

CAT 4 RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Group 4-069

The Forgotten Generation

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Abstract

The Forgotten Generation is a project regarding dementia. With the prevalence of dementia in Singapore's society, the group felt that not enough attention is being paid to the implications of dementia not just on the patient, but the caregiver as well. Caregivers are the ones who are constantly caring for the patients, often voluntarily. Many of them have little experience in dealing with dementia patients and thus may face many challenges. However, as they face different challenges, they may not know where to seek help. Hence, the group has created a resource package to cater to caregivers of dementia patients, to aid them in dealing with patients. As the number of dementia patients increases, so does the need of caregivers. Therefore, the group has reached out to a large number of caregivers via an online website and an Instagram page, to assist any dementia caregivers facing any challenges.

1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

With an ageing population, the number of elderly in Singapore who suffer from dementia has increased steadily, with 10% of the elderly population currently suffering from dementia. However, generally there are still some in Singapore who lack understanding of dementia and are unsure of how to interact with dementia patients.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of The Forgotten Generation were to:

- Increase awareness for dementia patients
- Educate caregivers on how to take care of dementia patients

1.3 Target Audience

The target audience were caregivers of dementia patients. This included family members, paid helpers, social workers, and aspiring volunteers.

1.4 Resource

A resource package was created which included an educational online website and an Instagram page to raise awareness and educate the general public about dementia.

2 Review

Websites like www.helpforalzheimersfamilies.com lack self care tips for caregivers. Many dementia caregivers end up having depression and anxiety, thus, it is just as important to take care of the caregivers' mental, physical or financial well-being. Our website offers methods on how to care for dementia patients and ways for caregivers to care for themselves.

The Health Promotion Board's resource pack is inaccessible as it is only obtainable through grassroots leaders, hospitals or clinics. In contrast, our project is accessible online, through social media postings of infographics and information about dementia.

Caregiver support groups, like the Alzheimer's Disease Association in Singapore, can provide an opportunity for respite and learning. Unfortunately, their workshops are rare and short, and potentially inaccurate or unreliable because anybody could offer incorrect information. This could result in the wrong kind of care, harming both patient and caregiver. Nurses have already verified this project to ensure its validity.

The US Government of Human and Health Services teaches people different ways to care for themselves and how to support their dementia patients. Unfortunately, much of their resources are outdated, being published in 2003 or 2006.

To conclude, this project generally has a wider reach to both the general public and dementia caregivers, and also ensures that the information is reliable, accurate and informative.

3 Methodology

3.1 Needs Analysis

In March 2019, the group has conducted a survey on 104 members of the public, including caregivers of dementia patients. The survey was to get an understanding about whether the general public was aware of dementia and whether they were able to interact with dementia patients. The survey results showed that although many of the participants knew someone who had dementia (Fig3.1), they did not know how to interact with them (Fig 3.2). Many people are also unaware of the factors contributing to dementia (Fig3.3) and how to deal with dementia (Fig3.4).

