

Together for meaningful and enlivening activities

- students and persons with dementia

Background

The importance of person-centered care, quality of life and quality of care for people in long time care have been focused in international research, but there is still a way to go. It is especially a challenge in relation to people with dementia. In a Norwegian setting, it is estimated that about 80% of nursing home residents have dementia. Facilitating person-centered care for this group is a challenge.

Aim

How to tailor meaningful and enlivening activities for the individual person with dementia living in long time care.

Methods

A qualitative, explorative design was chosen for this study. Students explored different ways to communicate with the residents. Thirty-six nursing students were included, 12 students each year in a three-year period. Each student was responsible for two residents and wrote eight reflection journals upon activities. Data was retrieved from 284 reflective journals and from eight focus group interviews. Data from the reflection journals and focus group interviews are analyzed by qualitative content analysis.

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References:

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Results

The main theme retrieved out of this study is: **enlivening through sensing the spark of life**. When the resident feel enlivened, it is expressed both verbally and non-verbally, and the attentive nurse/-student could be guided by these expressions. The findings shows two categories:

- 1. Journeying to meaningful and enlivening activities.** This category describes and provides examples of how students and residents travel together to search and adjust for what is meaningful to the individual resident.
- 2. Expressions of enlivening** explains and illustrates how students recognize and interpret expressions of enlivening with the residents.

Conclusion

It is possible to tailor meaningful and enlivening activities together with the individual person with dementia. Involvement and interest is necessary in order to read, understand verbal and nonverbal expressions and communicate with the individual resident.