

Background

Woodside Lutheran Home is a 130-bed facility with an 18-bed dementia care unit. The unit is always full and has the highest staffing ratio on campus. There are three and half CNAs on AM, and two on the PM and NOC shifts. There is always one nurse scheduled for all shifts. After months of poor staff motivation, the unit experienced less focus on engagement and safety, resulting in more resident falls. Residents are found lined up in front of the nurse's station and when a life enrichment aid is not on the unit, residents are found doing nothing.

Dementia Care Solutions, located in Green Bay, WI, is a program that offers coaching for nursing staff in long-term care facilities. This program will come to the facility and coach staff on how to effectively redirect residents, decrease falls, offer alternative activities, and learn how to use effective visual, verbal, and touching cues.

Knowledge and Importance

Research shows that dementia care training puts the focus of staff-resident interactions on the relationship instead of the task. This allows the relationship to come first, resulting in both workers and residents communicating in a way where both parties are able to understand.

On February 1st, 2023, changes to the unit were implemented along with new expectations put into place. Dementia Care Solutions led classes on February 10th and February 27th. At the end of the month, the coach spent additional time on the unit floor training staff with a "hands on" process. When the coaching was completed, the coach came in periodically to observe how the staff used their training and give advice on better work approaches.

The goal of making changes to the unit and partnering with Dementia Care Solutions was to decrease resident falls, offer alternative activities, and allow staff to learn how to effectively prevent and redirect resident behaviors.

Objectives

The objective of this project was to decrease resident falls, educate staff on how to effectively work with people living with dementia, create more staff involvement by leading and creating resident activities, and creating a more friendly dementia care unit.

Methodology

Measures

Quantitative Methods:

- Track resident falls monthly

Qualitative Methods:

- Staff Survey and Interviews
 - Analysis of workload and practices used when working in a dementia care unit
 - Staff survey and interviews were distributed prior to project implementation and after project implementation

Methodology

- Research Dementia Care Champion Course
- Reach out to Sheri for consultation
- Create method for data collection and analyses
- Establish project goals



- Provide staff with expectations for unit
- Staff meeting and education
- Conduct staff interviews
- Document survey and interview results
- Begin analysis of data

- Refine unit duties
- Continue auditing staff responsiveness
- Prepare to review resident falls monthly
- Determine which modifications should be made

- Assess survey results and feedback
- Evaluate staff behavior
- Continue Sheri drop in visits
- Compare data to goals
- Summarize and reflect on what was learned

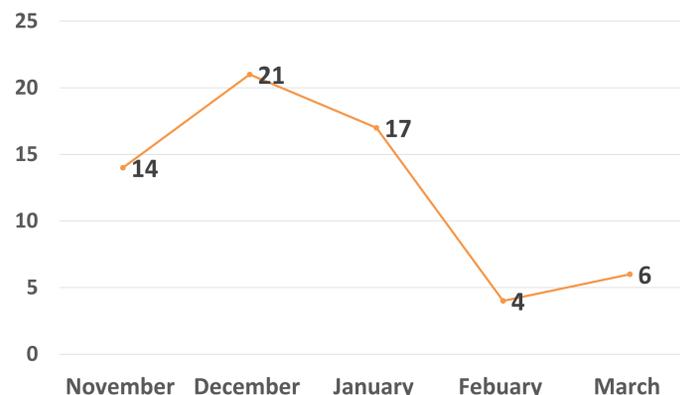
Results

Staff Survey

	Are you knowledgeable of and/or utilize behavior redirecting skills?	Are you knowledgeable of engaging/meaningful activities that you can perform with residents?	Do you use effective visual, verbal, and touching cues?
Before Education	50%	25%	62.5%
After Education	80%	60%	86.6%

- An 8-question Dementia Care Training Survey was distributed to nursing staff before the Dementia Care Champion Course and two weeks after the mandatory Dementia Care Solutions training.
- Staff now chart on iPads around the unit instead at nurses' station, which resulted in residents no longer being lined up
- A notable outcome is that 93.3% of staff feel that the unit is dementia friendly.

Falls on Memory Care Unit Per Month



Results

- Changes on the unit began February 1st, resulting in a significant decrease in resident falls.
- From January to February falls decreased by 23.52%
- Staff have noted that residents are happy with more to do which may have resulted in less self-transferring.

Program Highlight – Sensory Room



A 'meeting room' on the unit was transformed into a sensory room. By adding decorations, essential oils, relaxing music, and a sensory light projector, to the room, residents to have a safe place to relax or calm down. In the room, we also created sensory bins with different activities. Since creating the sensory room residents have used it every day and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere.

Conclusion

The outcome of this project has allowed residents to feel more engaged and safer in the environment. Staff have been able to gain new approaches and learn better ways to effectively communicate with those living with dementia. With expectations put into place, creating activity boxes, a sensory room, and providing education, the unit feels like a new and thriving place. The employees have been helping more and participating in activities, resulting in a better understanding of why the work they are doing is important. All of this has allowed the unit to function better.

Recommendations

By involving Dementia Care Solutions, the Mulberry team learned effective ways to work with people living with dementia and help make the unit feel more dementia friendly. Recommendations I would suggest are:

- The team only went through one Dementia Care Champion Course. I don't feel the entire team needs to participate in the rest of the sessions, however, having lead CNAs and a few nurses complete the course would be beneficial.
- Nursing staff should be more involved in activities. To ensure that all staff can help with activities, I believe the LE department should explain the activity and share how the nursing staff can be of help before the activity begins.
- Continue to have Sheri, from Dementia Care Solutions, coach and train staff "hands on" to allow the unit to effectively solve challenging situations.