An aged care makeover

Creating stimulating surroundings for residents with dementia

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On the Menu...

Phenomena:
dementia + boredom = ‘difficult behaviour’

Typical Solutions:
Medication
T.V.

Our solution...
Background

• Specialist Mental Health for Older People
  - Dementia, depression & delirium with difficult behaviours
  - Boredom produces behavioural problems
  - Evidence for activity & engagement to reduce behaviours
  - Non-medical solutions seen as ‘unrealistic’

• ‘Spontaneous Engagement’
The Process

A volunteer facility...

- Resident profiles
- Surveyed facility
- Staff engagement
- Family engagement
- Sourcing materials
- Implementation (working bee)
After...

Colourful Gazebo
Raised Garden Bed
Garden Sheds
Laundry
Reading Nook
Sewing Nook
Interactive Mural
Results – Staff Perception

- Surveyed staff before & after (2 wks & 6 months)
- Staff across both project & control units

**BEFORE...**

- Generally ‘boring’ environment
- Group activities engaging but not always feasible
- Need more activities, stimulating environment
Results – Staff Perception

"How do you feel about the changes being made to your unit to introduce activity stations?"

- Don't like the idea: 0%
- Some concerns/heistations: 2%
- Neutral (Don't Care): 0%
- Somewhat Positive: 1%
- Really Enthusiastic: 10%
## Results – Staff Perception

#### AFTER...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Negatives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased interaction</td>
<td>Cold weather</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wider appeal</td>
<td>Faulty items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distraction from agitation</td>
<td>Staff &amp; family needing reminders</td>
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<td>Tool for staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distraction from negative behaviours &amp; thoughts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amusement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reminiscing</td>
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<td>Family/Visitors happier</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Usefulness &amp; purpose</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
"Do you think the activity stations have improved quality of life and stimulation for residents?"

"Do you think the activity stations help staff manage residents' difficult behaviours better?"
Results – Family Perceptions

"Do you think the activity stations have improved quality of life and stimulation for residents?"

- No Difference: 1%
- Some Improvement: 33%
- Great Improvement: 33%

“brings them a little of the outside world into their world”

“a continuation from what they’ve done all their lives”

“gives me something to discuss with mum”

“visitors are now bringing their children to look at the chooks”
Results – Behavioural Observations

- Project units and Control units
- 2 hrs/day for 5 days before implementation
- 2 hrs/day for 5 days after implementation
- 10min observations (by SMHSOP staff)
- Behaviours categorised & tallied
  e.g. pacing, verbal aggression, watching t.v., sitting looking bored, engaged in a stimulating activity
Some Significant Improvements

Total observations:
1266 ‘Before’, 1305 ‘After’
Increase in *Positive Behaviour : Negative Behaviour Ratio*

![Chart showing increase in positive behaviour ratio between Project Units and Control Units.]

*Positive Behaviour : Negative Behaviour Ratio*

\[ PB:NB = \frac{\text{(total observed instances of positive behaviour)}}{\text{(total observed instances of negative behaviour)}} \]

**Positive** behaviours:
- Conversation
- Enjoyable/stimulating activity (not T.V.)
- Positive staff interaction
- ...

**Negative** behaviours:
- Sitting looking bored
- Aimless wandering
- Verbal/physical aggression
- ...

↑73% Increase in positive behaviour ratio for Project Units

↑17% Increase in positive behaviour ratio for Control Units
Limitations of Study

- Improvements in mood not tested
- Other changes during observation period
- Insufficient numbers for some results
- Long-term effect not conclusive
Ideas for Future

- Expansion in current facility
- Other facilities in Anglican Care
- Creation of instruction manual/toolkit
- Possible adaptations to non-dementia settings
SUMMARY

• New approach for aged care facilities
• Clear improvements in positive : negative behaviour and staff/family satisfaction
• Good feedback to benefit future projects

Thanks to: