

Empowering patients for better wound care outcomes



PATIENT EMPOWERMENT AND WELLBEING IN WOUND CARE

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PRESENTER INTRODUCTION

Dr. Julie Bajic Smith (PhD), founder of Wise Care – Australia’s leading aged care mental health wellbeing training provider.

Qualified: Registered psychologist; PhD research focused on optimising home care worker mental wellbeing, with postdoctoral work examining supported decision-making in dementia.

Experienced: 18 years of clinical experience in home and residential care settings as a clinician and workplace trainer.

Passionate and Determined: Dedicated to translating research into practical strategies to improve the aged care experience for all parties involved.

Purpose and Objective of Presentation: To raise awareness about the importance of having effective teams in the workplace.

AGENDA ITEMS

- Our Wellbeing – Stats and Trends
- Empowering Patients: Why It Matters
- Building Trust and Communication
- Education and Information
- Encouraging Self-Management
- Delivering Emotional Support
- Summary

WELLBEING IN AUSTRALIA

1. 43% of people aged 16-85 years have experienced a mental disorder at some point in their life.
2. 22% had experienced a mental illness in the previous 12 months



WELLBEING IN AUSTRALIA

The most common mental illnesses in Australia:

- *Anxiety disorders* (17% of the population)
- *Affective disorders* (8%)
- *Substance Use disorders* (3%)



Source: 2020–2022 National Study of Mental Health and Wellbeing (NSMHW), AIHW

WELLBEING IN LATE LIFE

- Generally, independent older adults have better mental health status than younger people.
- Most are well connected with peers, have less financial pressure and stress and are more fulfilled and engaged.
- Many are vocationally fulfilled and are regularly spending time with family and/or travelling.

WELLBEING IN LATE LIFE

Older people experience ageing in different ways, depending on their unique circumstances and life experience.

Healthy ageing includes:

- remaining physically active
- being socially connected
- meaningfully engaging with society.

RISK FACTORS FOR COMPROMISED WELLBEING

Risk factors are unique to each person and their circumstances.

For elderly individuals with wounds, risk factors can be grouped into:

- health issues
- social support needs
- environment
- grief and loss
- the impact of dementia

WHAT ARE WE
HOPING TO GET
OUT OF THIS
SESSION?

WHY DO WE
NEED PATIENT
EMPOWERMENT?

BENEFITS OF EMPOWERMENT IN HEALTHCARE

1. Improved Treatment Adherence
2. Increased Patient Satisfaction
3. Better Health Outcomes
4. Reduced Healthcare Costs

OPTIMAL WELLBEING

1. **Holistic Approach:** Integrate physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects.
2. **Positive Habits:** Develop daily routines that support health and happiness.
3. **Mindfulness:** Practice awareness and presence in daily activities.
4. **Meaningful Connections:** Cultivate strong relationships and community ties.
5. **Research-Backed Strategies:** Apply proven methods to enhance overall well-being.

TRUST AND COMMUNICATION

WOUND CARE: FOSTERING TRUST THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Active Listening
2. Clear and Transparent Communication
3. Consistency and Reliability
4. Respect and Dignity

WOUND CARE: FOSTERING TRUST THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

5. Patient-Centered Care
6. Building Relationships
7. Professional Competence
8. Emotional Support

EMPATHY

WHAT IS EMPATHY?

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. It's about putting yourself in someone else's shoes and experiencing their emotions, thoughts, and perspectives.

WHAT IS EMPATHY?

1. **Emotional Understanding**

- Recognising Emotions
- Sharing Emotions

2. **Cognitive Perspective-Taking**

- Understanding Perspectives
- Open-mindedness

3. **Compassionate Action**

- Support and Help
- Comfort and Reassurance

TYPES OF EMPATHY

1. **Cognitive Empathy** = the ability to understand how someone thinks and to see things from their perspective, recognising and comprehending their thoughts and viewpoints.
2. **Emotional Empathy** = feeling the emotions of others as they experience them, sharing in their emotional state and truly feeling what they are going through.
3. **Compassionate Empathy** = goes a step further by encompassing a genuine concern for the wellbeing of others and a desire to help them. It combines understanding and feeling with a proactive approach to support and care.

ACTIVITY
ROLE PLAY –
CLIENT AND
NURSE

ACTIVITY

THE PATIENT IS A 65-YEAR-OLD INDIVIDUAL WITH A CHRONIC LEG WOUND THAT HAS BEEN SLOW TO HEAL. THEY ARE FEELING ANXIOUS AND FRUSTRATED ABOUT THE LACK OF PROGRESS AND ARE CONCERNED ABOUT POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS.

E - Eye contact

M - Muscles of facial expression

P – Posture

A – Affect

T - Tone of voice

H - Hearing the whole person

Y - Your response



REFLECTION

How did it feel to be the speaker when the listener displayed opposite behaviors?

How did it feel to be the listener displaying those behaviors?

What impact did the lack of empathy have on the interaction?

WHICH TYPE OF EMPATHY SHOULD I USE?

Gauge the situation and trust both your thoughts and your heart to determine the appropriate type of empathy.

As a health professional, you may find yourself using compassionate empathy most frequently.

