

Dementia Awareness (Unit 1): Session 6 (3 hours)

H = Health

Our own health (physical and mental, as well as our physical fitness) has a large impact on how we feel and behave. There are a number of health problems that may lead us to think that a person's dementia is progressing, when in fact they have an acute illness that can be treated. A number of acute health problems could lead to deterioration in behaviour or abilities in any person. These are often referred to as acute confusional states, or delirium. Dementia is considered to be one of the key risk factors for getting delirium.

e-tivity 6.1 (1 hour)

Purpose

To consider the other health problems that people with dementia commonly experience.

Task

- 1) Consider the range of health problems that may cause acute confusional states
- 2) Pick one example and reflect how this may manifest in a person with dementia. Consider how the signs and symptoms of this health problem can be picked up by carers. Is this easy? **(75 words)**
- 3) What does this suggest about the skills and understanding needed by staff? Add your thoughts to...**(Note to facilitator - suggest a discussion board)**
(100 words)



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Respond

Respond to two different members of the team from different profession from your own. **(50 words each)**

Comment

Health problems that can lead to deterioration in behaviour or abilities:

- Urinary tract infections
- chest infections
- dehydration
- malnutrition
- depression
- pain
- hypoxia
- constipation
- uncontrolled diabetes
- tumours

There are many other examples.

An area that often goes unrecognised in people with dementia is pain. Problems with communication make this particularly hard to detect.

e-tivity 6.2 (1 hour)

Purpose

1) Imagine if you were in acute pain, but could not tell anyone. When you tried, the words came out wrong and no-one seemed to understand what you are saying.

- How might you communicate, non-verbally, that you are in pain?
- How might you appear?



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What are the non-verbal clues in your posture or muscle tone?

- What pain assessment tools are used within your practice setting?
- How appropriate are these to people with dementia who may have limited communication skills?

2) Write your reflections in...**(Note to facilitator - suggest a wiki) (100 words)**

Respond

Write at 100 words (minimum) on at least two other contributions in the wiki.

e-tivity 6.3 (1 hour)

Purpose

To consider the importance of a holistic health approach to people living with dementia.

Task

- 1) Reflect on how you get to know about a person's overall health and physical well-being
- 2) Add your thoughts to...**(Note to facilitator - suggest a wiki) (75 words)**

Respond

Respond to at least one member of your team from a different professional group.
(25 words each)



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