

STAR-VA: A Multi-Component Psychosocial Intervention for Managing Challenging Behaviors in Residents with Dementia in Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Community Living Centers

STAR-VA Overview

STAR-VA is an interdisciplinary behavioral approach to managing challenging behaviors among Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Community Living Center (CLC) residents with dementia. The STAR-VA intervention entails four core components: (1) Creating realistic expectations of individuals with dementia; (2) Promoting effective communication with individuals with dementia; (3) Identifying and changing activators and consequences of challenging behaviors (ABCs), and (4) Increasing personally relevant pleasant events through a structured process. In STAR-VA, a CLC Mental Health Provider and Registered Nurse are trained to train the entire CLC team to collaborate on behavioral assessment and care planning.

STAR-VA was adapted from the Staff Training in Assisted Living Residences (STAR) program developed by Dr. Linda Teri and colleagues at the University of Washington (e.g., Teri et al., 2010; Teri, Huda, Gibbons, Young, & van Leynseele, 2005).

Publications

STAR-VA

Karel M. J., Teri, L., McConnell, E., Visnic, S., & Karlin, B.E. (2016). Effectiveness of expanded implementation of STAR-VA for managing dementia-related behaviors among Veterans. *Gerontologist*, *56*, 126-134. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnv068. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26185155>

Karlin, B. E., Visnic, S., Shealy -McGee, J., & Teri, L. (2014). Results from the multisite implementation of STAR-VA: A multicomponent psychosocial intervention for managing challenging dementia-related behaviors of veterans. *Psychological Services*, *11*, 200-208. doi: 10.1037/a0033683. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23937081>

Curyto, K.J., McCurry, S.M., Luci, K., Karlin, B.E., Teri, L., & Karel, M.J. (2017). Managing challenging behaviors of dementia in veterans: Identifying and changing activators and consequences using STAR-VA. *Journal of Gerontological Nursing*, *43*, 33-43. doi: 10.3928/00989134-20160930-01. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27711931>

McConnell, E.S., & Karel, M.J. (2016). Improving management of behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia in acute care: Evidence and lessons learned from across the care spectrum. *Nursing Administration Quarterly*, *40*, 244-254. doi: 10.1097/NAQ.0000000000000167. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27259128>

STAR

Teri, L. H., Huda, P., Gibbons, L., Young, H., & van Leynseele, J. (2005). STAR: A dementia-specific training program for staff in assisted living residences. *The Gerontologist*, *45*, 686-693. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16199404>

Teri, L., McKenzie, G. L., Pike, K. C., Farran, C. J., Beck, C., Paun, O. & LaFazia, D. (2010). Staff training in assisted living: Evaluating treatment fidelity. *The American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 18, 502-509. doi: 10.1097/JGP.0b013e3181c37b0e. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19910884>

STAR-VA Intervention Manual

https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/healthcare-providers/docs/STAR-VA_Manual.pdf

Orientation to STAR-VA: Virtual Broadcast

This 90-minute broadcast provides an overview of the core components of the STAR-VA intervention and its application in two case examples. This orientation would be helpful to administrators, nursing staff, and other team members looking to understand how a structured, team-based, behavioral approach can help the team help residents with dementia.

The broadcast may be viewed at this link: [STAR-VA orientation broadcast](#)

For Further Information

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