



TITLE: Therapeutic Recreation for Elderly and Mental Health Patients: Clinical Benefit, Safety, and Guidelines

DATE: 28 May 2014

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the clinical benefit of therapeutic recreation (outings and day trips) for the elderly or mental health patients?
2. What are the safety issues pertaining to therapeutic recreation (outings and day trips) for the elderly or mental health patients?
3. What are the guidelines associated with therapeutic recreation (outings and day trips) for the elderly or mental health patients?

KEY MESSAGE

One non-randomized study and one evidence-based guideline were identified regarding therapeutic recreation (outings and day trips) for the elderly or mental health patients.

METHODS

A limited literature search was conducted on key resources including PubMed, The Cochrane Library (2014, Issue 5), University of York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) databases, Canadian and major international health technology agencies, as well as a focused Internet search. No filters were applied to limit the retrieval by study type. Where possible, retrieval was limited to the human population. The search was also limited to English language documents published between Jan 1, 2009 and May 12, 2014. Internet links were provided, where available.

The summary of findings was prepared from the abstracts of the relevant information. Please note that data contained in abstracts may not always be an accurate reflection of the data contained within the full article.

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RESULTS

Rapid Response reports are organized so that the higher quality evidence is presented first. Therefore, health technology assessment reports, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses are presented first. These are followed by randomized controlled trials, non-randomized studies, and evidence-based guidelines.

One non-randomized study and one evidence-based guideline were identified regarding therapeutic recreation (outings or day trips) for the elderly or mental health patients. No relevant health technology assessments, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, or randomized controlled trials were identified.

Additional references of potential interest are provided in the appendix.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

One non-randomized study¹ involved eight patients with dementia who volunteered for a program combining social outings with exercise and cognitive-linguistic stimulation. The authors found that cognition, mood, and physical fitness remained stable after a year.

One guideline² was identified regarding occupational therapy for adults with serious mental illness. The guideline recommends life skills training in natural environments, grocery shopping to improve shopping skills, and physical and outdoor activity.

REFERENCES SUMMARIZED

Health Technology Assessments

No literature identified.

Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses

No literature identified.

Randomized Controlled Trials

No literature identified.

Non-Randomized Studies

1. La Rue A, Felten K, Duschene K, MacFarlane D, Price S, Zimmerman S, et al. Language-enriched exercise plus socialization for older adults with dementia: translation to rural communities. *Semin Speech Lang.* 2013 Aug;34(3):170-84.
[PubMed: PM24166191](#)

Guidelines and Recommendations

2. Brown C. Occupational therapy practice guidelines for adults with serious mental illness. Bethesda (MD): American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA); 2012. Summary available from: <http://www.guideline.gov/content.aspx?id=38528>
See: General Recommendations

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APPENDIX – FURTHER INFORMATION:

Qualitative Studies

3. Boggatz T. Leisure activities among older Germans - a qualitative study. *Int J Older People Nurs.* 2013 May;8(2):174-85.
[PubMed: PM22672185](#)
4. Popham C, Orrell M. What matters for people with dementia in care homes? *Aging Ment Health.* 2012;16(2):181-8.
[PubMed: PM22129467](#)

Study Protocol

5. McCluskey A, Ada L, Middleton S, Kelly PJ, Goodall S, Grimshaw JM, et al. Improving quality of life by increasing outings after stroke: study protocol for the Out-and-About trial. *Int J Stroke.* 2013 Jan;8(1):54-8.
[PubMed: PM23280270](#)

Additional References

6. Social care institute for excellence (SCIE). Dementia Gateway: keeping active and occupied [Internet]. London (UK): The Institute; 2013 Nov. [cited 2014 27 May]. Available from: <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/dementia/living-with-dementia/keeping-active/files/keeping-active-and-occupied.pdf>
See: The Outdoor Environment, page 6
7. Ndegwa S. Initiatives for healthy aging in Canada [Internet]. Ottawa: Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health; 2011. (Environmental Scan: Issue 17). [cited 2014 May 27]. Available from: http://www.cadth.ca/media/pdf/Initiatives_on_Healthy_Aging_in_Canada_es-17_e.pdf
8. Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada. Reach up, reach out: best practices in mental health promotion for culturally-diverse seniors [Internet]. Ottawa (ON): Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada; 2009. [cited 2014 May 27]. Available from: http://www.von.ca/en/special_projects/docs/RR_manual.pdf
See: Regular Meetings, page 5, bullet 3; page 12, paragraph 4; page 28