

# CHANGING THE CULTURE OF DEMENTIA CARE IN HOSPITALS: EVALUATION OF THE ITALIAN EDITION OF BEST PRACTICE IN DEMENTIA CARE LEARNING PROGRAMME DESIGNED FOR HEALTHCARE STAFF WORKING IN HOSPITAL

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**BACKGROUND** : Dementia is recognised as an international health priority. **Italian National dementia strategy** (2015) requires the integration and delivery of evidence-based practice in dementia care and literature highlight importance to train health care staff to enhance the quality of life of people with dementia in care settings. In Hospital people living with dementia often experience delirium. **Best Practice in Dementia Care learning program for hospitals**, developed by the Dementia Services Development Centre (**DSDC**), University of Stirling, is delivered in workplace by an internal facilitator, so learning has immediate impact on care delivery. The content is patient-centred throughout, focusing on the needs of the person receiving care. Participants are supported to reflect and consider how they might change in practice.



**AIM OF STUDY** : the aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme in terms of improved or changed skills and practice and increased quality of care and patient well-being.

**METHODS**: This is a **Prospective open cohort study**. The study included 36 course participants: **12 medical doctors (geriatricians)**, **8 formal carers** and **16 nurses** to work in a Geriatric ward and **60 patients**. The evaluation included feedback questionnaires, reflective exercises (analysed qualitatively and thematically), Dementia attitude scale (**DAS**), Caregiver Difficulty Scale (**CDS**), Neuropsychiatric Inventory Questionnaire (**NPI-Q**), Memorial delirium assessment scale (**MDAS**), **Barthel Index** and an observation grid of the patient's health and well-being.



**RESULTS**: the study is ongoing but most participants reported the programme has satisfied their training needs. Most participants reported the programme had affected how they worked with, ad supported, their colleagues in their team.



**CONCLUSIONS**: the evaluation demonstrates **marked changes in values** and belief relating to care and **support of people with dementia** and an increased awareness and understanding of dementia in practice in these settings.

The programme had increased the support among colleagues in their team.