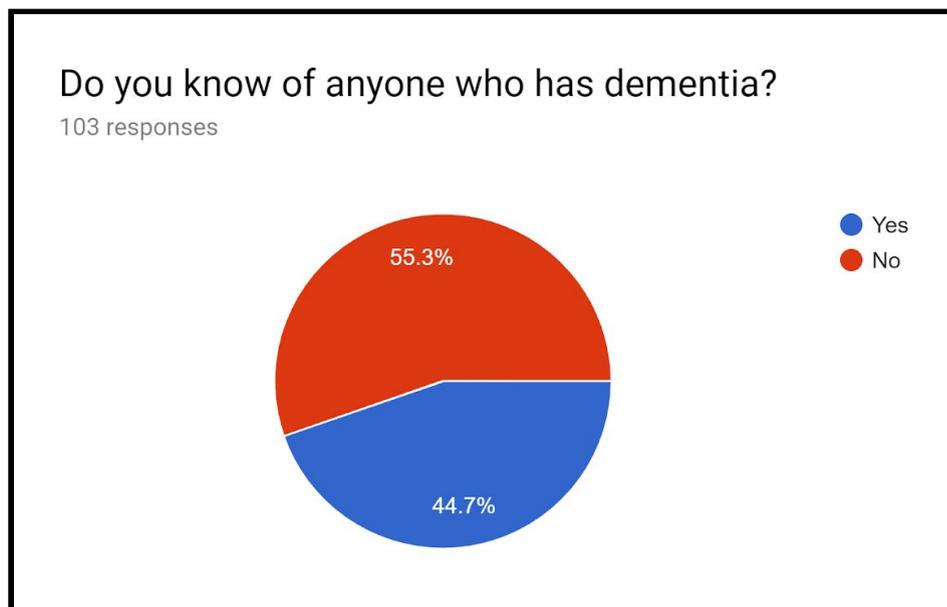


Fig 3.1

If the answer for the above question was yes, do you think you are equipped with sufficient knowledge in handling these patients?

94 responses

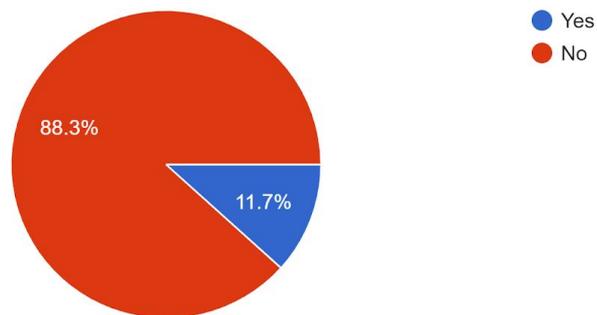


Fig 3.2

Do you know what increases the risks of getting dementia?

