

Walking away from negativity and moving forward with treating older adults with dementia

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As the number of older adults increases in our country, so does the number of those living with dementia. With dementia on the rise, it is time for all physical therapists, regardless of practice setting, to move forward and increase their knowledge on how to provide evidence-informed interventions for individuals living with dementia. Evidence continues to demonstrate that exercise and physical activity are neuroprotective, however, individuals living with dementia will not benefit from exercise if physical therapists are not skilled in providing these interventions to those with cognitive impairment. This course is designed to take participants through the framework for rehabilitation for older adults living with dementia, to improve carryover and participation. Strategies for establishing a personal connection, effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills, integrating motor learning techniques, and creating a safe and comfortable environment will be discussed. Case studies will be threaded throughout the presentation to allow participants to actively reflect on how strategies may be implemented with their patients and clients.

1. Participants will be able to determine the difference between Mild Cognitive Impairment and Dementia (or Alzheimer's).
2. Participants will be able to identify challenges to treating patients with cognitive impairments.
3. Participants will be able to implement an effective treatment plan for patients with cognitive impairments.
4. Participants will be able to effectively communicate with patients that have varying degrees of cognitive impairments
5. Participants will be able to educate patients and/or caregivers effective techniques to increase compliance with home exercise programs."

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