Dementia 101:
The Foundation To Dementia Care

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Goals/Objectives: Content

- Be able to describe the factors that affect memory that are NOT dementia.
- Learn to state why dementia is different than "normal aging".
- Be able to define and discuss types of dementia.
- Define and give examples of deficits in attention, memory, language, visual spatial processing and executive functioning.
- Describe the effects of caregiving (staff and family) for someone with a dementia diagnosis.
Goals/Objectives: Trainer Mastery

❖ Choose a good case example.
❖ Be able to facilitate “touchstone” moments.
❖ Identify the three main points and learn how to repeat them.
❖ Be able to help providers recognize caregiver stress.
❖ Be able to help trainees move away from asking, “what type” to “what’s the problem”.
Number of people age 65 and over, by age group, selected years 1900-2000 and projected 2010-2050

Note: Data for 2010-2050 are projections of the population. Reference population: These data refer to the resident population. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census and Projections.
Current Dementia Stats

Age

- 1-2% of those age 60-70
- 5% of those age 71-79
- 24% of those age 80-89
- 37% for those age 90 and over

Types

- Alzheimer’s Dementia most common diagnosis
- Vascular Dementia 2nd most common
Alzheimer’s Tidal Wave

- 5.3 million Americans with Alzheimer’s now
- Every 70 seconds somebody develops Alzheimer’s
- By 2050 someone will develop Alzheimer's every 33 seconds
- Beginning in 2010 - 500K new cases each year
- By 2050 there will be nearly a million new cases per year
LOTS of media attention on dementia, esp Alzheimer’s Disease.

Memory changes may be our greatest worry about aging. We are sensitive to changes!

If you are feeling down, you are more likely to worry. If you always worry about things, you are likely to worry about memory too.

The more scared we are about memory, the harder it may be to work with dementia.
Many Factors Impact Memory

- Aging
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Medication
- Physical Illness
- Boredom
- Sleep

- Energy level
- Beliefs about memory
- How active you keep your mind
- Your expectations for yourself in terms of memory
- Attention and effort to remember
What is Dementia?

- Dementia is a word describes a defined group of cognitive and functional changes.
- Many diseases may cause these changes, not just Alzheimer’s!
- Diseases that cause Dementia:
  - Alzheimer’s Disease - Vascular Disease
  - Fronto-temporal Disease - Parkinson’s Disease
  - Huntington’s Disease - Lewy Body Disease
  - HIV/AIDS
What Kinds of Problems Define Dementia

- Memory problems (Must be significant!)
- Problems in at least one other area
- Attention: Focusing and tracking information
- Language: Speaking & Understanding
- Executive Functioning: Divided attention, problem-solving, decisions. Rational. Emotional Control (Inhibition- ability to bite tongue).
- Visual-spatial Process: Understanding and navigating visual, spatial information
- Significant difficulties with day-to-day function
Dementia is Progressive

- **Early Stages**
  - Deficits are present, complex functioning impacted, some independence

- **Middle Stages**
  - Deficits are worsened, more simple functions impacted, caregiving required most times

- **Late Stages**
  - Deficits are severe, all simple functions impacted (including eating), 24 hour supervision, death

- Remember that each person is different
Learning &
Memory
Center
Hippocampus
BIG CHANGE
Understanding Language – BIG CHANGE
Hearing Sound – Not Changed
Sensory Strip
Motor Strip
White Matter
Connections
BIG CHANGES

Automatic Speech Rhythm – Music
PRESERVED

Speech & Language Center
HUGE CHANGES
Executive Functioning Center
Emotions Behavior
Judgment Reasoning
Vision Center – BIG CHANGES
Case Example

- Spend 5 minutes writing about a client or family member or friend with dementia
- Include who they were prior to diagnosis, when they were diagnosed (if known)
- Describe the problems they are having with memory, at least one other area of cognitive functioning and problems with day to day functioning
Caregiver Stress

- Lots of research documenting the effects of caring for a loved one with dementia
- Physical: Lower immune response. Higher Blood Pressure, Heart Rate and Cortisol Levels
- Some evidence of cultural differences
- Important for providers to recognize stress and burnout in themselves!
Furthering Your Case Example

- Go back and look at the case that you wrote up
- Is there anything to add about the stress that family or professional caregivers were under?
- Any signs of stress/burnout?
- Try describing this case in 2-3 minutes to the person sitting next to you
- Need to find ways to connect with client experience and build empathy
- Touchstone Exercises
  - Think of a time you forgot something really important
  - What if you were given a test about something you had never studied and told you had to pass
  - Think about how you feel when someone corrects you
  - Others?