

## Scenario: Personal Care

Over the course of dementia, people may develop difficulties with personal care and require additional support. However, personal care habits are very individual and it is not always easy to accept help with daily activities such as washing or dressing. This roleplay training scenario will allow participants to step into the shoes of both a person with dementia receiving help and a caregiver providing help.



### Aims

The aim of this training scenario is to simulate difficulties in accepting help in personal care in situations such as washing or dressing.



### Learning Objectives

- Increase participants' competencies in supporting people with dementia
- Develop a person-centered approach for healthcare staff facing situations similar to the scenario



### When to use this scenario

- This scenario is suitable for staff working in healthcare facilities and informal carers supporting people with dementia. The scenario cannot be conducted as an online version.



## Equipment

- Role play instructions handout
- Washing situation: washbowl, washcloth, towel
- Dressing situation: several shirts

### Optional

- Simulation glasses
- Simulation gloves



## Downloadable supporting materials

- Slide show
- Evaluation form

## Facilitation Instructions

### Setting up:

- If the scenario is performed in a healthcare facility (hospital, nursing home, etc.), ensure in advance that you have booked rooms.
- Print out the roleplay instruction handout and gather required props prior to the training.

### Briefing:

You may say the following to introduce the roleplay:

- *"People with dementia may develop difficulties with personal care and require additional support. We are now going to split into pairs to carry out a roleplay that simulates activities relating to personal care."*
- *"In pairs, one person will play the role of a carer while the other person will play the role of a person with dementia."*
- *"You will be given some props needed to carry out a personal care activity and written instructions relating to your role. Each activity will be acted out twice using different approaches. For the second activity, you will then switch roles so each person has the chance to step into the shoes of a person with dementia and their carer."*





20-30 mins

## Activity Instructions

1. The group is divided into pairs: a person with dementia and a professional or informal carer.
2. Provide each participant with the roleplay description handout relating to their role (link available to download in the equipment section).
3. Only provide the person who will be the carer with instructions relating to the activity they will be carrying out; washing or dressing. This is so the participant playing the role of the person with dementia is unaware of the carer's intentions and has to rely on the carer's approach to communication to gain this information.
4. Each pair is given props used during activities of personal care; providing help to wash feet and putting on a shirt.
5. **Optional:** Ask the participant playing the role of the person with dementia to wear simulation glasses during the washing activity and the simulation gloves during the dressing activity.
6. Each activity is carried out in two rounds
7. The first round simulates a negative example of getting help with washing or dressing.
8. The second round simulates a more positive example of caregiving.
9. During the second activity, the roles are reversed to allow participants to put themselves in the shoes of a person with dementia and their carer. However, if you only have time for one activity, you can switch roles after the first round.



## Group Reflection / Discussion



- After the scenario is concluded, it is important to engage in a period of reflection:
- How was your experience of the scenario?
- What can you take away from the scenario for your professional/everyday life?
- Do you think this type of intervention helped you understand the difficulties that people with dementia can experience?
- What are the pros and cons of roleplaying?

## Helpful Tips



- This scenario can be combined with other scenarios such as Communication in care
- To further sensitize health care professionals or informal carers, they can think carefully about their own habits, needs and wishes in daily routines

## Additional Resources



- **Helping a person with dementia in dressing and grooming:**  
<https://www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/daily-care/dressing-grooming>