



**Karolinska  
Institutet**

**Institutionen för Neurobiologi, Vårdvetenskap och Samhälle**

# Förhållningssätt och kommunikation i mötet med personer med demenssjukdom

Utvärdering av ett träningsprogram med  
validationsmetoden

**AKADEMISK AVHANDLING**

som för avläggande av medicine doktorsexamen vid Karolinska  
Institutet offentligen försvaras i Aulan, Ersta Sköndal högskola,  
Stigbergsgatan 30, Stockholm

**Fredagen den 4 oktober, 2013, kl 09.00**

av

**Mona Söderlund**

Leg sjuksköterska, högskoleadjunkt, filosofie magister

*Huvudhandledare:*

Docent Görel Hansebo  
Ersta Sköndal högskola  
Institutionen för vårdvetenskap

*Bihandledare:*

Professor Astrid Norberg  
Ersta Sköndal högskola  
Palliativt forskningscentrum

Professor Britt-Marie Ternstedt  
Ersta Sköndal högskola  
Palliativt forskningscentrum

Filosofie doktor Agneta Cronqvist  
Ersta Sköndal högskola  
Institutionen för vårdvetenskap

*Fakultetsopponent:*

Helle Wijk  
Göteborgs universitet  
Sahlgrenska akademien  
Institutionen för vårdvetenskap och samhälle

*Betygsnämnd:*

Agneta Berg  
Högskolan i Kristianstad  
Hälsa och samhälle

Lars-Olof Wahlund  
Karolinska Institutet  
Institutionen för neurobiologi, vårdvetenskap  
och samhälle

Maria Engström  
Högskolan i Gävle  
Avdelningen för hälso- och vårdvetenskap

**Stockholm 2013**

## 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 Feil's 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

ISBN 978-91-7549-277-3