Music + Memories = Magic: Wisconsin Nursing Home and Community Projects

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NURSING HOME PROJECT

METHODS

150 participating nursing homes around Wisconsin have been asked to administer surveys to ten employees who work with residents receiving personalized music. These surveys have questions regarding work position, job satisfaction, and an open ended question for participants to provide feedback.

Example Questions:
- Personalized music has the promise of bring more pleasure to my residents.
- I feel fairly well satisfied with my job.
1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

The first set of surveys were sent out by mail and self-addressed, stamped envelopes. In the future, these surveys may be emailed based survey may be used instead to cut costs. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used to analyze the data collected over six months.

RESULTS

The data is still being collected and analyzed; however, the results we expect are that personalized music will decrease caregivers’ stress and increase job satisfaction. In our initial reading of participant responses, several have echoed this experience: “In the time we have been doing this, I see great results for our residents.”

Abstract

Music is a relatively low cost and low risk approach to managing the behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia.

Our first project is bringing the national Music and Memories program into 150 nursing homes. Agency staff will be surveyed close to the start of the project, at three months, and at six months to evaluate the impact of this program on staff and overall work environment.

The second project is taking the Music and Memories program into the Eau Claire community by bringing the benefit of personalized music to twenty-five persons with dementia living in their homes with a caregiver. Caregivers will complete the Caregiving Distress Scale (CDS) at intake and at the three-month follow-up. In addition, they will also complete a questionnaire to evaluate the feasibility and impact of the music on caregivers’ stress level and quality of life.

COMMUNITY PROJECT

METHODS

Through collection of data, questions have been asked relating to relationship distress, emotional burden, care-receiver demands, social impact, & personal cost.

This process involves multiple home visits for each participant. During the first visit a memory screen and a caregiver distress scales are given, along with collection of participant music preferences. Subsequent visits are as needed, as well as a final contact visit at the three month point that includes a second memory screen, and a second caregiver distress scale.

RESULTS

Data is still being collected and analyzed; however, the results we expect are that personalized music will support caregivers and decrease caregivers’ stress.

Through our collection of data, we have discovered that the questions related to the emotional burden of caring for a person with dementia have been difficult for caregivers to answer. Difficulty in answering questions honestly could impact the accuracy of results.