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ABSTRACT

This project was inspired by the Social Work class Applications of Social Justice and Human Rights in Social Work.

As a Clinical Practice with Families and Children student and as an intern at Merwick Care and Rehab, I was able to identify a need for an education in the way the staff interacted with the residents. I hosted an inservice session to discuss and highlight the cultural and language sensitivity issues highlighted in my audits as well as the effects this can have on the population. After hosting an inservice session, I collected data regarding the increased awareness and knowledge on the topic.

Problem and Population

Being able to examine structural disparities within the skilled nursing home system as a whole allows one to recognize the need to look at the situation from a theoretical approach (Alexander, et. al., 2022). Looking at the presented issue from a capabilities perspective can allow for the facility to identify how their environment and contributing key players in their care can either benefit or hinder their progress within their rehabilitation stay. It has been identified that poor treatment can lead to mental health issues (Alradaddi, 2022). Since capabilities theory focuses on the highest potential outcome, having care that hinders progress shows that someone is not reaching their highest potential.

The social issue identified is the increased concerns of clients regarding their treatment and how it affects them mentally while they are in skilled nursing care. To eliminate the identified issue, there needed to be education to the staff. If the staff is unaware of their actions because they were misinterpreted or they do not realize what they are doing wrong, there is no way to correct the presented issue. The program to implement this elimination of the issue would be to collect concern forms and store them by month so that the issues can be addressed once a month. By addressing the issues on a monthly basis, it can be tracked whether the issues are decreasing once they are talked about and addressed or not. Involvement of clients directly impacted would only be done if a concern form was written and if a client or clients family spoke up about how they felt. Pairing feedback with the education on mental and physical impacts of elder abuse and the stigma with ageism will allow a new perspective of intersectionality to be addressed and make it more of an educational session.

Site of Intervention

Merwick Care and Rehab located at 100 Plainsboro Rd, Plainsboro, NJ is a skilled nursing facility in Middlesex County. This facility consists of subacute rehab and a long-term care units. There are 200 beds total. The issues addressed concern all the residents that are patients at this facility whether it be rehab or long term.

Intervention

For this project, I implemented an education session/in-service for the staff at my internship, Merwick Care and Rehabilitation Center. Through this project, I raised awareness and urged for reformation in terms of maintaining dignity and using a human rights perspective in the way the staff interacts with its clients. I presented a PowerPoint presentation that I created about language sensitivity and interactional sensitivity among the geriatric population.



Impact

- In feedback gathered after the presentation-
- All participants reported their knowledge of language and cultural sensitivity increased
 - All participants reported they will continue to use the skills learned
 - Most participants reported that this in-service was beneficial to them
 - Some participants reported suggestions on how this in-service could be better delivered
 - Examples included using specific scenarios from feedback, addressing the issue head on when it occurs, and having in-services more frequently

Advancing Social Justice and Human Rights

Human rights and social justice foster the idea that everybody is entitled to equal opportunities and fundamental rights that should not be infringed upon. These are things that no matter how old someone is, should not matter. The older adult population tends to be one of the populations affected by infringement of rights and subjected to abuse. Skilled nursing facility residents are often individuals who can become subjected to this type of abuse. Elder abuse can include physical, emotional, psychological, financial and other types of abuse perpetrated towards older adults. Verbal abuse and psychological abuse have the highest rates in a skilled nursing setting. Verbal abuse accounts for 20% of reported abuse in a skilled nursing setting (Conti, et. al., 2022). Psychological abuse accounts for 33.4% of reported abuse (Hirt, et. al., 2022).

References

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