

Examples of everyday rehabilitation – from a theoretical perspective

Author: Annsofie Mahrs-Träff

Linköping University, National Institute for the Study of Ageing and Later life.

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Objectives

The rehabilitation needs of most people living in residential care are to a large extent met through rehabilitative work in everyday life. The analysis presented is based on rehabilitative activities in Norrköping Municipality in relation to activity theory and the theory of gerotranscendence.

Most people who live in residential care are in the so-called fourth age. They have multiple illnesses, major disabilities and need care. Activities in nursing homes need to be varied according to the residents' abilities and interests. Participation in everyday life is crucial for older people's health and wellbeing.

Theory and Method

Two major theories explain in social gerontology how individual's adapt to the aging process; activity theory and the theory of gerotranscendence.

In Sweden an activity theoretical approach is taken to elderly care. The theory purport that older people who are active and have contacts with others are happier than those who are not active.

The theory of gerotranscendence is based on the idea that values and ideas about life change and we get a more spiritual and cross-border perspective as we age. Social activities are less important. The elderly may have an increased need for self-imposed loneliness.

Results

An analysis was made of physical and social activities. This showed that the activities usually occurred in groups and for the most part were based on activity theory. Very few activities can be traced to the theory of gerotranscendence.

The user can choose whether to participate in activities or not. On the other hand it is not made clear that users are involved in planning the activities to be implemented. When an event occurs an interesting side effect is that staff are released and can be with those who do not want to participate in organized activities

Conclusion

Staff must meet the patient's need for activity by offering activities that are based on the two theories.