Nursing-2013

OMICS Group Conferences
Accelerating Scientific Discovery

International Conference on
Nursing & Emergency Medicine

December 2-4, 2013 Las Vegas, USA

Dementia gets dolled up

Leah Bisiani
Uplifting Dementia and Allity, Australia

Abstract

Aim: The aim of this research was to examine the therapeutic impact of the provision of a lifelike baby doll as a therapeutic tool, on the behaviour of a person living with dementia. Specifically, the research assessed the potential benefits, if any, of the use of doll therapy in reducing behaviours of concern such as anxiety and agitation that may be associated with observed past attachment needs of a person with dementia.

Method: A single, female participant, with moderately advanced Alzheimer's disease was the subject of this research to examine the therapeutic impact of the use of a doll on behaviours of concern, attachment needs and social interaction. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research designs and methodologies in data collection and analysis.

Results: Results demonstrate that doll therapy was a positive intervention for the person living with dementia who was the participant in this research. The findings indicate significant reduction in behaviours of concern related to the need for attachment and a considerable decline in levels of anxiety and agitation. There was extensive ongoing improvement in social interaction, self-worth and communication.

Conclusion: Crucially, this study advances an understanding of a) the use of a doll as a therapeutic tool on the behaviour of a person living with dementia; b) the long term attachment needs of the participant to reduce or prevent behaviours reflective of other needs; c) the effect therapeutic interventions on the well-being of the participant. It also extends an understanding of the use of complementary therapy to inform professional practice; to promote opportunities for the exchange of knowledge; and to stimulate research and promote best practice. This study will also contribute to the general body of knowledge about the use of complementary therapy to meet past attachments needs and to improve the continuity of an uplifting life experience for people living with dementia. Further, the benefits of this research will encourage a change in attitude to one of the many alternative therapeutic ways of meeting the specific requirements of a person living with dementia. The outcome also provides further evidence of an improved quality of life, growth and fulfilment in the maintenance of self to assist other people with similar needs. As professionals, we need to build upon this evidence to promote therapeutic interventions that demonstrate another valuable way forward in the provision of person-centred dementia care. This single case study may also provide the impetus for aged care providers to develop an increased sensitivity to contribute to, and promote, therapeutic interventions that encourage positive ageing and wellbeing of people living with dementia.

Biography

Leah Bisiani is a highly skilled registered nurse, having completed her Masters in Health Science/dementia stream, and her diploma in Business/Frontline Management, with more than 25 years experience in aged care/dementia specific care. After completion of her training at the Alfred Hospital in 1985, she undertook further studies and in-charge/management employment within the aged care industry, establishing a knowledge and experience base that has placed her at the forefront of the industry, with her primary area of expertise being dementia specific care. She has recently won the 2010 Lend lease Australian Award for Excellence in Innovation for her person centred care models and behaviour management of residents living with dementia. Her innovative strategies and revelations have enabled people living with dementia to live fulfilling lifestyles as well as successfully empowered and inspired care staff to want to make a difference. She then won the Lend Lease Global Award for Excellence in April 2011, held in Singapore, against the winners of the other countries involved. This award again was to recognise her contribution to the aged care sector and specifically those living with dementia. Recently, she was published by Sage Publications in the international Dementia Journal in regards to her research titled: "Exploring the use of doll therapy to meet past attachment needs and diminish behaviours of concern in people with dementia: A Case Study approach".

Leah.Bisiani@allity.com.au