

Dementia and the Trimbos Institute

The Trimbos Institute aims to develop and translate knowledge that contributes to the improvement of mental healthcare, quality of life and psychological well-being of people with dementia and their caregivers.

Foto: Bert Verhoeff



A dyadic intervention to support persons with early-stage dementia and their caregivers – Dutch SHARE

People with dementia and their caregivers often struggle with changes that come along with dementia separately from each other. The intervention 'SHARE', developed by the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, provides tools to the dyad to deal with changes and stressors that are caused by dementia. The following themes are dealt with: relationships and communication, values and preferences, time for oneself and each other and asking help from others. The Trimbos Institute translated and adapted SHARE, conducted a pilot study and now offers training in this methodology in cooperation with the Dutch Network on Psychological expertise in elderly care (PgD).



E-learning 'Learning about dementia'

How does a professional caregiver make sure that someone with dementia feels comfortable? How can you prevent the occurrence of challenging behavior in people with dementia? And if this behavior does occur, how do you cope with it? These questions are central to the e-learning tool 'Learning about dementia'. The e-learning tool consists of two sections. The first section elaborates on different types of dementia, and how to relate to people with dementia through a person-centered approach. The second part of the e-learning tool focusses on challenging behaviours of people with dementia. *"I recognized some of the incidents in the videos and now I understand why people with dementia act the way they do. I then knew I had to do things differently. And the fun part is, it really does help."* (Student of a nursing working and learning trajectory, Albeda College)



Online support for caregivers

The World Health Organization has partnered up with international experts, including the Trimbos Institute - WHO collaborative center for mental health - to develop a comprehensive, online education portal called 'Support'. The portal is aimed at relieving the burden of caregiving by emphasizing self-help, skills training and support for informal caregivers of people living with dementia. Developing e-mental health applications is an important field of expertise of the Centre for Innovation of the Trimbos Institute. Other examples regarding e-mental health for caregivers of people with dementia include 'Mastery over dementia', a guided self-help internet course in which caregivers learn coping strategies and ways to manage behavioral problems, and 'E-coach', a video-based e-learning aimed at supporting caregivers in managing the challenging behavior (CB) of their relative. The e-learning will be integrated on www.dementie.nl of the Dutch Alzheimer organization.





Through the D'mentia Lens

Family caregivers often have trouble dealing with the changing behavior of their family member with dementia. 'Through the D'mentia Lens' is a simulator using the innovative Oculus Rift VR headset combined with an e-learning. It contains a 360o movie that shows the world from the perspective of a person with dementia so caregivers can experience what it feels like to live with dementia. In a pilot study we test the feasibility and impact of Through the D'mentia Lens. Questions we aim to answer in the pilot study are for example: does this simulator have the potential to contribute to improved understanding of the people with dementia, more empathetic relationships and thereby reduce care burden?



The Living Arrangements for people with Dementia study

The Living Arrangements for people with Dementia (LAD) study is a national ongoing monitoring study in nursing-home care for people with dementia that started in 2008 in the Netherlands.

In the past seven years this study has contributed to:

- An overview of trends in nursing home care for people with dementia in the Netherlands. An example of a positive trend is that over the years residents with dementia are more often involved in doing pleasant activities. A worrying trend is the high number of psychotropic drugs that are still being prescribed.
- A better view of what is important to good quality of care for people with dementia: e.g. person-centered care, activity involvement, philosophy of care, leadership, staff's working conditions, collaboration with family members and volunteers and the physical environment.
- More insight in possible solutions concerning issues on quality of care.
- More insight in directions for internal quality improvements for participating healthcare organizations.



Cooperation within dementia networks

There are many professionals involved in the care of people with dementia, such as GPs, case managers, physicians, psychologists, paramedics and geriatricians. They work together in so called dementia networks. However, the collaboration between professionals does not always run smoothly. 'Soft' factors that determine the success of collaboration are for instance experiencing added value from each other, clarity about the role of each partner and shared assumptions. However, these factors are not accounted for in existing evaluation tools for dementia networks. Therefore, we developed an online tool which can be used by dementia networks to evaluate teamwork between partners and provide input where improvements can be made.



Personalized doors for nursing home residents

Personalized doors are actual size stickers of a former front door, which can be stuck to an apartment's door in a long-term care facility for people with dementia and older adults with psychiatric problems. A front door often holds a symbolic meaning by representing a certain period of time in somebody's life; a place that felt like home. The personalized doors enable residents to "take their former door with them" to the new environment. We evaluated the added value of these doors. It appears that these personalized doors have a positive impact on both the resident, caregivers and family members. For example, the doors can stimulate recollection of memories in residents – reminiscence-, an activity that can lead to improved well-being.



More information
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