

Using a PICO(T) Framework and Evidence to Advance Care for Patients with Dementia

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### **Introduction**

The need to promote healthcare services that meet the patient's needs has seen developments of patient-centred care that incorporate evidence-based practices. The Patient or Problem, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome, and Time (PICO(T) framework is critical to the formulation and definition of study issues and search for evidence. Its practical uses enhance healthcare practices – an essential factor that promotes quality of life. The author will search for evidence surrounding patients who have dementia using secondary sources, use the PICO(T) framework, analyze the findings to the explain their relevance and practical potential for use in decision making.

### **Use of the PICO(T) Approach**

As a nurse, it is essential to identify a practice issue to address and apply the PICO(T) framework to gather relevant knowledge on the practice. Dementia has no known cure and healthcare provided slows down the progression of the syndrome. Individualized nursing care is the practice identified to enhance its effective incorporation to nursing care provided to dementia patients. The question developed using the PICO(T) approach is: Do individualized nursing care and support promote quality of life for dementia patients by slowing down the progression of the syndrome?

The study population takes into account patients who have dementia, aged 40 years and above, and are getting healthcare services from professional nursing facilities. Thus, the study remains objective to nursing care provided in such facilities. Individualized nursing care (INC) is the practice identified in the study. It incorporates clinical situation, clinical data, family history, individual preferences, genomics and personal patient's characteristics in an attempt to promote

their participation in decision making. Significant emphasis is given on the patient's needs compared to healthcare services.

### **Sources of Evidence**

A nursing plan outlines the types of care a patient is to receive from a professional nursing facility. As a nurse, a nursing care plan is an essential tool because it captures the unique patient's needs and guides one to match care with the patient's needs (Dixon, Karagiannidou, & Knapp, 2018). Also, it facilitates monitoring of the patient's progress – an essential aspect in evaluating the effectiveness of nursing care. Nurse's role in the development of a nursing care plan is instrumental as the plan focuses on their judgment using the assessment data (Department of Health, 2009). It reflects identifiable nursing diagnoses, specific to the patient, and contains realistic nursing outcomes (Dixon, Karagiannidou, & Knapp, 2018). A care plan adopts a systematic process focusing on the future of the patient's health.

As a nurse caring for patients who have dementia, the symptoms of the syndrome potentially affects the abilities of the patients establishing the need to develop a care plan for all the patients. Dementia affects the brain functions of patients that, in turn, affects their memory and communication abilities (Bayles, McCullough, & Tomoeda, 2018). Thus, a patient may be incapable of executing some tasks they previously did or even fail to communicate effectively – making it hard to determine their exact need. Nursing care plan records the strengths, family history, job, current medication, weaknesses and abilities of patients on the onset of their treatment or admission to a nursing facility (Dixon, Karagiannidou, & Knapp, 2018). Accuracy of the data is crucial for correct diagnosis and provision of care matching patient's needs. Patient's notes are essential in updating the care plan to reflect the patient's health changes. It is worth sharing the care plan to all professional such as therapist, taking care of the patient.

### **Findings from Scholarly Articles**

The Nursing Home Reform Law of 1987 spells out that it is the right of every resident in a nursing facility to receive individualized care. It requires that patients receive adequate care to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychological well-being following a written plan of care (Fazio, Pace, Flinner, & Kallmyer, 2018). The laws focus on the promotion of quality of life which, as a nurse, aligns to the goals of a professional nursing facility. The effects of dementia are portrayed in a progressive decline in different areas of function, including a decline in memory, reasoning, communication skills and physical inactivity (Brooke, 2016). The disease uniquely affects patients, and individualized nursing care ensures that appropriate and quality care is provided to match the needs. Individualized nursing care includes active listening, empathy, and providing a convenient environment to facilitate the productive nurse-patient relationship and overall outcome (Brooke, 2016). A combination of an accurate health care plan and strong nurse-patient relationship is essential to maintain communication even after the patient's ability to express themselves deteriorates.

### **The Relevance of the Findings**

Given the progressive deteriorating health of patients who have dementia, the need to slow down the illness progression is essential to enhance the quality of life. Additionally, the law requires that the residents of a nursing facility be accorded care that matches their needs, plan of care and enhances dignity, ensuring respect to an individual's preference. Individualized nursing care promotes patients quality of life by matching the care to individual needs of dementia patients. It focuses on a patient's preferences through nursing care that shows empathy encourages meaningful activities and cognitive stimulation. Therefore, individualized nursing

care is essential in providing care to patients who have dementia, given the high prevalence of the illness.

### **Conclusion**

The PICO(T) framework is essential in the design of research questions that address nursing care issues. As a nurse, patients who have dementia may have challenges while carrying out regular tasks, and quality care is essential for their health. A decline in memory among other functional areas can be addressed using nursing care information in professional nursing facilities. It ensures that the patient's needs are well catered for by remaining objective to slow the progress of the illness. Nurses show empathy, listen actively and foster relationships that promote the delivery of quality care and enhancement of the patient's identity.

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