



MONTEFIORE

Working with Ageing Holocaust Survivors

Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Home

For further information please contact:

Katie Hoskins, Communications Manager

E: khoskins@montefiorehome.com.au

Why does my Resident refuse a shower or a bath?



(Left) Six thousand Mauthausen prisoners wait in the camp courtyard for disinfection. After 24 hours, nearly 140 had died (July 1941)

Why did I find a bag of oranges and bread hidden under the Residents bed?

Ebensee survivors, too weak to eat solid food, suck on sugar cubes to give them strength. (May 8, 1945)



Why does my Resident have a fear of injections and doctors?



During the Medical Trial (Nuremberg Proceedings), a Polish survivor shows her scarred leg to the court, while an expert witness Doctor explains the nature of the medical experiment performed on her in the Ravensbrueck concentration camp. (December 22, 1946)

Or is afraid of institutions, the darkness,
illness, loud noises or voices?

(Below) Prisoners'
barracks in the Dachau
concentration camp. (May
3, 1945)



'Holocaust'

1933 -1945



Time in history when Jews
were condemned to death by
the Nazi Regime

State-sponsored systematic
persecution and murder of
approx. 6 million Jewish
people...1.5 million were
children...

Developing the Program



Renee Symonds

Child of a Holocaust Survivor

SMMJH Board-member

Clinical Psychologist





Event or Trigger	Potential Reaction	Reason	Response Tips
Taking a Shower	Refusal Unusual fear Crying Screaming Withdrawal	Memories of gas chamber Dehumanising conditions	Offer options of bath or bed bath Be respectful of privacy and nudity Be prepared to offer a flexible schedule Check to see if family members presence would help Do not force the issue
Not enough food 'Hunger Pangs'	Food Hoarding or hiding Eating to fast	Hunger was an ever-present feeling during the war years Many starved to death Secrecy	There should be clear communication that food is readily available Try and ensure that there is always a fresh bread-roll or fruit available for residents Clearing away the hoarded food needs to be done in a empathetic manner



Event or Trigger	Potential Reaction	Reason	Response Tips
<p>Receiving injections</p>	<p>Refusal</p> <p>Fear</p> <p>Anger</p>	<p>Many survivors were tattooed with numbers for identification. These were done in a series of needles without anaesthetic. Once tattooed, only numbers identified them.</p>	<p>Allow individual to observe other receiving injection without painful consequence</p> <p>Explain all treatment options thoroughly</p> <p>Try to have a family member or trusted friend on hand to provide support</p>
<p>Medical treatments</p>	<p>Refusal</p> <p>Upset</p> <p>Depression</p>	<p>Many Survivors underwent atrocious experimentation by 'doctors' or technicians. Many patients died in the process.</p>	<p>Where cognitively competent, respect individuals right to refuse treatment</p>
<p>Loud Noises or Loud Voices</p>	<p>Distrust</p> <p>Fear</p>	<p>Reminds them of the camps and ghettos</p>	<p>Maintain a quiet and confident tone of voice</p> <p>Discourage calling and shouting in the corridors</p> <p>Loudspeakers should only be used in Emergency</p>

Program Model



Erin Ryan

Learning and Development Manager

SMMJH

Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Home



- Established 1889 in Sydney
- Mission:
‘To enhance the Quality of Life of the Jewish Aged Community by providing an exceptional standard of service and care, and embracing the richness of Jewish Culture and Tradition’
- 3 campuses: approx 640 Residents, 850 Staff, 260 Nursing Home Beds, 105 Dementia Specific Beds
- Approximately one in three of Residents are ‘Survivors’
- Many ageing Survivors experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



Research

Research has demonstrated that the psychological effects of the Holocaust may get worse with age and/or as mental health deteriorates

Late onset of Post Traumatic Stress symptoms may include:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Guilt
- Isolation
- Intrusive thoughts
- Nightmares Insomnia
- Headaches/ dizziness
- Social withdrawal



Aim & Method

Aim:

