

Effects of Humanity Training on Staff Burnout, Empathy and Attitude towards Dementia in an Acute Hospital

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Aims

It is not uncommon for the healthcare staff caring for persons living with dementia (PWDs) to experience burnout and job dissatisfaction. Humanity is a relationship-centred and compassionate care approach that focuses on the communication between PWDs and healthcare staff. This study investigates the effects of Humanity training on healthcare staff burnout, empathy and attitude towards dementia.

Methodology

Study design

Single arm pre – post implementation study

Setting

Acute care hospital

Participants

106 healthcare staff (doctors, nurses and therapists)

Outcome Measures

Data collected at pre-training and six-month follow-up

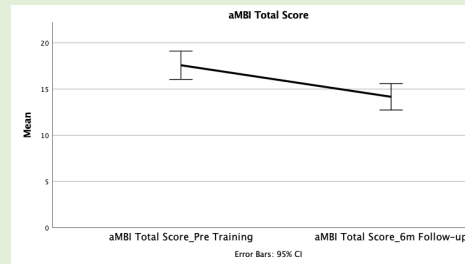
- *Burnout*: Abbreviated Maslach Burnout Inventory (aMBI)
- *Empathy*: Jefferson Scale of Empathy (JSE)
- *Attitude towards Dementia*: Dementia Attitudes Scale (DAS)

Intervention

Humanity course was conducted over four consecutive days by a certified Humanity trainer. The training includes the theoretical foundations and hands-on practice of the Humanity methods to optimise care for PWDs. After the training, healthcare staff had weekly meetings to discuss Humanity care prescriptions, regular peer observations of Humanity performance and monthly Humanity implementation group meetings.

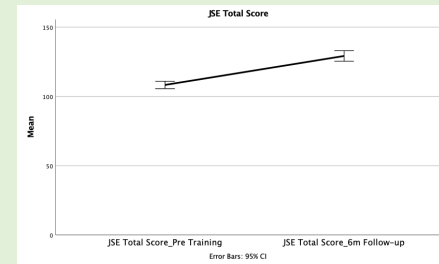
Results

Burnout (aMBI)



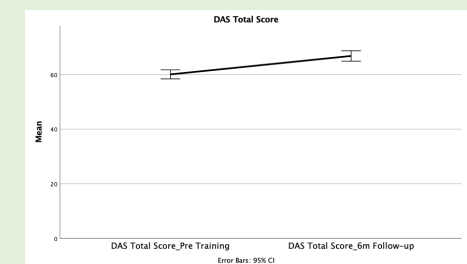
Healthcare staff showed decreased burnout score from pre-training (17.58 ± 9.92) to six month after training (14.16 ± 7.41), a significant decrease of - 3.415 (95% CI, - 4.849 to -1.991), $t(105) = -4.755$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.46$

Empathy (JSE)



Empathy score among healthcare staff increased from pre-training (108.33 ± 13.840) to six month after training (129.23 ± 19.632), a significant increase of 20.896 (95% CI, 16.569 to 25.223), $t(105) = 9.576$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.93$

Attitude towards Dementia (DAS)



Attitude towards dementia score among healthcare staff also increased from pre-training (60.05 ± 8.64) to six month follow up (66.79 ± 9.97), a significant increase of 6.745 (95% CI, 4.401 to 9.09), $t(105) = 5.705$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.55$

Conclusion

Humanity training reduces staff burnout, enhances empathy and improves attitudes towards dementia. These positive staff outcomes can potentially lead to improved care for PWDs in the acute hospital.