



Staffing, Training Biggest Problems in Alzheimer's Care Units

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Special care units for Alzheimer's sufferers are proliferating in nursing homes around the country. The idea is that by grouping people with Alzheimer's disease together in special units, they can receive better, more appropriate care.

That sounds good in theory. But in practice, special care units suffer from inadequate staffing and staff training.

These results come from a survey of 77 administrators who operate special care units for dementia sufferers in the US. and Canada by Tampa, Florida, researchers Stephanie Hoffman, Ph.D., and Mary Kaplan, M.S.W.

The 10 most frequently cited challenges in running Alzheimer's care units were (in descending order):

Inadequate staffing (cited by 64 percent of administrators)

Inadequate staff training (58 percent)

Inadequate programming for residents (55 percent)

Unit design problems (53 percent)

Poor support from other facility staff (44 percent)

Inadequate funding (36 percent)

Poor administrative support (36 percent)

Staff turnover (36 percent)

Problems with residents' families (35 percent)

Problems with admission criteria (31 percent)

Just because a residential facility claims to offer a special care unit for people with Alzheimer's, don't assume that it will be terrific for your loved one. Examine carefully any facility you consider, and ask about the staffing, staff training, and program.

Source: American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease



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