Dementia- Friendly Doorway Design - Interventions & Innovations

Presenters: Jocelyn Hunt & Jennifer Blaik, Design & Dementia CoP

Special Guests: Brian & Karen Romeril, Creative Art Co.
Our Presenters...

**Jocelyn Hunt**, B.A. Gerontology, CPG, CAPS  
Environmental Gerontologist / Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist  
Home Adaptation and Maintenance Program Manager  
CHATS - Community & Home Assistance to Seniors

**Jennifer Blaik**, B.R.L.S,  
Post Graduate Certificate Therapeutic Recreation  
Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant  
The Regional Municipality of York
Karen and Brian Romeril
of Creative Art Co. (formerly BKRC Art Effects) together
design, draw and paint specialized murals using
perspective drawing techniques

Collaborated with Gail Elliot, BASc, MA Gerontologist and Dementia Specialist, to create Memory M-AID© signage for persons living with dementia
Design and Dementia CoP

**WHAT:** Collaborative of health care partners, researchers, information specialists, and others with an interest in dementia-friendly design

**HOW:**
- Offer *knowledge-to-practice* webinars and
- Create and share best practice recommendations/tools

**WHY:** Improve the quality of life of persons living with dementia through enhanced environmental design of care settings (including physical, social, and emotional design components)
Learning Objectives

• Discuss how the use of visual redirection techniques can reduce exit-seeking behaviour and its associated agitation in persons living with dementia

• Outline a set of knowledge-to-practice recommendations based on current literature and practice knowledge

• Learn from one another about the challenges and successes of implementing doorway interventions
Research and Evidence

• Supportive environments (both physical and social) are key social determinants of health and identified as key components to full engagement in [the] community\(^1\)

• Changes related to aging and cognition increase the effect of environment on behaviour (i.e. “environmental press”)

• Importance of “Place” and “Familiar”

\(^1\) WHO, 2002; Health Canada, 2006; Roundtable for Future Planning, 2006
It’s Important and It’s Complex...

There is a need to balance multiple factors related to design considerations and implementation:

- Individual needs of the person
- Compliance with legislation and standards
- Time, resources, staff support & education
- Established design of buildings and the challenge of retrofitting existing spaces
Why do people living with dementia exit-seek?

• Exit-seeking behaviour is considered a goal-directed behaviour that is purposeful, and attempts to fill a particular need for the person living with dementia (Algase et al, 1996)

• People have a natural interest to go in and out of doors
Why do people living with dementia exit-seek?

- Persons living with dementia do not lose this interest, however may lack insight and judgment as to the associated risks.
- The inability to go out of a door can cause persons living with dementia anxiety and frustration.

Why is this an issue?

- Risk mitigation: safety of the person, as well as staff safety.

DOORWAYS Knowledge to Practice Recommendations
Dementia-Friendly Design Recommendations

1. Camouflage Restricted Areas
2. Therapeutic Redirection
3. Enhanced Access to Safe Areas
4. Positioning of Prompts
5. Doorway Entrance Seating
6. Limitations to Doorway/Elevator Traffic
7. Door Code Redirection
8. Enhanced Privacy
1. Camouflage Restricted Areas

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adapt doorways to restricted areas (e.g. staff/maintenance doors), co-resident rooms and exit doors from dementia environments for visual redirection /blending

**Strategies include:**

- ✓ paint/wallpaper doors the same shade/pattern as the surrounding walls
- ✓ cover handles/panic bars with a cloth apron or paint of the same colour/pattern
- ✓ place large bold grid lines, a large STOP sign, or sign that states "[name of resident] this is not your room" in front of doors
- ✓ add blinds, or other window coverings to doorway windows (consider translucent film/glazing that shows shadows but not details)
- ✓ place a STOP sign, Velcro / magnet yellow fabric ribbon, or signage (please refer to wayfinding section of signage recommendations) in front of doors
It isn’t enough to just change the door....

we must redirect and engage as well...

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Before
St. Joseph’s Health Care Hamilton – ALC Unit

After

By permission of Creative Art Co.
Alzheimer Society of Hamilton & Halton

By permission of Creative Art Co.
Before

Dearness London

After

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DOORWAYS Knowledge to Practice Recommendations
Before

Sunset Village Collingwood

After

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DOORWAYS Knowledge to Practice Recommendations
2. Therapeutic Redirection

RECOMMENDATION: Make pleasant seating/special interest areas available in areas away from exit doors and promote their use.

*Strategies include:*

- ✓ provide, guide and settle residents in reading areas with books
- ✓ bird watching areas with binoculars and directive signage for staff to reference (i.e. "Look for the robins")
- ✓ aquariums
Bird Enclosure

Regina Gardens LTC, Hamilton

Game/Activity Area

Google Images

Home-like Sitting Areas

Google Images

Aquarium

Grace Villa LTC, Hamilton
3. Enhanced Access to Safe Areas

RECOMMENDATION: Provide doorway design that enhances access to safe areas

*Strategies include:*

✓ doorways lead to secure outdoor areas and / or safe wandering paths
✓ doorways are visually distinctive from the wall
✓ doorways use lever handles for independent use
“Please join us in the garden...”
Inviting Through Safe Doorways

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4. Positioning of Prompts

RECOMMENDATION: Post Fire Exit instructions above or at eye level
5. Doorway Entrance Seating

RECOMMENDATION: Provide seating just inside building entrances to allow vision time to adjust. Avoid seating areas near dementia unit entrances/exits.

Strategies include:

✓ Provide age-friendly seating area (e.g. bench, chairs, etc.) close to building entrance.
✓ Use of Awnings for transitional lighting - Check out our lighting document for more great strategies!
Building Relationships

• These recommendations are based on our interpretation of current research and best practices; they are neither prescriptive nor all-inclusive.

• A facility/organization planning environmental changes should ensure they comply with the MOHLTC Long-Term Care Facility Design Manual, the LTC Homes Act, any other pertinent legislation/codes, and the requirements of the Fire Marshal.

• Work closely with your local fire marshal/inspectors, architects, and engineers, to make the best choices available to you.
Transition space between outdoors/indoors

Recessed seating
6. Limitations to Doorways / Elevator Traffic

RECOMMENDATIONS: Ensure exits from dementia environments are low-traffic areas

Strategies include:

- encourage staff and visitors to use stairwells and alternative entrances as much as possible
- have service staff use alternative entrance to the unit and/or consider timing of service traffic
- when possible, locate elevators outside of secure area
Elevator Redirection

Before

After

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Elevator Redirection

By permission of Creative Art Co.

DOORWAYS Knowledge to Practice Recommendations
7. Door Code Redirection

RECOMMENDATION:
Incorporate door / elevator code pads into visual redirection adaptations

Strategies include:
✓ keypad as part of bookshelf design or wall painting
✓ incorporate upside down code pads

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Elevator and Code Pad Redirection

By permission of Creative Art Co.
8. Enhanced Privacy

RECOMMENDATION:
Consider Dutch Doors to enhance privacy and offer opportunities for engagement

Strategies include:

✓ install for individual rooms or activity areas to limit uninvited entry to bedrooms
Review

• Doorways are an important design feature affecting the quality of life for persons living with dementia

• Redirecting attention away from doorways/towards safe areas can:
  ✓ reduce anxiety
  ✓ reduce exit-seeking behaviour
  ✓ promote feelings of freedom and control
  ✓ promote exercise and restorative functions
  ✓ decrease boredom
  ✓ increase ability to both actively engage safely in their environment
Questions?
You are invited to get involved!

brainxchange.ca/design

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