

# CLAHRC BITE

A bite-sized summary of a piece of CLAHRC research

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Education and training for all acute hospitals staff should have greater emphasis on caring for patients with dementia or cognitive impairment



## Who this applies to:

Providers of education and in-service training.

## Findings and implications...

- In a study of acute hospital settings, all staff groups expressed feeling ill-prepared to care for the complex needs of patients with dementia or cognitive impairment.
- Training at all levels, from undergraduate to in-service mandatory training, for all staff should have greater emphasis on caring for patients with dementia or cognitive impairment. Guidelines have made these recommendations, but current findings indicate they have not been fully implemented.
- A change in culture across acute hospital wards is required in order to provide the best care for patients with cognitive impairment.

# The Bigger Picture

Observational and interview studies indicate that staff of acute hospitals often feel ill-prepared to care for the complex needs of patients with dementia or cognitive impairment.

All staff groups regularly caring for older patients, irrespective of their specialty and seniority, should be trained to meet the needs of these patients and the other parties affected by their admission. The most effective approach may be to revisit assessment, as current assessments of nursing skills do not include patients with dementia.

A guide to training the social care and health workforce (Skills for Care, 2011) makes the following recommendations:

- » Recognise the signs of distress resulting from confusion and respond by diffusing a person's anxiety and supporting their understanding of the events they experience.
- » Managers need to take responsibility to ensure members of their team are trained and well supported to meet the needs of people with dementia.

## The Evidence:

Gladman, J. et al 2012. "Care of Older People with Cognitive Impairment in General Hospitals." National Institute of Health Research, Service Delivery and Organisation Programme.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, and Social Care Institute for Excellence. 2006. "Dementia: Supporting people with dementia and their carers in health and social care."

Skills for Care, Skills for Health, Department of Health. 2011. "Common Core Principles for Supporting People with Dementia - A guide to training the social care and health workforce." Leeds, Bristol: Skills for Care and Skills for Health.



## An explanation of CLAHRC and its role

The Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) is a partnership between the University of Nottingham and the NHS in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.

Funded by the National Institute for Health Research, our mission is to undertake high quality research to improve health and social care across the East Midlands.

This is a bite-sized summary of a piece of CLAHRC research. It is part of a series designed to make such work more available to clinicians.

### Our website

[www.clahrc-ndl.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.clahrc-ndl.nihr.ac.uk)

### Useful links

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk/developing\\_skills/dementia](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/developing_skills/dementia)  
[www.tinyurl.com/NIHRdementia](http://www.tinyurl.com/NIHRdementia)

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This is a summary of independent research commissioned by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

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