

The Aging Population

Communication Matters - Video 2

Aynsley Moorhouse:

A major thing for healthcare professionals to remember is to speak to the person with dementia. When my - I remember, just as a personal story, when my dad had dementia, and I remember he was lying in a hospital bed, and my mom was standing next to him, and I was here, and a doctor was in the room - and never once looked at my dad; never once asked him a question directly, or even really said anything to him. Everything was said to my mom and I. And I felt it would be such a small shift to ask the question to my dad and, you know, allow for him to answer, and then my mom could supplement if needed. If people are just spoken to and treated like individuals who - who have something to say; and if you just take the time to listen... Everyone's pressed for time. We're all, I think, all health - most healthcare professionals are overworked and have huge caseloads, and we're always rushed. But sometimes you just make the time to listen, and you can learn a lot about the person from the way they say things, even if the answer doesn't completely make sense, there might be some words that - that give you the key to what they're trying to express. The way they're saying it, the sound of their voice, the tone; just listen.

Yeah, I don't know. How to fight ageism: stop using ageist language; stop using dehumanizing language. We need to stop thinking about - we need to stop labelling people. You know, we talk about wanderers or aggressive people. There's - people aren't wandering; people are - people are being direct - people want to go somewhere, and then get lost. Or they forget where they're going. They're not wandering; they've gotten lost. Or, you know, aggressive people - what does aggression mean, and where is this behaviour that might be happening, where is it coming from? What is the unmet need that is leading to this? And if we can start getting to the unmet needs then we can start treating people with dignity and respect, and - yeah, and not labelling them and trying to address their behaviours with drugs or restraints.