Volume XXX

Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions
For Staff Members in Long-Term Care

Facilitator’s Guide
How Dementia Can Affect the Care You Provide

Every day, you see people with dementia. In the early stages, changes may appear subtle, but near the end, dementia is often what you see first in residents under your care. By understanding dementia and how it affects your care giving decisions, you can not only provide the best possible care for your residents, but you can also help reassure families who don’t understand what’s happening to their loved one.

Up to half of all nursing home residents have some form of dementia. That number is pretty startling, but even more astounding when you consider that only about 60% of residents have undergone an effective screening to test their cognitive abilities.

Quality of life is paramount for the residents under your care. Your residents and their families rely on you … when you can support and educate them, you can not only relieve anxiety, but help them enjoy their time together. Use this in-service training to educate yourself and your staff, to stay aware of dementia and its effect on care giving. Above all, discover ways to listen to your residents – both verbal and non-verbal communication – so you can understand their needs and provide the best protection for yourself and your residents.
This facilitator’s guide will help you plan and conduct sessions to help ensure that your staff understands how dementia affects care giving decisions.

“Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions” is a video-based learning program. It speaks directly to the needs and motivations of every staff member in your facility, regardless of their position or job description. In this program every member of the care giving team can learn more about dementia in the long-term care setting. After viewing it, you will be able to:

• Describe some of the common forms of dementia and discuss how they affect your residents.
• Understand how the Global Deterioration Scale, or GDS, helps stage or explain the progression of dementia,
• Recognize your role in providing care and the effects that dementia can have on care giving, and
• Understand the importance of structured programs

Conduct the “Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions” learning sessions for:

• All current members of your nursing staff
• All newly hired nurses and nursing assistants
PROGRAM CONTENT

“Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions” is a practical educational tool. It defines different forms of dementia and describes the progression of the disease and signs that you’ll likely see in your residents. Above all, this knowledge will help you understand how to adapt your care giving. This program demonstrates different techniques designed to address specific behavioral and communications challenges related to dementia. Filled with practical information and useful instruction, this video will explain how dementia affects your care and when you need to make adjustments to reflect individualized needs.

This video training provides a unique and interactive learning experience. In addition to the valuable learning information contained in the video and accompanying facilitator guide, the video in-service provides opportunities for facilitated discussion to help involve participants in the acquisition of knowledge that will help everyone understand how to care for residents with dementia.
SAMPLE GROUP SESSION AGENDA

Use the following sample agenda to structure a session featuring “Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions.”

Length of program: approximately 25 minutes

Suggested length of session: 1 hour

Materials needed:
- This facilitator’s guide
- The “Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions” 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 <em>MODULE 1: Introduction</em> of video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>INTRODUCE the “<em>Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions</em>” topic by leading the group in the following discussion:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ASK:</strong> How often do you care for residents with dementia?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ASK:</strong> What is unique about care giving for residents with dementia? What are some challenges that you’ve faced? What specifically do you think you could have done differently?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ASK:</strong> Do you think that common care giving approaches apply to all residents with dementia? Are there specific rules and guidelines that distinguish them from other residents?</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Review</strong> the program objectives:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Describe some of the common forms of dementia and discuss how they affect your residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Understand how the Global Deterioration Scale, or GDS, helps stage or explain the progression of dementia,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Recognize your role in providing care and the effects that dementia can have on care giving, and</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Understand the importance of structured programs.</td>
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</table>
DISCUSS prior knowledge of dementia and care giving for residents with dementia. Try to understand the group’s knowledge base 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 understanding and care giving skills.

5 min  
Show *MODULE 2: What is Dementia?*

10 min  
Engage viewers in a brief discussion about *MODULE 2: What is Dementia?* If group members are slow to respond, consider recapping the main ideas emphasized in this module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

ASK: Name different types of dementia. What makes them different?

ASK: Based on what’s been covered in this module, what behaviors commonly seen in your facility are associated with dementia? What behaviors pose the greatest challenge to your care giving?

ASK: What approaches have you found to work in managing challenging behaviors? What approaches have not worked? What could have been done differently to improve the outcome? What would you do the same?

DISCUSS the importance of understanding and distinguishing different types of dementia.
5 min  Show *MODULE 3: Global Deterioration Scale*

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

ASK: What are the different stages of dementia? How are you able to stage your residents to understand how their dementia has progressed? Is this an exact science – how useful is staging through the Global Deterioration Scale?

ASK: Describe behaviors or changes that distinguish different stages of dementia, e.g. what makes stage 1 different from stage 2?

ASK: What are the benefits of understanding staging? How can this knowledge help you support residents and their families?

DISCUSS the importance of dementia staging using the Global Deterioration Scale. Explain how this is an inexact science and how general staging can help in shaping care giving approaches for each resident. Also discuss the staff role in staging and interpreting those findings.

10 min  BREAK
5 min  Show *MODULE 4: Effects on Care Giving*

10 min  Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 4: Effects on Care Giving. If group members are slow to respond, consider recapping the main ideas emphasized in this module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

**ASK:** Why is it important to understand stages of dementia. How does this understanding help you make care giving decisions?

**ASK:** Referring to specific residents or examples, describe challenges presented by behaviors related to dementia. Discuss with the group ways to intervene based on your knowledge of their staging.

**ASK:** What currently used care giving approaches would you change based on this knowledge? What hasn’t worked? What might work under similar circumstances?

**ASK:** What role does each staff person play in making care giving decisions for residents with dementia?

**ASK:** What role does each staff person play in correcting potential problems?

**DISCUSS:** Describe common care giving challenges – meal time, social interaction, etc. Engage group in discussion that involves them in identifying approaches to help residents best enjoy these opportunities.
5 min Show MODULE 5: Structured Programs for Residents with Dementia

10 min Engage viewers in a brief discussion about MODULE 5: Structured Programs for Residents with Dementia. If group members are slow to respond, consider recapping the main ideas emphasized in this module (or the key situations and behaviors with which you feel your group can most easily relate).

ASK: Define structured programs. Why can they be effective for residents with dementia?

ASK: Give an example of a structured program that you use or that is used in your facility. How have residents responded – positively and negatively?

ASK: What is your role or responsibility in identifying and/or implementing structured programs?

DISCUSS structured programs. Come prepared with examples of these programs that are used in your facility. Break them down and discuss what works and doesn’t work with your residents, especially as it relates to different stages of dementia.

5 min Show MODULE 6: Conclusion

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

• As a group, attend a structured program and observe residents with dementia.
• How do you rate our current success in providing an engaging experience and maintaining structure?
  o To staff members
  o To residents
  o To family members
• How would residents or their family members rate our success?
• What are some examples you’ve seen in just the last week or two of:
  o Care giving approaches
  o Approaches that co-workers have used successfully
  o Training or education to help staff and/or residents understand dementia and care giving decisions
• What can we do to help families understand dementia and how it is affecting the way they relate with their loved ones?

Suggest that team members accept a follow-up assignment as a proactive step in improving their understanding of dementia and care giving decisions.

Over the next week, ask care givers to make note of circumstances where they face challenges and approaches that they have used with residents.

A couple of weeks later hold a second meeting and ask care givers to share what they have learned.
Questions?

If you have questions about how to implement the “Dementia and Your Care Giving Decisions” program, or if you would like information about other programs available from ElderCare Communications, call or write:

**ElderCare Communications**  
680 Northland Boulevard, Building C  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45240  
Phone: 800-505-3232  
www.eldercarecommunications.com

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