

Presentation of the results within the project “All for memory (SPAM)” Education of educators - Communication with Individuals Affected by Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias

Prikaz rezultata projekta „Svi za pamćenje (SPAM)” Edukacija edukatora- Komunikacija s osobama oboljelim od Alzheimerove bolesti i drugih demencija

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Introduction and objective: With the increasing share of elderly people in the population structure, there is an inevitable rise in the prevalence of Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias. Dementia is not a normal part of aging, and the risk of developing dementia increases with age. The most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer’s disease (AD), which is characterized by memory loss, reasoning impairment, and personality changes. Due to cognitive and psychiatric symptoms, patients experience early functional decline and become increasingly dependent on others for assistance. Recognizing the initial signs of the disease early and initiating standard anti-dementia treatment in a timely manner are crucial for planning the future care of individuals in elderly homes. Additionally, implementing preventive programs to preserve cognitive functions is essential. The objective of the project was to provide training for caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias, as well as to develop training materials.

Methods: The employees of the Service for public health gerontology at the Teaching Institute for Public Health “Dr. Andrija Štampar,” together with their colleagues from Service of mental health, created an educational material called the “Manual for Formal Caregivers: “Communication with Individuals Affected by Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias” for the training participants. Two-day training sessions were organized for educators – nurses working in elderly homes.

Results: The first two-day training took place in Osijek in June 2022, with the participation of 35 attendees from elderly homes across five counties. The second one was held in Zagreb in June 2022, with 36 participants from elderly homes across eight counties. All participants received the manual as an educational material for their caregiving training in their respective elderly homes. Nearly all participants provided positive evaluations of this educational model and the seminars.

Conclusion: The evaluation confirmed the purposefulness of the seminar’s topic, highlighting the need for further similar education programs. Through this training, knowledge was effectively conveyed to the participants, equipping them with the necessary skills for their ongoing work and contributing to the enhancement of care for patients with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias in elderly homes and gerontological centers.

LITERATURE

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