

The Dementia Caregiver's Toolbox

Tips, news bites, product reviews, and people in the news for professional and family caregivers who want to keep up with the world of dementia care. This is a companion blog to www.nurturingnuggets.com, a product line which provides education to caregivers while supporting dementia and caregiving causes worldwide.

January 06, 2007

Dementia Certification: Proceed With Caution!!

I have been upset about the whole dementia certification issue for years and now I'm ready to talk about it. You say, what could possibly be upsetting about getting certified as a dementia practitioner or specialist? It's all in the presentation, read on.

Certification in many professions takes on two forms: certification that is rendered from submitting credentials and then there is certification that comes from competence; training on the subject and testing of the competence in knowing the subject.

You see many folks out there doing great work in dementia care who want to get some recognition and credit for their work, so they search for a place to give them certification or recognition. Fine, no problem. **But, there is NO nationally sanctioned standards for dementia professionals as yet**, with each state in the U.S. setting up their own guidelines on what constitutes dementia training. None of the big organizations have come forward, such as the [Alzheimer's Association](#), to offer standardized training for staff to work with dementia clients. This is confusing to many people because if you search on the internet, you will come across a "National" organization that will credential you in the first method I spoke about; submit your paperwork, pay a fee and get your certificate. You can then be put on a list of [Certified Dementia Practitioners](#) and use that designation after your name. Certification of this type is not a new concept but people have to be aware of what they are actually getting for the fees they pay. What does this [CDP](#) really mean out there in the world? Who are the people on this National Board and what are their qualifications? Do they have a financial relationship to some of the other links that they offer you? If you are satisfied with the answers, then by all means, go for it.

Another certification route is to actually take courses from a school or organization, take a test and get a dementia certificate. [Copper Ridge Institute](#) is a recognized dementia training spot through Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and offer a Dementia Care Certification Course. Other schools like the [University of South Carolina](#) offer Dementia Care Specialist Certification. There are also so many private companies that provide training as well, such as [Dignity First](#) and many more.

You are probably wondering if I have dementia certification and I do, from [Senior Care](#), as a Dementia Care Specialist. I had to take 16 hours of training and pass a test. I don't even mention the certification in my bio as my experience out in the field along with my published books provides anyone the background they need.

My purpose isn't to bash any dementia trainers trying to make a living. All I am suggesting to you is to be a savvy consumer and don't jump at the first thing you see that gives you letters after your name. Be sure you are getting value for the money you are spending.

Posted at 08:08 PM in [General dementia information](#) | [Permalink](#)

TrackBack

TrackBack URL for this entry:

<http://www.typepad.com/services/trackback/6a00d8341edfe453ef00d8346b2c8969e2>

Listed below are links to weblogs that reference [Dementia Certification: Proceed With Caution!!](#):

Comments

Experience is truly what it's about. I'm all for formal education. But until one has experience caring for someone with dementia, I find that person's "expertise" hard to relate to. Great post, Sue.

Posted by: [Carol](#) | [March 16, 2007 at 09:04 AM](#)

Verify your Comment

Previewing your Comment

Posted by: |

This is only a preview. Your comment has not yet been posted.



Your comment could not be posted. Error type:

Your comment has been posted. [Post another comment](#)

The letters and numbers you entered did not match the image. Please try again.

As a final step before posting your comment, enter the letters and numbers you see in the image below. This prevents automated programs from posting comments.

Having trouble reading this image? [View an alternate.](#)



