Culturally Sensitive Dementia care

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The presentation

Provide information and support for:

- Professional care providers that provide services to individuals with dementia
- Professional care providers working with culturally and linguistically diverse population
Presentation Aims/Objectives

- Communicate in a more culturally effective manners to better help individuals with dementia and their family members
- Provide culturally sensitive dementia care to diverse population
- Knowledge of where and how to find further information and support services
Why Learn about Working with Older Adults Immigrant?

U.S. immigrant population ages 65 and older are two trends—

- The aging of the long-term foreign-born population and
- The recent migration of older adults as part of family reunification and refugee admissions.

- Older adults are the fastest growing segment of the population.
- Illness, cognitive decline, and mental health issues are not normal manifestations of aging, however, the incidence of these conditions increases with age.


Why Learn about Working with Older Adults?

- As ethical and competent professionals, it is important to prepare ourselves for effective practice with client with diverse ethnicity and culture.  
  Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002

- These next slides illustrate the projected growth of the immigrant population over 65 in the U.S.
Statistics

Statistics (continued)

**Population by Selected Age Group and Nativity: 2014 to 2060**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 National Projections.
Dementia: Definition

- Dementia is not a specific disease.

- Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life.

Memory loss is an example.

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Dementia: Symptoms

- Include disturbances of multiple higher functions of the brain including:
  - Memory
  - Thinking
  - Orientation
  - Comprehension
  - Calculation
  - Learning capacity
  - Language and judgment.

- Symptoms frequently cause changes in mood, behavior, and personality.

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Warning Signs of Dementia

- Memory loss
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks
- Problems with language
- Disorientation to time and place
- Poor or decreased judgment
  - Misplacing things
  - Problems with abstract thinking

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Difference Between Dementia and Normal Memory Difficulties

- An example of forgetting part of an experience with normal memory challenges: *You forget where you put your car keys.*

- How this would present with Alzheimer’s Dementia: *You forget what your car keys are for.*

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
### Difference Between Alzheimer and Normal Memory Difficulties?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Alzheimer’s Disease</th>
<th>Age-associated Memory Problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forgets</td>
<td>Whole experiences</td>
<td>Parts of an experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remembers later</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can follow written or spoken directions</td>
<td>Gradually unable</td>
<td>Usually able</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can use notes</td>
<td>Gradually unable</td>
<td>Usually able</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can care for self</td>
<td>Gradually unable</td>
<td>Usually able</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cultural Beliefs About Dementia

Stigma of a cognitive impairment:

- Odd behaviors will be viewed as a result of “bad blood.” (eg. Waali= Crazy in Somali)

- Family secrets become a mechanism to evade public shame and humiliation.

- Maintaining social appearance and respect in the community is important.

- Caregiving becomes primarily a family activity.

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Cultural Beliefs About Dementia (continued)

Some caregivers attribute cognitive impairments to:

- The will of God
- Punishment for past sins and the caregiver must bear this sin
- The evil eye
- Normal aging

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Barriers to Care

- Limited knowledge of dementia.
- Limited knowledge of available support services.
- Relatively few bilingual or bi-cultural service providers.
- Limited culturally sensitive educational materials to address the needs of Immigrants caregivers.

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Providing Culturally Sensitive Dementia Care

- Consider each person as individual
- Holistic Approach to care Family
- Understand Linguistic and economic barriers
- Acknowledge religion as a support system
- Respect Cultural differences and perception of aging

www.alz.org
Elements of culturally sensitive care

- Self-Awareness
- Value Diversity/ Awareness and Acceptance of differences
- Knowledge of client’s culture including their perception of aging, caring for family members and memory impairment
- Understand the linguistic, economic and social barriers individuals from diverse population face. Provide services in a family’s native language.
- Adaptation of skills and Techniques

Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
Dementia Assessment

- Assessment tools that help determine an individual’s stage of Alzheimer’s dementia:
  - Global Deterioration Scale
  - Brief Cognitive Rating Scale
  - Functional Assessment Staging Tool

- Mini Mental Status Exam (MMSE)
  - Cannot diagnose Alzheimer’s & dementia, but it can help identify an individual’s cognitive strengths and limitations.
  - Often used as a screening tool.

www.alz.org
Results of cognitive assessment are influenced by:
- Education
- Socioeconomic status
- Ethnicity
- Literacy
- Acculturation

Immigrant of Africa descends elders, Hispanic/Latino elders and Native American elders may have false positive scores for cognitive decline due to cultural bias inherent in common cognitive assessment tools.
References

- Alzheimer Disease and Associated Disorders, 2002
University of Southern California USC Libraries Resource Guide to Diversity on Aging -

Alzheimer’s Association Cultural/ Ethnic Diversity -
www.alz.org/alzwa/in_my_community_13902.asp

The Rowland Universal Dementia Assessment -

Concise Cognitive Screen -
Question and Answer
Thank you!