



ECHO Idaho: Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias CASE RECOMMENDATION FORM

ECHO Session Date: 7/23/2024

Presenter Credential: MD

Thank you for presenting your patient at ECHO Idaho –Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias session.

Summary:

A 71-year-old man with a history of Parkinson's Disease has been diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia and is experiencing behavioral disturbances. He lives on a farm in rural Idaho with his healthy wife. Due to his declining health, they have engaged hospice services for approximately six months. The patient has expressed a desire to die at home.

Question:

How can I effectively assess the support needs of primary caregivers for a 71-year-old patient with Parkinson's and Lewy Body Dementia, who exhibits ADL/IADL challenges (toileting, showering, sensory loss), while also addressing Advance Care Planning, medication management, and caregiver support?

After review of the case presentation and discussion of this patient’s case among the ECHO Community of Practice, the following suggestions have been made:

Recommendations:

- Medication considerations:
 - Galantamine – May help reduce hallucinations and delusions associated with Lewy Body Dementia. Consider gradually reducing the dosage to assess its necessity and minimize potential side effects.
 - Cetirizine may not be necessary due to the presence of glycopyrrolate for drooling. Consider alternatives like ipratropium nasal spray for runny nose.
 - There is a risk of increased psychotic symptoms or other complications when stopping medications like galantamine or acetylcholinesterase inhibitors. A gradual approach is recommended if discontinuation is considered.
 - Maintaining a balance between acetylcholine and dopamine is crucial for Parkinson's patients. Any medication changes should be made cautiously to avoid exacerbating symptoms.
 - Consider simplifying the patient's medication regimen to improve comfort and reduce caregiver burden.

- Caregiver and family support:
 - Introducing additional caregiving support early in the disease progression can ease the transition to a long-term care facility, such as memory care. This prior experience with outside care can help individuals and their families adjust to the new environment more smoothly.
 - [Zarit Burden Interview](#): Various versions of quick and easy tools to consider. These tools may be used to objectively measure caregiver distress and burnout. It helps to confirm or challenge the provider's assumptions about the caregiver's situation and identify areas for targeted support or intervention.
 - [Caregiver Strain Index \(CSI\)](#) could be manageable for caregivers with varying levels of education.



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- Using the [PERMA](#) (Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment) approach based on positive psychology science can help caregivers focus on positive aspects of their lives.
- Offering meditation and mindfulness techniques can promote relaxation and stress reduction for caregivers. Focusing on caregiver well-being through positive psychology and stress management techniques is crucial.
- The importance of community involvement such as neighbors can provide support and supervision during outdoor walks.

- Occupational therapy:
 - Educating the caregiver about Lewy body dementia behaviors, specifically the importance of patience and avoiding rushing the patient.
 - Assisting with environmental adaptations to improve the patient's function and safety.
 - Incorporating the patient's past occupations (farming and ranching) into daily routines to stimulate engagement, cooperation and reduce agitation.
 - Teaching the caregiver specific techniques to manage daily tasks like toileting and showering while respecting the patient's needs.
 - [LSVT LOUD](#) and [LSVT BIG](#) are therapeutic approaches that can address two different issues in Parkinson's.
 - [LSVT LOUD](#) is designed to help improve speech and voice function.
 - [LSVT BIG](#) aims to help people increase the size of their movements to improve balance and daily function.
 - Movement is so beneficial. In this case, it may be difficult with the rural component and hospice service, but it can be beneficial throughout the diagnosis.

Resources:

- [Zarit Burden Interview](#)
- [Caregiver Strain Index \(CSI\)](#)
- [Navigating Dementia: A Workbook for Family Caregivers](#)
- [Idaho's Community Care Program](#): 208 898-9626 or ccp@a3ssa.com (Area Agency of Aging host)
- [ALZ Association](#) - Virtual caregiver support
- [The Memory Cafe](#) is a FREE program for people with Alzheimer's Disease or other forms of dementia, and their care partner. To RSVP contact Karen Kouba, kkouba@jannus.org or phone 208-947-4283.