

# Interventions for Dementia in Nursing Homes

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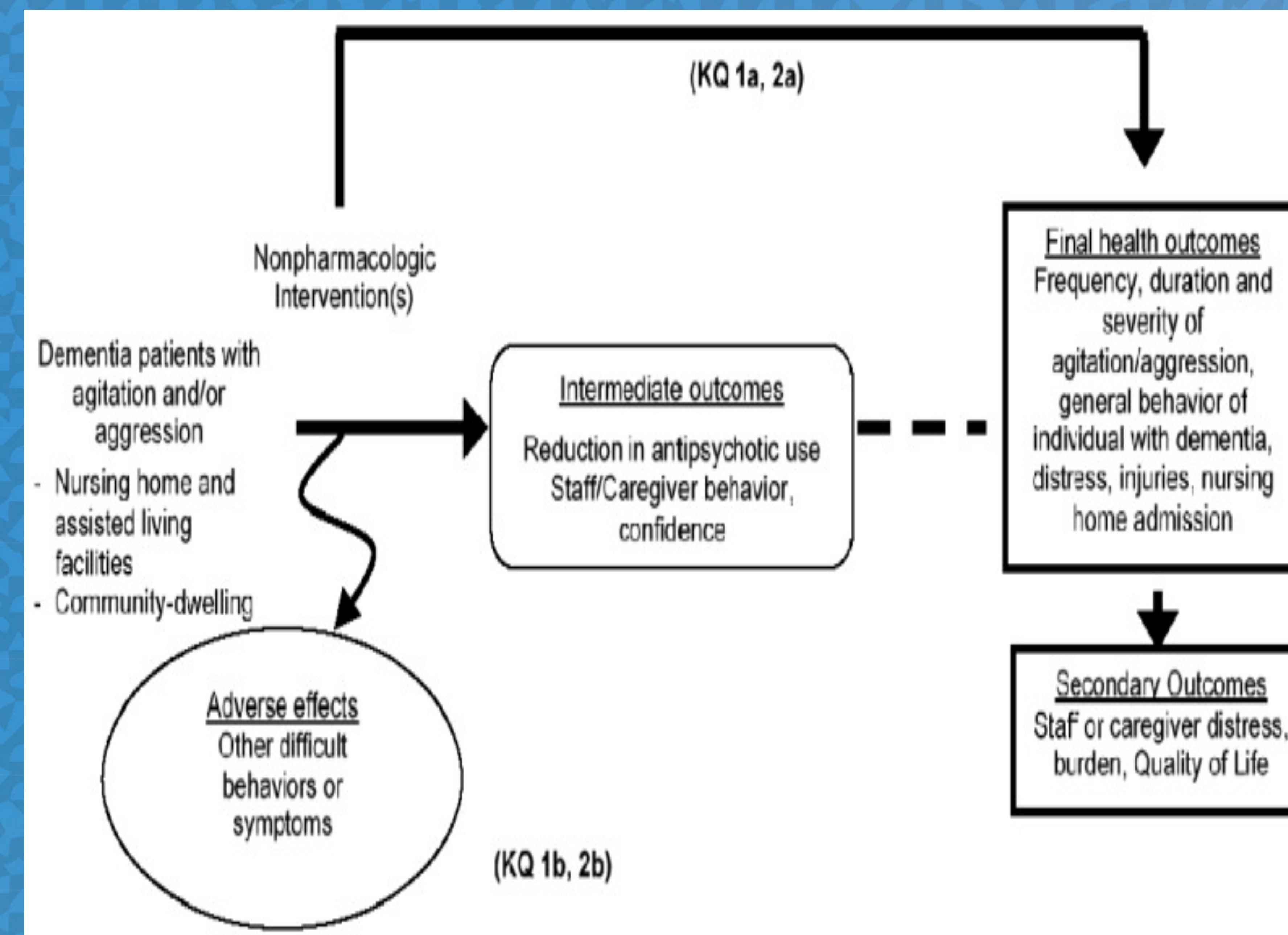
## Background/Significance

- Dementia causes damage to or loss of neurons
  - This damage causes an inability of the brain cells to communicate and hinders thinking, memory, and behavior ("What is Dementia?...", 2017).
- Highly prevalent in nursing homes due to older patient population
  - 47.8% of nursing home residents have a dementia diagnosis (FastStats-Alzheimer's Disease, 2020).
  - Dementia was the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in 2016 (Zonsius et al., 2020).

## Importance to Nursing

- The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient and the nurse is responsible for advocating for the patient's rights while providing dignified and compassionate care (American Nurses Association, 2015).
- With such a high percentage of nursing home residents having a dementia diagnosis, nurses need to be trained on dementia care
  - Promotes patient and family trust in caregiver
  - Proper care by staff promotes resident quality of life
- Knowing how to effectively communicate and activity participation can lessen behaviors by the resident
  - De-escalating situations lessens aggression symptoms (Jao et al., 2017).

## Graphic



The graphic demonstrates outcomes associated with the use of nonpharmacologic interventions instead of pharmacologic

- Decrease in need for antipsychotic use
- Decrease in behavior symptoms
- Lessens staff stress

(Brasure et al., 2016)

## Interventions

- Pharmacologically meds such as cholinesterase inhibitors and benzodiazepines may cause unwanted effects such as increase in falls, and can be considered a chemical restraint when used to control behaviors, rather than a treatment (Stockwell, 2018).
- Nonpharmacologic interventions should be implemented to increase quality of life
  - Activity participation
    - Less behaviors when kept busy/active. Determine residents preferred activities. (Backhouse et al., 2016).
  - Social interaction & Reminiscence
    - Decrease in depression symptoms related to dementia (Jao et al., 2017).
  - Physical activity
    - Shown to help improve cognitive and executive functions such as impulse control (Henskens et al., 2018).
  - Reading/Listening to books
    - Stimulates cerebral cortex/brain training (Bartolucci & Batini, 2019).

## Conclusion

Providing an individualized intervention plan to lessen behavioral symptoms for dementia patients can greatly increase their quality of life.