been avoided?

**DISCUSS** the participants’ role in assisting residents at mealtime. Does time and protocol permit one-on-one time with residents who are eating? How do participants feel that this one-on-one involvement with residents affects their overall nutrition?

**ASK:** What specific training have they received regarding the feeding of residents who suffer the effects of a stroke or dementia?

**ASK:** How do the protocols at your facility differ from the methods presented in this training?

**ASK:** Does your facility routinely provide residents with dental consultation? If so, how does this affect their nutrition routine? If not, how do you think this knowledge could improve their routine and overall nutrition and hydration?

**ASK:** What methods do you use to assist residents with poor or failing eyesight at mealtime? Do you think that the suggestions described in the video can improve success at mealtimes for your residents with dementia?

**DISCUSS** the role of the dietitian at the participants’ facility in selecting appropriate foods for residents with dementia. If the facility does not routinely involve a registered dietitian, who picks specific menu items and what criteria do they use? What role do participants play in providing individualized care to residents at mealtime?
ASK: What is the protocol for notifying the nurse or care planner of changes in behavior that could affect a resident’s nutrition or fluid status?

ASK: Does your facility have a specific protocol for tracking, reporting, and monitoring resident nutrition? If so, how is it different from the protocols highlighted in the video?

ASK: How are resident care plans commonly adjusted after changes are recognized?

DISCUSS the importance of routines that consider the unique needs of residents with dementia. How do you properly balance adequate nutrition and hydration with individual care and independence?

1 min Show Conclusion of video

5 min In closing:

ASK for questions or additional comments from the group.

DISCUSS as appropriate.

Thank group members for their participation and conclude the session.
EXERCISES AFTER VIDEO

1 How do you rate our current success in providing information regarding the nutritional status of long-term care residents with dementia? How do residents rate our success?

1 What are some examples you’ve seen in just the last week or two of
   -- Undernutrition and dehydration in residents with dementia
   -- Specific causes of dementia that have affected a resident’s ability to nourish themselves
   -- Successes using routines to better provide adequate nutrition and hydration to residents with dementia

1 What can you do to help yourself and other members of the staff better understand the nutrition and hydration needs of residents with dementia, and how to provide the best care to safeguard resident health and quality of life?

Suggest that participants accept a follow-up assignment as a proactive step in improving their understanding of how to provide for the unique nutritional needs of residents with dementia.

For example, each participant might be asked to identify a resident at their facility at risk for undernutrition due to the presence of dementia. Ask them to note how changes in their body or behavior are addressed to maintain adequate nutrition and hydration. Participants could also track the success of interventions addressing those residents who pose a risk for undernutrition or dehydration. What was done at the care planning stage? On the frontline?

Then, hold a second meeting and ask each staff member to share what they have learned or any successes they have witnessed.

Finally, as a group, establish a series of recommendations outlining how to best improve the care regarding the nutrition and fluid intake of residents with dementia.
Questions?

If you have questions about how to implement the “Dementia and Nutrition: Helping Prevent Nutritional and Fluid Deficiencies” program, or if you would like information about other programs available from ElderCare Communications, call or write:

ElderCare Communications
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Cincinnati, Ohio 45240
Phone: 800-505-3232

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