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SUPPORTING DIRECT CARE WORKERS CARING FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA – EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF A PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION

Field: Gerontology

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Abstract:

The main purpose of the thesis was to develop, implement, and evaluate the effects of a psycho-educational intervention on direct care workers caring for people with dementia in aged-care facilities. Specifically, the study aimed to assess the effects of the intervention on workers’ perceived stress, burnout, and job satisfaction; verbal and non-verbal communicative behaviours; and quality of interactions with residents with dementia. Additionally, the medium-term efficacy of the intervention on workers’ outcomes was assessed, and a qualitative analysis of the factors that were relevant to the success or failure of the intervention was performed.

How my research is having impact:

The thesis contributes to work in the field of person-centred care and represents a major advancement in the design of educational interventions in aged-care facilities. This is to the best of our knowledge the first study to assess the effects of a psycho-educational intervention on direct care workers. The intervention was found to have pioneered a few innovations that are considered important to improve workers’ wellbeing (e.g. implementation of weekly relaxation sessions after the intervention). Such, highlight the importance of seeing these initiatives as an important stimulus for change.