

CURRICULUM GUIDE

“ATTAINING COMPETENCY IN ASSESSING PAIN”

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The current DVD-based curriculum has evolved from a series of educational efforts (supported by the Agency for Health Care Administration) to improve pain assessment and management in nursing homes. These efforts have drawn on experts from several universities, state agencies, and care associations. The leadership, staff, and residents at the Miami Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged, River Garden in Jacksonville, and Morse Geriatric Center in West Palm Beach have provided invaluable support and guidance for this curriculum.

The curriculum centers on competent assessment of pain in nursing home residents, including those with moderate to severe dementia; the focus is on recognizing, measuring, and reporting pain, including recording the pain location and severity in the MDS system. The learning objectives are: (1) the learner will ask about pain, (2) the learner will use consoling language (empathy), (3) the learner will correctly choose and (4) use the appropriate pain assessment tool. The curriculum also addresses the correct entry of pain assessment data into the MDS system.

The curriculum integrates DVD multimedia technology into a series of trainer-guided learning experiences. Learners can view instructional material in advance of trainer/instructor and resident encounters and for independent review and remediation. Such integration of technology-based multimedia training with in-person training has been shown to be more effective when it is combined with a focus on the trainer’s direct observation for assessing and documenting learner progress and achievement of competency.

This curriculum relies on a multimedia DVD entitled “Attaining Competency in Assessing Pain” and on the trainer’s ability to blend this multimedia material with standardized trainer-led simulations modeled in the DVD scenarios. The DVD provides both a general overview of the pain assessment process and specific scenarios that open the way for a series of objective-directed interactive simulations and evaluations of learner performance. The learning objectives and their evaluation are specified in the checklist used to evaluate and document professional staff competency in assessing pain as well as recording pain location and severity into the MDS system.

The DVD-based blended-learning curriculum provides a series of objective-linked simulations and assessment tools directed at a set of specific competency-related objectives. This highly structured approach to instruction and evaluation of a critical competency — pain assessment — is also a model for developing competency-based blended-learning curricula in other critical LTC proficiencies across the spectrum of LTC providers.

DVD DESIGN AND FEATURES

The DVD is intended to support a variety of independent and trainer-led activities aimed at documented staff competency with three common pain assessment instruments: the 0 to 10, the Wong-Baker faces, and the mild-moderate-severe pain-assessment scales. We have not included training on the pain in advanced dementia (Pain AD) scale, since that scale does not depend on the communication skills developed in our DVD-based curriculum, but requires more professional experience and focuses on a different set of observational skills.

The DVD, comprising a number of separate scenes, runs only about 27 minutes. It permits scene selection for continuous play (initial viewing by individuals) or scene selection in any desired sequence (matching the immediate training session or remediation need). Because the scene selection process is the same as that used on commercial DVD movies, the user interface should be familiar to any DVD user. The final screen 2 of the

Attaining Competency in Assessing

PAIN



DVD gives the Web address for *Geriu*, where any instructor or learner can get assistance with the curriculum or provide specific feedback. This same feedback form, “Feedback Questionnaire for *Attaining Competency in Assessing Pain* DVD,” can be printed from the DVD or from the accompanying CD-ROM. The DVD presents a range of content that imparts information, guides instructor and learner behavior, and provides, through the various multimedia scenarios, resources for learning and remediation. These flexible applications of a single DVD derive from one’s ability to display any sequence of multiple scenarios, each aimed at a specific learning objective. In continuous sequential viewing, these scenes impart a sense of the learning goals and attitudes needed for optimal use and learning of the curriculum, as the learners progress through the various learning objectives in an interactive mode with the instructor. As separate components, the scenarios provide specific guidance for the recognition and assessment of pain intensity across the range of LTC residents.

The scenario format and multimedia design support the flexible use of the DVD content. The DVD can be viewed continuously to introduce the overall curriculum goal, or individual scenes can be reviewed in any sequence and as often as needed for particular training or remediation sessions directed at specific learning objectives. The DVD scenarios not only impart specific knowledge and skills; they reinforce key attitudes and communication approaches and concepts that are conducive to competency-based learning. The different “learners” in the DVD cast of characters represent learners who are assessed, meet competency, and allowed to proceed and others who do not meet competency, receive formative feedback, and undergo retraining. A printable full script of the DVD is provided on the CD-ROM so the instructor can prepare for the role-playing. The final section of the DVD addresses the entry of data into the MDS system. That scenario provides a narrated animation with specific instructions on how to proceed from a pain-intensity score obtained on any of the three pain assessment tools to entry of pain intensity and location data into the MDS system. A printable list of the 10 common sites of pain is provided.

CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Once the importance of competence in pain assessment is understood by all the curriculum participants, the first step in implementing the curriculum is for the instructor and learners to view the entire DVD individually or as a group; viewing the entire DVD takes about 30 minutes. The initial viewing helps to clarify learning goals and process while introducing learners and trainers to a behavioral model of training that draws heavily on simulation and evaluation. The initial viewing also introduces learners to attitudes that will enhance their comfort with simulations and evaluations that they will be conducting with their instructor/ preceptor. Thus learners gain a clear understanding about what will happen in the upcoming training and a clear picture of what they will be expected to do, both during the training session and during the bedside assessment of their competency. After this initial viewing the same DVD scenarios are used by the instructor and by the learners to address specific training aspects, including role-playing practice of pain assessment, preparing for bedside evaluation of learners, and entry of pain data into the MDS system.

The heart of the DVD instructional training is the role-playing sessions, where the DVD’s actor-instructor simulates various types of residents with or without pain. The role-playing simulation scenes on the DVD include discussions of each pain assessment tool (0-10, Wong-Baker, mild-moderate-severe) and depictions of learners choosing and using each of these tools. Sometimes the DVD’s learner-actors choose and use scales correctly; other times they do not. The DVD’s actor-instructor provides immediate formative feedback.

The trainer in charge of this curriculum must study and replicate these role-playing sessions that will be offered to each learner. The role-playing sessions are highly linked with the four learning objectives: (1) the learner will ask about pain, (2) the learner will use consoling language (sympathy/empathy), and the learner will correctly choose (3) and use (4) the appropriate pain assessment tool. LTC trainers/ instructors should view these DVD sessions with the goal of reproducing them in the setting of their own organization, with the instructor(s) playing the role demonstrated by the actor/ instructor. In order to assure that students can choose and use the correct pain assessment tool, each learner requires training in each scenario. The role-playing simulations were designed as two-minute exercises so that all the training sessions with three to five learners can be accomplished within a one-hour instructor-led session. *As demonstrated on the DVD, learners should*

perform the entire role-playing exercise with the trainer until it is done correctly. This approach reinforces the correct behavior and skills in the proper performance of the training. And as demonstrated on the DVD, all the trainees/learners should receive positive formative feedback during simulation exercises with the instructor, and the feedback should specifically address learner errors. Learners continue with training until they perform all the sessions correctly.

Simulation training sessions should be done separately from bedside competency-assessment sessions (see below). Although many learners (and instructors) have never before been involved with simulation training, we have found it to be one of our most appreciated and highly rated training approaches. Instructor emphasis should be on the concept that errors are expected in training and that no patients or residents will suffer from these errors during the simulations.

Once the instructor/trainer is satisfied with the learner performance during role-playing simulations, NH staff should be ready to demonstrate their competency at the bedside with their very own patients or residents in pain. Their instructor/supervisor assesses the learner's performance related to the four major learning objectives and records it on the Competency Assessment Checklist. The checklist and instructions on its use are addressed in the DVD; a printable checklist file for the instructors is provided in the disc set. Each instructor/supervisor should assess each of the learners at the bedside by selecting three different residents in pain: one who understands the 0 – 10 scale, one who does not understand the 0 – 10 scale and requires the Wong-Baker, and one who cannot understand either of those two scales and requires the mild-moderate-severe scale. After the bedside assessment witnessed by the trainer/supervisor, the learner is given specific feedback on performance and whether they demonstrated competency or need further training.

The last section of the curriculum addresses data entry into the MDS system. The DVD provides a series of MDS-entry animations. This section provides instruction on how staff can convert the pain-assessment score obtained from any of the three pain assessment tools into an entry on the Minimum Data Set (MDS). Although the pain-assessment training mainly addresses quantitating the intensity of pain, the animated instructions include how to complete the "frequency," "intensity," and "site" entries for the MDS. This portion of the module takes only a few minutes and constitutes a distinct unit that can be viewed and reviewed separately as a single learning element. The DVD and CD-ROM set of printable files include a table of MDS information and a listing of the common sites of pain described in the MDS.

CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND SUPPORT

The curriculum is based on a two-disc set consisting of the multimedia DVD and a CD-ROM with printable computer files. These files provide this facilitator guide and additional materials for the instructor's use, including the DVD's script and a learner evaluation checklist. Note that the DVD also contains these files, but they may not be printable from a stand-alone DVD that is not computer-based. Together the two discs provide all the tools needed for a trainer to deliver a curriculum consisting of consensus-derived learning objectives, instructional content, trainer-led simulations for learners to practice, and methodology for the trainer to make an formative evaluation using a specific checklist. This evaluation approach documents competency and/or identifies specific remediation targets for each learner.

The DVD-based curriculum was designed, developed, and produced by a team led by the chair of the TNH Steering Committee, Michael J. Mintzer, MD, an expert in geriatrics, dementia, and long-term care. Questions regarding the implementation of the DVD-based curriculum should be referred to Marilyn Cheung (305-762-1468), administrative coordinator for the Teaching Nursing Home program, which is supported through a contract from Florida's Agency for Health Care Administration.