Geriatric Articles


  The increasing prevalence of depression in elderly home health care patients led to a statewide initiative in Connecticut to enhance evidence-based depression treatment for older adults. A training curriculum on depression screening and interventions was developed and disseminated to 25 home care professionals representing 14 agencies in Connecticut using a train-the-trainer model. Home care trainers included nurses and social workers. This article describes Phase I curriculum design and initial evaluation of the impact of the training on the preparation of trainers to provide depression care education at their home care agencies. Several evaluation measures, including an appraisal of the self-reported attitudes and self-efficacy of home care professionals towards depressed older adults, a pre/post-test to assess the trainers’ knowledge, and willingness of trainers to implement the education program at their agencies were used to assess program outcomes. Participants’ self-efficacy levels in screening and caring for depressed older adults was significantly increased following the education program compared to immediately before the education program ($t$, (24) = -4.204; $p < .001$).


  The negative health consequences of caring for an older adult family member with dementia are well documented. However, not all family caregivers experience these negative health consequences. The purposes of this study were to describe strategies family caregivers use to help them continue to provide care for an older family member with dementia despite challenges and describe these family caregivers’ resilience and psychological distress. A mixed methods design was used with a narrative approach dominant and standardized scales for resilience and psychological distress used to enhance the description of the sample. Data were collected through telephone interviews with 18 family caregivers residing in an urban area. The findings indicate that family caregivers used four strategies to sustain the self: drawing on past life experiences, nourishing the self, relying on spirituality, and seeking information about dementia. Understanding strategies used by family caregivers to sustain themselves is essential for providing holistic nursing care and developing effective interventions.


  The purposes of this pilot study were to determine the feasibility of using a Healing Touch (HT) intervention with noncommunity-dwelling older adults experiencing persistent pain and to determine an HT protocol. Data were collected at multiple time points from 20 noncommunity-dwelling older adults experiencing pain. Residents were assigned to the HT group that included techniques specific for pain or a Presence Care group. Outcome variables included measures for pain, activities of daily living, and quality of life. The pain measures showed decreases that were not statistically significant for both groups. The measure for activities of daily living showed a non–statistically significant improvement over time for the HT group. Quality of life decreased for the HT group and improved for the Presence Care group although not significantly. The practitioners were able to complete all seven of the 30- minute HT sessions. The findings indicated that both groups showed some improvement in their pain scores with other measures being variable. HT is a feasible intervention for the elderly with pain. Overall, the findings highlight the complex nature of pain in older adults.
Espnes, G. A., Haugan, G. & Moksnes, U. K. (2013). Nurse-Patient Interaction: A Resource for Hope in Cognitively Intact Nursing Home Patients. *Journal of Holistic Nursing, 31*(3): 152-163. Nursing home care increasingly targets those elderly with the greatest needs in terms of personal daily activities, whereas services supporting spiritual needs such as hope tend to be ignored. Hope is seen to be a dynamic life force vital to well-being. Nursing home patients are frail, vulnerable, and dependent, which may lead to their hope being intimately related to the nurse–patient interaction. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between nurse–patient interaction and hope among cognitively intact nursing home patients. Read the full article [here](#).

Espnes, G. A., Garaasen, H., Hammervold, R., Haugan, G. & Rannestad, T. (2012). The Self-Transcendence Scale: An Investigation of the Factor Structure Among Nursing Home Patients. *Journal of Holistic Nursing, 30*(3): 147-159. Self-transcendence, the ability to expand personal boundaries in multiple ways, has been found to provide well-being. The purpose of this study was to examine the dimensionality of the Norwegian version of the Self-Transcendence Scale, which comprises 15 items. Read the full article [here](#).


Howard, E. P & Strout, K. A. (2012). The Six Dimensions of Wellness and Cognition in Aging Adults. *Journal of Holistic Nursing, 30*(3): 195-204. The objective of this study is to examine how wellness in six dimensions (occupational, social, intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual) protects cognition in aging adults. Cognitive impairment increases with age; baby boomers represent a significant percent of the population at risk for cognitive impairment. Cognitive impairment has a negative impact on nursing resources, health care finances, patient mortality, and quality of life. Wellness and prevention is one focus of Institute of Medicine’s vision for the future of nursing. Read the full article [here](#).