

PubMed

Format: Abstract

Int J Geriatr Psychiatry. 2014 Apr;29(4):384-91. doi: 10.1002/gps.4014. Epub 2013 Aug 20.

Nurses in distress? An explorative study into the relation between distress and individual neuropsychiatric symptoms of people with dementia in nursing homes.

Zwijzen SA¹, Kabboord A, Eefsting JA, Hertogh CM, Pot AM, Gerritsen DL, Smalbrugge M.

Author information

Abstract

OBJECTIVES: To optimize care and interventions to improve care, and to reduce staff burden, it is important to have knowledge of the relation between individual neuropsychiatric symptoms and distress of care staff. We therefore explored the relation between frequency and severity of individual neuropsychiatric symptoms and distress of care staff.

DESIGN: This is an explorative study with a cross-sectional design.

PARTICIPANTS AND SETTING: Care staff was interviewed regarding 432 residents of 17 nursing homes for people with dementia.

MEASUREMENTS: Behavioural problems were assessed using the Nursing Home version of the Neuropsychiatric Inventory (NPI-NH) questionnaire. The distress scale of the NPI-NH was used to determine the distress of care staff.

RESULTS: Agitation/aggression had the highest mean distress score and was also the most prevalent symptom. Disinhibition and irritability/lability also had high mean distress scores, whereas euphoria/elation, hallucinations and apathy had the lowest mean distress score. The symptom severity of each symptom strongly predicted the distress score, whereas the frequency of the symptoms was a less important factor.

CONCLUSIONS: Although some of these findings are in accordance with studies among informal caregivers, there are also notable differences. Apathy caused little distress among care staff. Therefore, care staff might not feel the urgency to explore the causes of this symptom. The findings of this study emphasize the importance of supporting care staff in the management of behavioural problems, especially aggression and apathy.

Copyright © 2013 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

KEYWORDS: behavioural symptoms; burnout; caregiver; nursing homes

PMID: 23963653 DOI: [10.1002/gps.4014](https://doi.org/10.1002/gps.4014)

[Indexed for MEDLINE]