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Interventions targeting pain or behaviour in dementia: a systematic review.

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Abstract

BACKGROUND: Both pain and challenging behaviour are highly prevalent in dementia, and multiple studies show that some of these behaviours may be correlated. Pain, especially in non-communicative patients, can cause challenging behaviour, and treatment of pain therefore may have an effect on behaviour. This review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of evidence regarding the effectiveness of interventions targeting pain on the outcome behaviour, and interventions targeting behaviour on pain, in dementia.

METHOD: PubMed (MEDLINE), EMBASE, COCHRANE, CINAHL, PsychINFO and Web of Science were searched systematically. Studies were included if they focused on an intervention targeting a reduction in the person's distress, pain, and/or behaviour, and included adults with a main diagnosis of dementia.

RESULTS: Of a total of 893 potentially relevant publications that were identified, 16 publications met the inclusion criteria and were eligible for further analysis; 6 studies focused on a pain intervention targeting behaviour, 1 study focused on a behavioural intervention targeting pain, and 9 studies focused on an intervention targeting both pain and behaviour.

CONCLUSION: Available evidence suggests that (pain) interventions targeting behaviour, and (behavioural) interventions targeting pain are effective in reducing pain and behavioural symptoms in dementia.

Publication type, MeSH terms, Substance

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