Cognitive empathy can be particularly helpful for motivating clients, especially those experiencing emotional changes.

Emotional empathy is useful for building rapport, but it's important to learn how to switch it off to avoid burnout.

EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES FOR WOUND CARE PATIENTS

Patient-Centered Care

Focuses on the needs and preferences of the patient. This approach leads to improved treatment outcomes and increased patient satisfaction.

Shared Decision-Making

This approach leads to improved communication, better treatment outcomes, and reduced healthcare costs.

Improved Treatment Outcomes

Patient empowerment can lead to improved treatment outcomes by encouraging patients to take an active role in their care and participate in decision-making. This approach leads to increased patient engagement and better health outcomes.

EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES FOR WOUND CARE PATIENTS

Education

Providing patients with the necessary knowledge and skills to manage their own care, including wound care basics, prevention strategies, and treatment options.

Support

Strategies for empowering wound care patients through support include providing them with emotional support, access to resources, and a supportive environment to manage their care.

Involvement in Treatment Decisions

Patients are actively engaged in the decision-making process and have a say in their care. This can help them feel more in control and confident about managing their condition.

ANXIETY AND WORRIES

PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT AND MENTAL HEALTH

Impact of Wound Care on Mental Health

Wound care can have a significant impact on patients' mental health, leading to emotional distress, depression, and anxiety. Psychological support can help patients cope with these challenges and improve their mental health.



STRESS

- Feeling stressed and worried is a normal part of life, something we all will experience at some stage
- These emotions are natural responses to challenges or uncertainties and can help to protect us.
- It's okay to feel stressed and worried from time to time
- Seeking support can help manage these emotions.
- Practicing self-care can also aid in coping with stress and worries.

ANXIETY DISORDERS

Anxiety is more than feeling stressed. It is different to our normal reaction to everyday events.

An anxious person may experience:

- physical symptoms (sweating, difficulty sleeping)
- changes in feelings (sudden intense panic)
- behavioural changes (avoidance, impaired concentration)
- changes in thinking styles (constant worrying).

ANXIETY DISORDERS

Currently, there is little research available on anxiety in late life, however, it has been observed that the client usually has a history of anxiety.

It can also be situation dependent, for example, an older person may feel more anxious when they are:

- away from home
- hospitalised
- with a new caregiver
- out and about in a new environment.

ANXIETY IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

Often, the only way a resident who is experiencing anxiety can get attention from staff members is to have a problem.

According to recent research, staff members rarely approach residents who are not having problems.

This creates a vicious cycle in which only problem behaviours are reinforced.

DEPRESSION IN LATE LIFE

Signs of depression can include:

- sustained low mood
- change in sleep patterns
- lack of energy
- persistent negative or dark themes
- agitation
- past episodes of depression.

HOW WOULD YOU
SUPPORT A CLIENT
IF THEY HAD
SYMPTOMS OF
ANXIETY?

TECHNIQUES
FOR ENHANCING
PATIENT
WELLBEING

HOLISTIC APPROACHES TO WOUND CARE

Holistic wound care involves treating the whole person, not just the wound. It incorporates mindfulness, massage therapy, acupuncture, and other complementary therapies to promote healing, wellness, and overall well-being.



TECHNIQUES

- **Guided Imagery:** Encourage patients to visualise a peaceful scene, such as a beach or a forest, while receiving wound care. This can help distract them and reduce anxiety.
- **Deep Breathing:** Teach patients to take slow, deep breaths during wound care procedures. This can calm the nervous system and reduce pain perception.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Guide patients to tense and then relax different muscle groups while you tend to their wound. This can help them release tension throughout their body.

TECHNIQUES

- **Music Therapy:** Playing soothing music in the background during wound care can create a calming environment and help patients feel more at ease.
- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Encourage patients to focus on the present moment and their breathing, rather than worrying about the wound care process. Simple mindfulness exercises can help them stay calm.
- **Comfortable Positioning:** Ensure that patients are in a comfortable and supportive position during wound care. This can help them relax and feel more secure.

TECHNIQUES

Positive Affirmations: Encourage patients to repeat positive statements to themselves, such as "I am healing" or "I am strong". This can boost their mental resilience and confidence.

- *"My body is strong and capable of healing."*
- *"I am patient and compassionate with myself as I heal."*
- *"I am surrounded by support and positivity."*
- *"I am resilient and can overcome challenges."*
- *"I am taking the right steps towards healing."*
- *"I am worthy of good health and wellbeing."*

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION IN WOUND CARE

PATIENT EDUCATION ON WOUND MANAGEMENT

- Patient education on wound management is an essential component of successful treatment outcomes.
- Provide patients with information on wound care, self-care, and prevention of wound recurrence to ensure optimal healing.
- Include information in writing, if possible

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PATIENTS AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Effective communication between patients and healthcare providers is essential for successful wound care. Healthcare providers should listen to patients' concerns, provide them with accurate information, and involve them in treatment decisions.

CONCLUSION

Patient empowerment and wellbeing are crucial components of successful wound care, leading to improved treatment outcomes and reduced healthcare costs. By involving patients in their own care, enhancing their wellbeing, and improving education and communication, healthcare providers can enhance the overall quality of care.

THANK YOU

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