

Sandra Schüssler and Christa Lohrmann

Abstract

This chapter provides background information about dementia. In addition, the methodology and the results of both the systematic literature search in international databases and the ensuing online survey with international experts in dementia, upon which the topics of this book were selected, are presented.

Worldwide, dementia is a great strain on health-care systems, because it is increasing at a rapid rate. Globally, there are now more than 46 million people with dementia, and this number will increase to more than 100 million by 2050 (Prince et al. 2015). The worldwide costs of dementia are also increasing. In 2015, approximately 818 billion US dollars were spent on the treatment and care of dementia patients, and this will rise to one trillion US dollars in 2018 (Prince et al. 2015). These costs are higher than for other chronic diseases, like heart disease, stroke, or cancer (Prince et al. 2013). Currently we have no treatment to cure dementia (WHO 2012; Prince et al. 2015); therefore, nursing care is a very important aspect of its management (Alzheimer's Society 2014).

Internationally, most people with dementia receive (nursing) care and support at home (OECD 2015). When dementia progresses, however, increasingly complex care needs arise, making in-home care no longer possible and causing many people with dementia to move into a nursing home (Braunseis et al. 2012, Morley et al. 2013; OECD 2015; Prince et al. 2015). In developed countries, often more than 50% of nursing home residents have dementia (Alzheimer's Association

S. Schüssler, MSc, BSc (✉) • C. Lohrmann
Institute of Nursing Science, Medical University of Graz, Billrothgasse 6, 8010 Graz, Austria
e-mail: sandra.schuessler@medunigraz.at

2013; Hoffmann et al. 2014; Lohrmann et al. 2015; Matthews et al. 2013). This shows that dementia is a very important disease for investigation in a nursing home setting.

Nursing home residents with dementia have a high prevalence of care dependency (28–83%) and various nursing care problems, like incontinence (urinary, 39–88%; fecal, 43–87%; double, 49–65%) or physical restraints (8–60%) (Schüssler et al. 2014a, b, 2015). These problems also increase over time (Schüssler and Lohrmann 2015), possibly leading to such negative consequences as reduced quality of life, high care and treatment cost, as well as a higher mortality risk (Gustavsson et al. 2011; Lohrmann et al. 2015; OECD 2013; Reid 2008). Therefore, in-depth knowledge about dementia is essential for nursing and other health-care staff in order to support dementia-specific care in nursing homes (Schüssler 2015).

This book provides information on the most important current topics in the field of dementia in nursing homes, sourced from a literature search and subsequent online survey. In March 2015, a database search was performed in PubMed and CINAHL with the keywords *dementia*, *nursing home*, *(geriatric) nursing*, *priorities*, *problems*, and *needs*. In total, 31 priority topics for dementia in nursing homes were identified (see Figure 1.1). After the identification of the topics, an online questionnaire was generated using Google Forms with a five-point Likert scale ranking for each topic with the purpose of identifying its importance for dementia residents in nursing homes. After this, experts in dementia were ascertained through Internet search, as well as scans of dementia organizations and university websites. The online questionnaires were sent via email to 52 dementia experts in March 2015 who were given 2 weeks to fill out the questionnaire. A total of 56% of the experts participated in the survey. The results of the survey can be seen in Figure 1.1. Based on the results, 16 (half of all topics) of the most important topics identified by the experts were included in this book and written about by international experts on dementia.

The content of the book is dedicated to all (academic) nursing professionals, nursing scientists, nursing students, and other health-care professionals. It will be a valuable resource for nursing home practice and nursing home research.

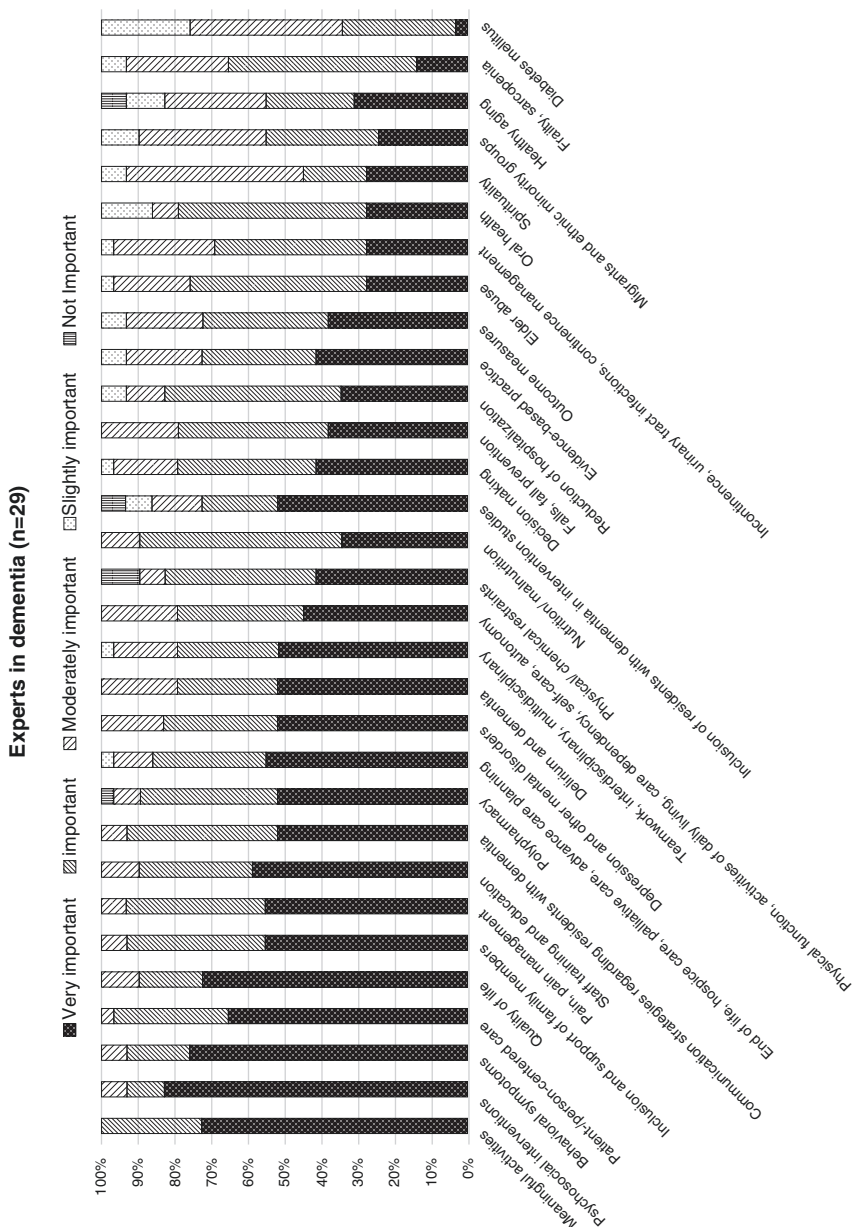


Fig. 1.1 Most important topics for dementia in nursing home

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