



The CARE Lab
Enhancing Care for
Persons Living with Dementia
& Their Family Care Partners

RESEARCH UPDATE

This research update is brought to you by Dr. Savundranayagam's CARE lab.

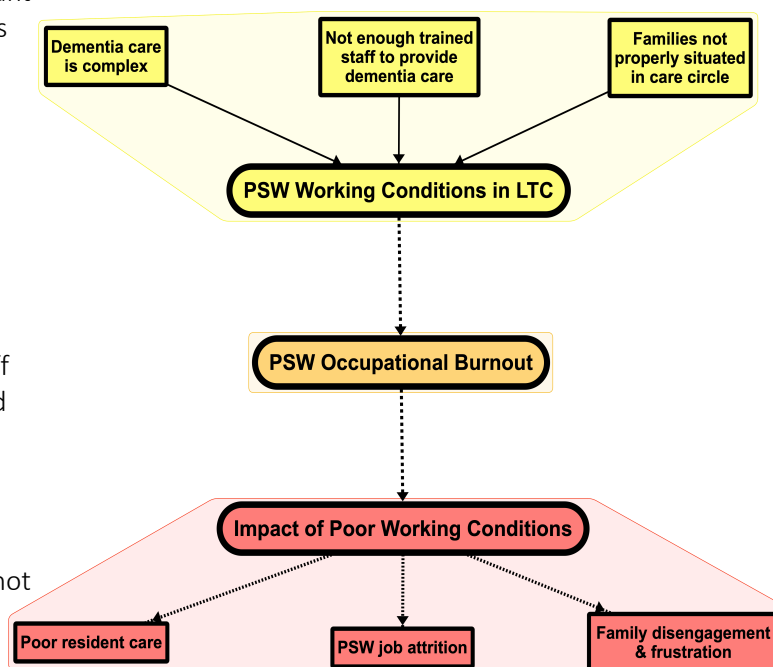
COVID-19 Impact on Be EPIC Training



- ✦ We thank all frontline workers for your support and care during COVID-19.
- ✦ Our research team completed Be EPIC training with 4 long-term care homes in London, Ontario.
- ✦ 31 personal support workers (PSWs) completed Be EPIC training.
- ✦ Be EPIC training is postponed due COVID-19 related restrictions.
- ✦ Be EPIC training will resume when it's safe.
- ✦ We will be training PSWs in London and Eastern Ontario.
- ✦ COVID-19 has highlighted the need to continue to offer person-centered communication training to PSWs.
- ✦ We are developing a virtual reality version of Be EPIC for PSWs.

Working Conditions Impacting Person-Centered Care

- ✦ Person-centered dementia care is important in long-term care (LTC) homes. Yet, little is known about the working conditions that support such care. For that reason, our team examined the working conditions of 39 PSWs employed at one of four LTC homes in southwestern Ontario.
- ✦ Focus group data was organized into themes (see figure). Working condition themes centered on 1) the complexity of dementia care, 2) not enough trained staff are in place to provide dementia care, and 3) residents' families are not properly situated in the care circle. These working conditions to occupational burnout for PSWs, which in turn results in 1) poor resident care, 2) PSWs leaving the job or not entering the profession, and 3) residents' families being frustrated and concerned with care provision.



- ✦ In light of these findings, we offer the following employer recommendations to better support person-centered dementia care.

Recommendation 1

All PSWs require person-centered dementia communication training which can prevent poor resident care outcomes and minimize PSW burnout and job attrition.

Recommendation 2

PSWs need to be included as an integral part of the interprofessional care team (e.g., peer mentorship, shift change/incident debriefs) so PSWs can share their knowledge and experiences involved with resident care.

Recommendation 3

Residents' families need to be part of the care team; they can inform PSWs about the unique social history of PLWD. Families also need support. For example, social workers can make referrals to community resources. Recreational therapists can include family in activities with residents.

Your Voice Matters

- ✦ We wanted to hear from you! If you have completed Be EPIC, we would like to hear how COVID-19 has impacted your ability to provide person-centered communication to your residents/clients.
- ✦ Please contact Shalane Basque (Sbasque@uwo.ca) if you are interested in sharing your recent experience as a PSW during the pandemic.

For More Information

- ✦ Please visit [our CARE Lab page](#).
- ✦ Please contact Dr. Savundranayagam (msavund@uwo.ca).