

SITUATION

In his more than two decades as a manager and clinician in skilled nursing facilities, Maxwell Perkins, MS, OTR/L, has seen a great variety of dementia care training and continuing education programs being marketed. As Director of Clinical Services for Infinity Rehab in Portland, OR (a contract therapy company operating approximately 150 facilities in eight states providing occupational, speech, and physical therapy), Perkins is passionate about education and continually on the lookout for innovative and evidence-based training therapists can apply to their practice areas. When it came to effective dementia care, Perkins noticed a gap in conventional therapist training.

“The traditional medical model in which most therapists have been trained has its limitations. As a result, some segments of the dementia patient population may be underserved because therapists lack an effective means of assessing patient capacity and developing an appropriate treatment model,” Perkins indicated.

Surveying the marketplace of training programs, Perkins was initially exposed to Dementia Care Specialists (DCS) training when he took the introductory course and found it offered a vastly different frame of reference for therapists. Seeing the potential to apply it to the facilities he oversaw, Perkins decided to expand the training and was then tasked with the job of implementing the training process and making it a part of the corporate culture.

“DCS training is the therapist’s Swiss Army knife—it cuts across disciplines and provides access to treatment tools not found in other programs.”

-Maxwell Perkins, MS, OTR/L
Portland, OR

RESULTS

Perkins sees two major differences between DCS training and other education programs being marketed.

First, DCS’ *Dementia Capable Care* training embodies a far more interdisciplinary approach. “They make it applicable across the spectrum for speech, physical, and occupational therapists—as opposed to other programs that tend to be far narrower in scope and focus. That approach makes more sense for organizations like ours.”

The second major difference is the ability of the therapist to immediately implement the training components on the job. “We see therapists attend a workshop on one day and incorporate the lessons learned the very next day. Therapists really enjoy the impactful nature of the visual media and other user-friendly training methods. In addition, the detailed written materials facilitate application of what they’ve learned in a patient setting.”

The feedback Perkins receives from those who have gone through the training reflects the satisfaction they feel. “Our therapists are hungry for the knowledge to advance their professional skills, and we frequently hear them tell us that after they receive DCS training, they feel more confident and far better equipped to meet the needs of patients—especially those at lower-functioning levels,” Perkins added.

Facilities are increasingly demanding training that is effective and efficient. The virtue of good training programs like DCS is that they are practical, meaningful, and easy to implement. “The facilities we serve say they feel a higher level of service is being provided to patients post-DCS-training”.

“We market the fact that our clinicians have received this training, and we promote the fact that this is part of an ongoing continual improvement process for our organization,” Perkins concluded.

ABOUT DEMENTIA CARE SPECIALISTS, A CPI SPECIALIZED OFFERING

Dementia Care Specialists (DCS) is the premier dementia training and consulting company. With nearly 60 years of cumulative experience in dementia care training, DCS provides state-of-the-art dementia products, training, and program consultation. Training from Dementia Care Specialists helps transform staff capabilities and quality of care. As a result, persons with dementia experience a higher quality of life, caregivers find more job satisfaction, and providers improve their business results.

Dementia Care Specialists is a CPI specialized offering. CPI is an international training organization with more than 30 years of experience in crisis prevention and intervention training.