

Introduction

As physiotherapists, we identified a growing number of referrals received by the Physio@Home service from care homes for residents with postural deformity. We were keen to share our skills to improve the care of residents with, or at risk of, postural deformity. We decided to evaluate whether postural management training for care home staff would be effective in the management of those with postural deformity.

Aims

1. To raise awareness of postural management in care homes.
2. To improve care home staff members' ability to recognise residents at risk of postural deformity and their confidence/self-efficacy in the prevention and management of postural deformities among residents.

Methodology

Initial pre-training bespoke questionnaire to evaluate baseline knowledge and understanding, confidence and concerns in postural management.

2 hour face-to-face training session in 5 different care homes (presentation and practical)

Immediate post training questionnaire

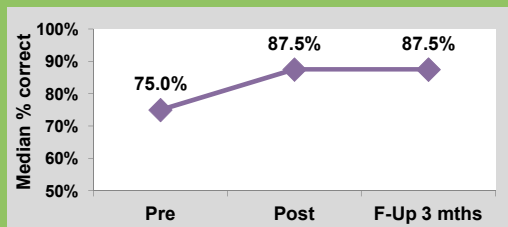
3 month follow up questionnaire with added questions regarding behaviour changes e.g. earlier referral of patients and implementation of basic postural management

Data collection and analysis of results from questionnaires

Results

- 33 care home staff participated (6-9 in each care home)
- 64% provided data at 3 months follow up
- Participants – 61% carers, 21% nurses, 12% managers
- 67% working in care sector more than 5 years
- 91% had previously cared for someone with postural deformity but only 13% had received training in this area

Figure 1. Knowledge of postural management indications score



Knowledge of indications for postural management had a median of 75% correct answers pre-training. Pairwise comparisons (using Related-Friedman's Two-way Analysis of Variance by Ranks with t-tests) showed that there was an improvement at post-training on this measure ($p=0.016$) with a median of 87.5% of questions answered correctly. This improvement was maintained at 3-months follow-up (Fig. 1).

Participants rated on a 1-5 scale how confident they felt about starting basic postural care (5=most confident). There was improvement from pre- to post-training ($p<0.001$) but not between pre- and 3-months follow-up, with confidence decreasing at follow-up but not to pre-training levels (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Confidence to start basic postural management (e.g. pillows/rolled towels) before a postural management assessment

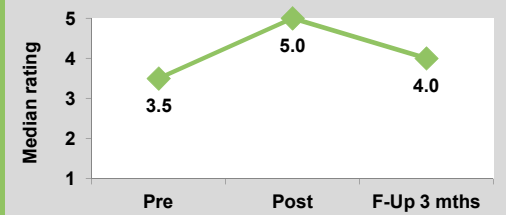
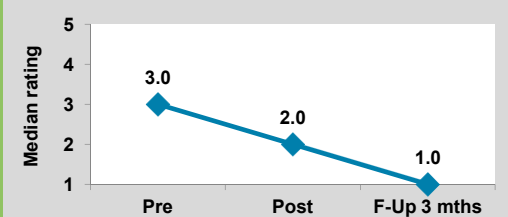
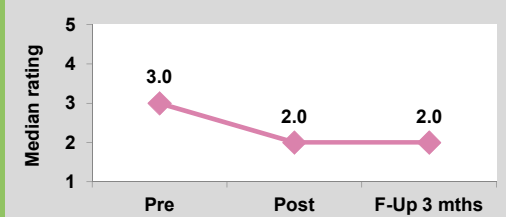


Figure 3. Concern about not having adequate understanding of how best to provide postural care



Similarly, participants rated how concerned they were that they did not have adequate understanding of how best to provide postural care (5=most concerned). Concern reduced from pre- to post-training ($p=0.006$) and further still by 3-months follow-up ($p=0.001$) (Fig. 3). On a similar scale there was an improvement ($p=0.019$) in concern about doing more harm than good from pre- to post-training, which persisted at 3-months follow-up (Fig. 4).

Figure 4. Concern about doing more harm than good



Discussion

Feedback from care home staff was extremely positive and every care home requested further training.

Early findings suggest that postural care refresher training might be important to sustain gains. We have yet to collect 1-year follow-up data and analyse trends over time in referral numbers and clinical severity at assessment compared to non-participating care homes.

Take Home Messages

Providing postural management training for care home staff can improve:

- awareness and knowledge about postural care
- ability to recognise residents needing postural care
- confidence in providing postural care whilst reducing concerns in doing so.



Acknowledgements

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