painACT
pain Aged Care Training

Pain assessment

THE AUSTRALIAN PAIN SOCIETY
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OVERVIEW OF MODULE

This is a self-led education module containing a video that you can distribute to relevant aged care staff to watch in their own time (see description below). The overall aim of this module is to provide a summary of how pain is/should be assessed in aged care. There is no accompanying face-to-face training session that needs to be conducted by the trainer. At the end of this document there are seven (7) multiple choice questions to be completed as a self-assessment to ensure you (as the trainer) have understood the content.
Video duration: Approximately 11.5 minutes.

The video is designed to be viewed primarily by nurses who are new to working in aged care, or as a refresher for nurses who have previously worked in an aged care setting. However, any staff member who has been delegated the role of trainer as part of painACT will also benefit from this module. In addition, although the information here is not targeted to personal care workers, parts of this video may still be of value, and so you may choose to share this video with any staff member who you think may benefit from this education module.

Learning objectives

1 Identify types of pain in aged care and when they are likely to be experienced

2 Describe simple pain assessment tools used in aged care

3 Describe pain assessment tools used for aged care residents/patients/clients living with dementia

4 Identify aspects of a comprehensive pain assessment conducted in aged care

Key messages

1 Pain can impact on aged care residents'/patients'/clients' overall functioning, including psychosocial aspects like relationships, mental health and emotional wellbeing

2 Pain can be acute (pain for less than three months) or chronic (pain for more than three months)

3 Pain assessment strategies include self-report tools and observational scales, and the goal of implementing these tools is the help reduce the broader impact of pain on the person

4 Managing pain effectively in aged care often involves a comprehensive assessment of pain in conjunction with input from a multidisciplinary team

Length of the education module

This education module includes an 11.5-minute video for nurses/relevant aged care facility/aged care provider organisation staff to watch individually. There is no group training associated with this module.

Trainer role

At least 30 minutes should be set aside for the trainer to become familiar with the content delivered in the pain assessment video before distributing to relevant aged care staff. There are no participant handouts associated with this education module. It is up to the individual aged care facility/aged care provider organisation to distribute the video to relevant staff to watch.

Additionally, the trainer should make themselves available for any comments or questions that staff may have after watching the video.

Key resources for this topic

- A computer with sound/speaker capacity to watch the 'Pain assessment' video for this module
- For a full and comprehensive exploration of this topic, refer to the source reference "Pain in Residential Aged Care Facilities: Management Strategies, 2nd Edition": https://www.apsoc.org.au/publications (optional)
- Primary resources are the Pain Management Guide (PMG) Toolkit 2nd Edition and the Pain in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF): Management Strategies 2nd Edition
- In particular, the following appendices and resource are relevant for information on pain in older people in RACFs and must be utilised in the context of the information contained in the "Pain in Residential Aged Care Facilities: Management Strategies, 2nd Edition" book, rather than in isolation.

  - These appendices can be found here: https://www.apsoc.org.au/Pain-in-RACF2-Appendices
    — Appendix 1: Modified Resident's Verbal Brief Pain Inventory (M-RVBPI; 5-minute read)

    — Appendix 2: Numeric Rating Scale (NRS; 1-minute read)

    — Appendix 3: Verbal Descriptor Scale (VDS; 1-minute read)

    — Appendix 5: Abbey Pain Scale (2-minute read)

    — Appendix 6: Pain Assessment IN Advanced Dementia (PAINAD) Scale (3-minute read)

    — Appendix 7: The Aged Care Pain Chart (2-minute read)

  - The following resource can be found here: https://www.apsoc.org.au/Pain-in-RACF2-Resources

    — Resource 4: Pain behaviours used in validated observational pain scales (2-minute read)

Self-assessment: Multiple choice questions

1 In addition to a physical effect on the body, pain also impacts psychosocial aspects of aged care residents'/patients'/clients daily life. What psychosocial aspects can pain affect? Circle the most appropriate answer.

A) Pain only has a physical impact

B) Pain only has a physical impact and emotional impact

C) Pain can have an impact on an aged care resident's/patient's/client's ability to function, their independence, their eating/sleeping, their emotions, their mental health, their social interactions and their relationships

D) Pain only impacts an aged care resident's/patient's/client's ability to eat and sleep

2 What is an example of acute pain that can be experienced by a resident/patient/client in aged care? Circle the most appropriate answer.

A) Bone fracture pain after a fall

B) Soft tissue injury after a fall

C) Pain after surgery

D) All of the above

3 Chronic pain is pain that persists beyond what is considered 'normal healing time.' After what time period is pain considered chronic? Circle the most appropriate answer.

A) More than three months

B) More than one week

C) More than two weeks

D) More than 12 months

4 When is pain likely to occur in aged care? Circle the most appropriate answer

A) During personal care

B) When the aged care resident/patient/client is moving

C) Throughout prolonged periods of immobility

D) All of the above

Self-assessment: Multiple choice questions

5 It is important to watch out for signs of pain in aged care residents/patients/clients, particularly if they are unable to communicate reliably about their pain. What are some indicators you can observe that can help you assess if a resident/patient/client may be in pain? Circle the most appropriate answer.

A) Facial expressions, body language, changes in routine, changes in mental state

B) No changes in social interactions

C) Body language does not help assess if someone is in pain

D) Verbalisation/vocalisation is the only way an aged care resident/patient/client can show pain

6 Two common tools that are used to self-report pain in aged care include:

A) Numeric Rating Scale and Verbal Descriptor Scale

B) Verbal Descriptor Scale and PAINAD

C) PAINAD and PainChek

D) PainChek and Numeric Rating Scale

7 Managing pain effectively in aged care often involves a comprehensive assessment of pain in conjunction with input from a multidisciplinary team. What are the types of healthcare professionals are involved in a multidisciplinary approach to managing pain in aged care? Circle the most appropriate answer.

A) Nurses only

B) Nurses, physicians, physical therapists, pharmacists, occupational therapists and psychologists

C) Physicians only

D) Nurses, physicians, pharmacists

Multiple Choice Question (answers)
1 (C), 2 (D), 3 (A), 4 (D), 5 (A), 6 (A), 7 (B)

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