Communicating with older people with dementia

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Being able to communicate with older people with dementia requires a high level of competence in assessment of specific and individual communication challenges and needs of the person. One of the most effective means of assessment and skills development is the use of reminiscence interventions, memory books or life-story work. There is considerable evidence that communication skills can be developed and enhanced through education and skills training. This article aims to invite and encourage readers to reflect on their present knowledge and skills in communicating with older people with dementia.

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Communication Difficulties in Hospitalized Older Adults with Dementia: Try these techniques to make communicating with patients easier and more effective. Miller, Carol A. MSN, RN-BC, AHN-BC. The studies by Small and colleagues cited in Communication Difficulties: Assessment and Interventions in Hospitalized Older Adults with Dementia examined communication between people with dementia and their family caregivers during activities of daily living.1, 6, 7 Their study on the effectiveness of 10 commonly recommended communication strategies (including simplifying speech, paraphrasing, avoiding interruptions, controlling environmental distractions, and engaging the person’s attention). Fronto-temporal dementia. This form of dementia can be found in older people but is often found in younger people between 30 to 60. Early stage symptoms are similar to other forms of dementia. For instance communication issues such as forgetting or not understanding words or peoples’ names. Often people assume that an individual with dementia cannot communicate and write them off if they do not get a response from them the first time instead of trying a different approach. The symptoms of dementia do often have a big impact on how a person communicates and they can often find it difficult to find the right word or repeat the same things several times. Victorian government portal for older people, with information about government and community services and programs. Show search toolbar. Contrast Sign Up Login. Suggestions for communicating with a person with dementia. Carers need to pay attention to how they present themselves to the person with dementia. Positive communication can help a person with dementia maintain their dignity and self-esteem. A caring attitude, use of appropriate body language and maintaining the right environment are all important aspects of communication. Alternative communication approaches you can try include validation therapy, music therapy, reminiscence and a This is your life book.