Institutionen för Neurobiologi, Vårdvetenskap och Samhälle

Förhållningssätt och kommunikation i mötet med personer med demenssjukdom
Utvärdering av ett träningsprogram med validationsmetoden

AKADEMISK AVHANDLING
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ABSTRACT

Communication difficulties among residents with dementia disease living in nursing homes may complicate care situations. These residents can have difficulties describing how they experience their everyday lives, which can lead to withdrawal, social isolation, or feelings of homelessness. Research indicates that nurses involved in dementia care experience communication as difficult and challenging. The validation method developed by Feil is held to facilitate communication through emphatic and confirmatory approaches. Scientific reviews show insufficient evidence for recommending the use of the method, in spite of this the method is used in dementia care. Evaluations of the validation method have primarily focused on the residents’ perspective, and reports on nurses’ experiences of the validation method are sparse. The overall aim for this thesis was to evaluate Feils’ validation method by describing nurses’ experiences and skills in communication observed during implementation of a training programme. Twelve nurses participated in the validation method training programme that included 10 days of theoretical training with supervision about once a month, and practical training integrated in everyday work. During practical training nurses had conversation with 3 residents each 2-3 times a week, and videotaped one conversation per month. Methods: The design is based on naturalistic scientific approach. Data were collected with interviews (I, II) and a questionnaire (II) before and after the programme, and videotaped conversations during the programme (III, IV). An interview was conducted as a comparison with nurses from another nursing home, who had long experiences of using the validation method (I). The result showed that nurses improved their communication and had closer relationships with residents with dementia disease after validation method training, in accordance with nurses with long experiences (I). The training strengthened the nurses, but also posed an extra strain on them. Even though the nurses described an extra strain on the entire nursing staff, this was not reflected in the results from the questionnaire about the work climate (II). Videotaped one-to-one conversations between nurses and residents showed that the nurses developed their approaches and communication skills, although to different degrees. An overall pattern revealed nurses’ movements within and between various paths when improving their communication skills (III). The findings were in congruence with the nurses described experiences (I). In videotaped conversations from the end of the programme, the residents had the possibilities to use their remaining communication abilities and to communicate what was currently on their mind (IV). This may be related to the development of the nurses’ communication skills during the programme. Conclusions of this thesis were that the nurses developed their skills in caring approach and communication when communicating with residents with dementia disease, which gave these residents possibilities to communicate according to their abilities. In order to integrate new knowledge about communication the results showed that it was necessary to combine theoretical and practical training with supervision and reflection. To provide nursing staff with this type of training could be seen as an investment for nursing homes, an opportunity to increase job satisfaction for nurses and to increase social community for residents.

Keywords: validation method; evaluation studies; dementia care; communication skills; caring approach; videotaped conversations; qualitative analyses