

Scenario: Barbara's Story

Barbara's Story is a film-based training programme developed by **Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation**. It is designed to raise awareness of how it feels to be a person with dementia receiving care. The training programme follows the journey of a woman called Barbara as her dementia gradually advances. The full programme includes a series of 6 films, each focusing on a different aspect of Barbara's care.



Aims

The aim of this training scenario is to simulate how it feels to live with dementia and the experiences associated with receiving care during the gradual progression of symptoms.



Learning Objectives

- Foster empathy and understanding for the lived experiences that a person with dementia can experience in a care setting.
- Promote introspective consideration for one's own approach to caring for persons with dementia.
- Emphasise the importance of compassion; seeing the person – not the dementia



When to use this scenario

This film depicts symptoms of dementia typically associated with the early stages of dementia. This training programme is suitable for staff working in a healthcare environment and family members of persons with dementia. Barbara's Story is suitable for online and in-person training.



Equipment

- PC, Laptop, or other means of video streaming
- Projector or Television



Downloadable supporting materials

- Barbara's Story – video file
- Barbara's Story – training briefing
- Presentation slides
- Evaluation form

Facilitation Instructions

Setting up:

- Ensure that all of the participants can see the film clearly.
- Ensure the audio settings are adjusted to an appropriate level so the film can be heard by everyone in the room
- Ensure that you can easily pause and resume the video to allow for smooth transitions between periods of reflection.
- This film is only available in English. However, if viewing the film on YouTube you can add subtitles by clicking on the setting icon displayed at the bottom of the video.



Briefing:

- You may introduce the film by saying the following:

"This film-based training scenario will follow the story of Barbara, who is experiencing symptoms of early-stage dementia. Please try to pay attention to Barbara's experiences and how people interact with her. After different points throughout the film, we will pause and reflect on the scene. You may find this film emotional so, if you need to leave please don't hesitate – someone will be on hand to support you".



30-60 minutes

Activity Instructions

1. Refer to the 'Barbara's Story Training Briefing' prior to commencing the training
2. Familiarise yourself with the *Teaching Points* included in the training guide.
3. Introduce Barbara's story to the group of participants with a brief description; conveying the points included in the *Briefing* section above.
4. Play scene 1 of Barbara's Story
5. At any point that you feel is relevant – or if the group's attention is wavering – pause the film to reflect. *Discussion points are included in the *Reflection* section below.
6. It is at your discretion how many episodes of Barbara's Story you wish to play (6 in total). Each scene covers various topics as outlined in the training brief so you may decide to pick the scenes that are most relevant to the overall objective of your training
7. Give time for a more in-depth reflection after the episode has ended.
8. Emphasise the main learning points included in the Training Briefing



Group Reflection / Discussion



- Refer to the teaching points of each episode outlined in the Training Briefing for some suggested points of discussion
- Ask the group open-ended questions regarding Barbara's state of mind; e.g., "What do you think Barbara was feeling when ___".
- Ask the group to consider the ways in which Barbara's medical/care experience could have been made easier for her – i.e., things that could have been done differently.
- Ask the group in what ways were the staff helpful/considerate towards Barbara.



Helpful Tips

This training programme can be linked with different scenarios, including 'The Way to Exam' and 'Navigating around hospital corridors with dementia'.

Additional Resources



Helpful guidelines for caregivers bringing a person with dementia to the hospital can be found at:

- <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/going-hospital-tips-dementia-caregivers>
- <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/help-dementia-care/going-into-hospital>
- https://dementia.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Supportingthe_Personwith_dementiainHospital1-1.pdf