‘to promote optimal Quality of Life for our Elderly Residents who experience PTSD’

Achieve this by providing specialised training and educating staff in:

- Jewish History & Culture
- The Holocaust
- Identifying ‘Triggers’ that contribute to Challenging Behaviours
- Strategies to manage the special care needs of Holocaust survivors and their families



Program Framework

Part A)

Orientation Module 2.5 hours long

- Jewish History & Culture, given booklet from SJM
- Introduction to Holocaust and 20 minute DVD
- New and existing staff attend

Part B)

Day visit to Sydney Jewish Museum

- Maximum 14 to attend
- Facilitated by 3 experienced people
- Last Thursday of every month
- High demand for attendance
- Have put on special days for other groups ie Volunteers

SJ Museum



- Short film about Jewish life in Australia
- Meet a Survivor who facilitates tour of Museum
- Tea break where staff enjoy Kosher biscuits
- Debriefing session
- Day ends with Jewish Cultural information talk by Education Officer from SJM
- Staff given copy of the handbook and handouts on Jewish Festivals to take home
- Complete a Questionnaire to provide feedback

Staff Debriefing Session



- Recap of Holocaust
- Staff responses to tour of museum
- Work from the Handbook
- Discuss & relate the 'Triggers' to workplace
- Presentation of a badge & given free return admission to the museum



Handbook

‘Working with Ageing Holocaust Survivors & Issues related to the second generation’

Introduction and comprehensive explanation

- 37 Triggers &
- possible reactions of Resident
- suggested responses for staff if behaviour occurs



Participant Profile

- Since 2006 over 300 staff have attended the Museum
- 130 staff January 2008 - May 2009 (16 months)
- Participant mix: Diversional therapy, bus drivers, care staff, admin, catering, allied health, social workers, management
- Cultural Backgrounds: African, Asian, Australian, Jewish, Sri Lankan, Pacific Islanders, S American, New Zealand, European



Sample Data

I consider that this program will be beneficial to me in my work at SMMJH:

Strongly Agree -110 (84.8 %)

Agree -19 (14.6 %)

Disagree - 0

Strongly Disagree -1 (0.76%)

I found the debriefing session was received relevant to my work:

Strongly Agree – 94 (72.3 %)

Agree – 34 – (26.15%)

Disagree -1 (0.76%)

Strongly Disagree - 0

No respond – 1 (0.76%)

From this training, are there any suggestions that you can make to enhance resident care?

Yes – 86 (66.15%)

No – 35 (26.9 %)

No respond – 9 (6.92%)

Overall, I rate the program as:

Excellent – 123 (86.9 %)

Good – 7 (5.38 %)

Fair- 0 Poor- 0

Source: Staff Questionnaires, January 2008 – May 2009: 130 respondents



Staff Feedback

Confirms the effectiveness of the program in supporting the staff in delivery of care services to residents

Benefits identified:

- Increased awareness of behavioural triggers
- Improved workplace relationships between staff and residents, development of trusting relationships
- Team building, MDT & 'Hollistic' skills development

Translates to:

- Proactive positive approach to mental health care of the Aged Jewish Survivors
- Improved Quality of Life and Person Centred Care

The program increases staff knowledge, awareness and empathy.



Sustainability & Support

Driven by Organisational Leadership Team & CEO

- Resources provided for training
- Compulsory training for all staff

Program is supported by and supports:

- Care Plans/ Behavioural management
- Psychologists, Doctors, Diversional Therapists
- Social Workers, Allied Health & Religious and Cultural Affairs Departments
- Montefiore Multidisciplinary Team Approach
- Care Managers encourage discussions in workplace



Future Directions

- Research and trials to track program to our Quality of Life Programs:
 - Increased Residents satisfaction
 - Increased Resident participation in activities
 - Decrease in Resident behaviours/ decreased aggression
 - Improved interaction of staff with Residents in Dementia specific neighbourhoods

- Model transferable to other trauma group survivors as they age