

NURSING RESEARCH REVIEW FORM

1st Review

Manuscript # 2004/090
Manuscript title: Efficacy of theory-based activities for behavioral symptoms of dementia
Manuscript type: Regular
Number of text pgs.: 16
Number of figures: 2
Number of tables: 2

Reviewer :

Stat reviewer assigned?: Do you recommend a stat reviewer? Also, the findings need to be presented in the table better with less in the narrative (see pages 14 and 15). Perhaps more than one table is needed.

Please evaluate the following with these choices: (1) adequate, (2) inadequate (describe in written review) or (3) not appropriate (describe in written review)

Problem statement: 1
Attention to relevant literature: 2
Theoretical framework: 2
Research design: 2
Data analysis: 2
Discussion of results: 1
Organization: 1
Writing style: 1

Please rate the following topics 1-5 (with 5 being the highest rating):

Value of topic: 5
Probable reader interest in topic: 5
Importance of present contribution to nursing: 5
Priority of topic for publication: 5
Rank this manuscript for its value: 5

Reviewer's Recommendation (please type "X" after your choice):

Accept without revisions
Accept with revisions **X**
Maybe accept with revisions
Do not accept

Comments for Editor only:

I wasn't sure how strict NR is about adherence to the Consort criteria, but I used them to evaluate this manuscript. Please check this.

Be sure to present a balanced view of the manuscript's strengths and weaknesses.

1. Problem statement

The study reported in this manuscript is very important in the field of gerontology and gerontological nursing. The authors are to be commended for extending the research on effective responses to behavioral symptoms in older adults with dementia. Behavioral symptoms cause much distress to both older adults and people who care for them as the authors have stated.

I would ask the authors to reconsider using the word “inappropriate” (page 3, lines 19+) to describe agitated behaviors. Inappropriate is as pejorative as “disruptive”, a word commonly used to describe behaviors in elders with dementia. The Need-driven Dementia-compromised Behavioral (NDB) model specifically is trying to avoid using such language. The behaviors are inappropriate only from the view of other people, not from the view of the older adult, just as they are disruptive to others. For the older adult it may be the only way to express an unmet need and thus is quite appropriate.

2. Literature review

The literature review is brief and could be fleshed out some more. There is literature demonstrating an association between agitated behaviors and movement during routine care activities. Thus, agitation often does not occur during “unoccupied” time as the authors state. Thus, a modification of the sentence on lines 4 and 5 of page 4 is warranted.

3. Theoretical framework

The NDB is an extremely important development in the study of older adults with dementia. The prevailing medical model, which attributes such behavioral symptoms to changes in the brain caused by the deterioration of dementia, has resulted in a standard of practice with antipsychotic drugs that have not been found to be effective and have many side effects. The NDB model shows much promise and studies using it are much needed.

The figures presented in the manuscript are however, difficult to follow: the intervention is not included in the Causal Model figure; several concepts used in the narrative are not included (e.g., style of interest, recreational activities).

4. Style of presentation. The manuscript is very well-written with the exceptions as noted about, which need fleshing out.

5. Research design

- Strengths of the design: Individualized interventions, use of videotaping to measure behavioral outcomes
- The paragraph on recruitment, (page 7, lines 14+): The numbers don't add up. If 6 consented participants were lost to follow up that should be 33, but the final sample is stated as 30
- Convergent validity (with what?) pg. 10
- What statistic was used for inter-rater reliability? Page 11, line 6

- Page 15
 - Randomization details are incomplete (Consort # 8, 9, 10)
 - More detail could be added about the background/discipline of the interventionists and the training they received.
6. data analysis
- Consort items 13 (participant flow) and 14 (recruitment) are missing
 - Consort item 14: the authors did not perform an intention-to-treat analysis and it looks as though partial data were available for some participants (page 7, bottom).
 - Consort 17: estimated effect sizes and precision are not reported in the table.
 - Consort 19: adverse events are not reported as such, although one participant was dropped because the video camera was upsetting to him.
7. Organization
- There is a one-sentence paragraph on page 9. It looks like the sentence is unfinished.