

Abstract

Is a personalised audio and visual content program feasible and useful for the most vulnerable residents living with advanced dementia in aged care homes?

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Background

An audio-visual listening program has been demonstrated as a useful person-centred care tool in several Australian aged care services.

Aim

With additional personalisation features, we aimed to explore the feasibility of the five-week listening program as an effective alternative to managing dementia-related behaviours and reducing psychotropic use.

Methods

This descriptive study examined the feasibility outcomes of the program in a special dementia aged care facility in New Zealand, by analysing the usage statistics and staff evaluation on behaviour reductions. We analysed daily medication charts to explore changes in psychotropic administration before and during the program.

Most of the 22 participants had severe cognitive impairments (73%) and psychiatric comorbidities (68%). Fifteen (68%) participants used the program totalling 104 sessions with minimal adverse reactions. Ten participants accessed the personalised program contents intensively throughout the five-week trial, for a weekly average of 2 hours.

Results

Staff reported a 70% reduction in agitation or verbal behaviours 12% clinically meaningful reduction was seen in pro re nata psychotropic administrations.

Conclusion

The personalised listening program can be a feasible alternative intervention for behavioural symptoms in highly vulnerable residents with advanced dementia. Assessing its impact on the rate of psychotropic administration warrants further research.