

Dementia Café: New Teaching Platform for students

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Introduction

Dementia is an increasingly common condition in UK. Alzheimer's society Dementia report 2012 stated that more than half of the dementia patient felt lonely and depressed. They have also felt that 58% of the healthcare professionals should have more understanding of dementia. UK medical schools have provided teaching on knowledge of dementia, but not on behaviour and attitude. It is surprising that some medical schools are not able to provide opportunities for student to interact with patients with dementia. Students' attitudes towards dementia patient has been described as poor, therefore we aim to improve this through a new platform.

Aim

To promote and improve medical students' attitude towards dementia through dementia cafe

Objectives

1. To find out about medical students' attitude towards dementia
2. To determine whether this new teaching platform will be able to improve medical students' behaviour and attitude towards dementia

Methodology

Dementia café in Bristol Royal Infirmary happens every 2 weeks at the hospital restaurant. It acts as a gathering for dementia inpatients and carers to enjoy and engage with some activities together outside the ward. 4th year medical students are requested to bring patient to the café, and engage with patients. There are healthcare professionals available to support the café.

Data is collected from 10 students, before and after the session. Students are assessed on their knowledge, attitude and behaviour before and after, and each heading is scored out of 5 marks. Students are also asked about positive and negative aspects of the café.

References

1. NICE guidelines
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg42/resources/dementia-supporting-people-with-dementia-and-their-carers-in-health-and-social-care-pdf-975443665093>
2. Tullo ES, Gordon AL (Mar 2013) Teaching and learning about dementia in UK medical schools: a national survey. *BMC Geriatrics*, 13 (1) p.29
3. Annear MJ, Lea E, Lo A, Tierney L, Robinson A (Feb 2016) Encountering aged care: a mixed methods investigation of medical students' clinical placement experiences. *BMC Geriatrics*, 16(1) p.38
4. Alzheimers Society Full Dementia UK report
https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/downloads/file/2/full_dementia_uk_report

Results

	Before Cafe	After Cafe
Knowledge on Dementia	3.5/5	3.9/5
Attitude towards dementia	3.8/5	4.5/5
Behaviour towards patients with dementia	3.7/5	4.5/5

Positives:

1. De-medicalises patient and allow them to talk about their interests and their lives
2. It is nice to see patient in a new light through interaction
3. Able to see how dementia can upset patients and their families, without taking a history
4. It is useful to see how a change in environment helps to improve a dementia patient's mood
5. Pet as therapy helps to initiate topics and conversations
6. Feels more comfortable in making patients with dementia feel more at ease

Things to improve on:

1. To follow a specific patient before and after café ie. patient journey, to fully appreciate how a café can change a person

Conclusion

Results have suggested dementia café has improved students' knowledge, behaviour and attitude towards dementia. This café has gained unanimous approval from students and patients alike. Despite the small sample size, students have shown and expressed their appreciation through positive feedbacks. This café has promoted meaningful interactions with dementia patients, and is worthy of its place amongst the medical curriculum

Actions

Based on these promising results, we will continue the café, and collect more feedbacks from students. This will provide tips on best way to run this café, and also to develop new ways of dementia teaching.