104 responses

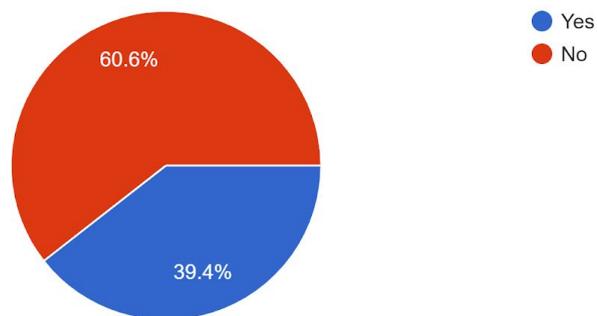


Fig 3.3

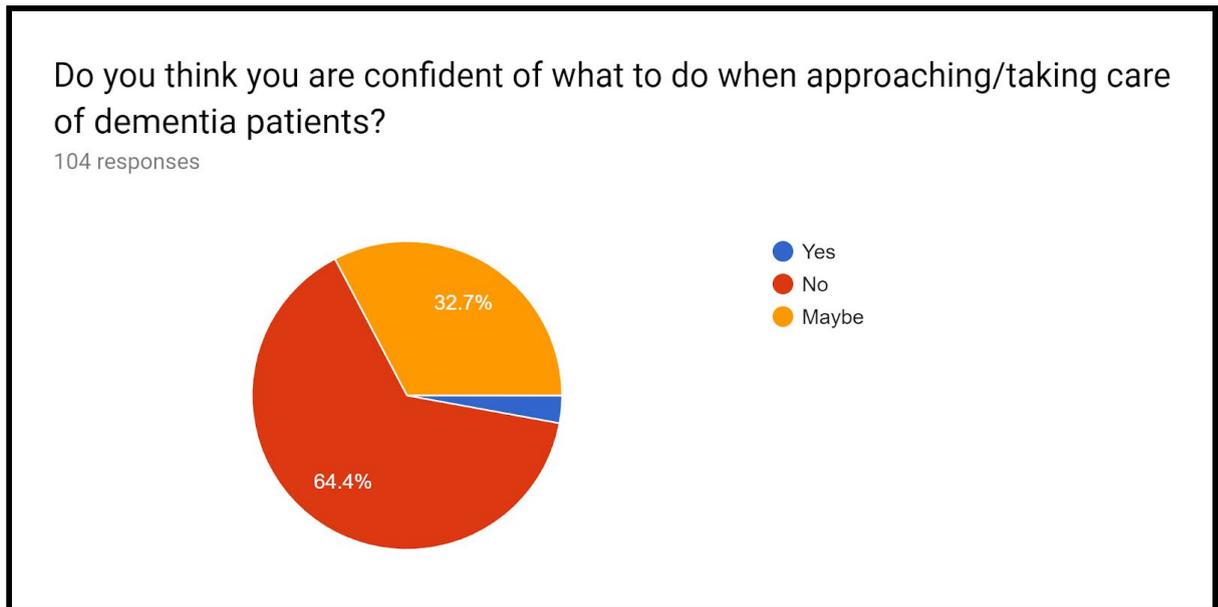


Fig 3.4

3.2 Development of Resources

The group did intensive research on dementia to create useful infographics and videos on caregiving. They were about challenges that are faced by dementia patients and how to interact with dementia patients. The group has also conducted interviews with professional nurses to find out more about dementia.

An Instagram page was created @the_forbidden_generation with updates of infographics on tips about how to treat dementia patients. This had allowed the group to raise awareness of dementia among social media users.

A comprehensive website, <https://tancheehin.wixsite.com/dementia>, was published with all the infographics and videos. This was to allow the public to easily navigate through our resources. The website also included information on dementia, tips on interacting with dementia patients, how caregivers may better manage caring for patients as well as themselves, and more.

All the content published on the website has been validated by Ms Dawn Chua, Nursing Student, NYP.

3.3 Pilot Test

Two pilot tests with our resources were conducted to gather feedback regarding our products. Participants were gathered and allowed to navigate through the website. As seen from the figures below, respondents found the resources to be mostly useful.

The respondents mentioned that they enjoyed the infographics the most as they were more straightforward and easy to understand. They also hoped to see more scenarios included as part of the videos.

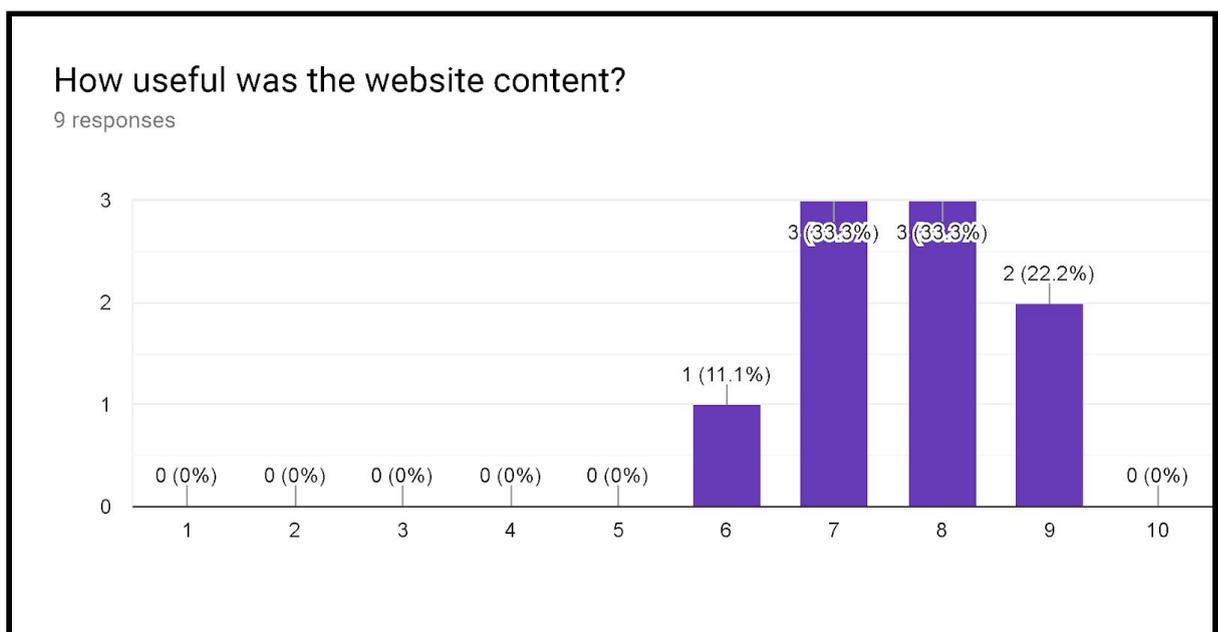


Fig 3.5

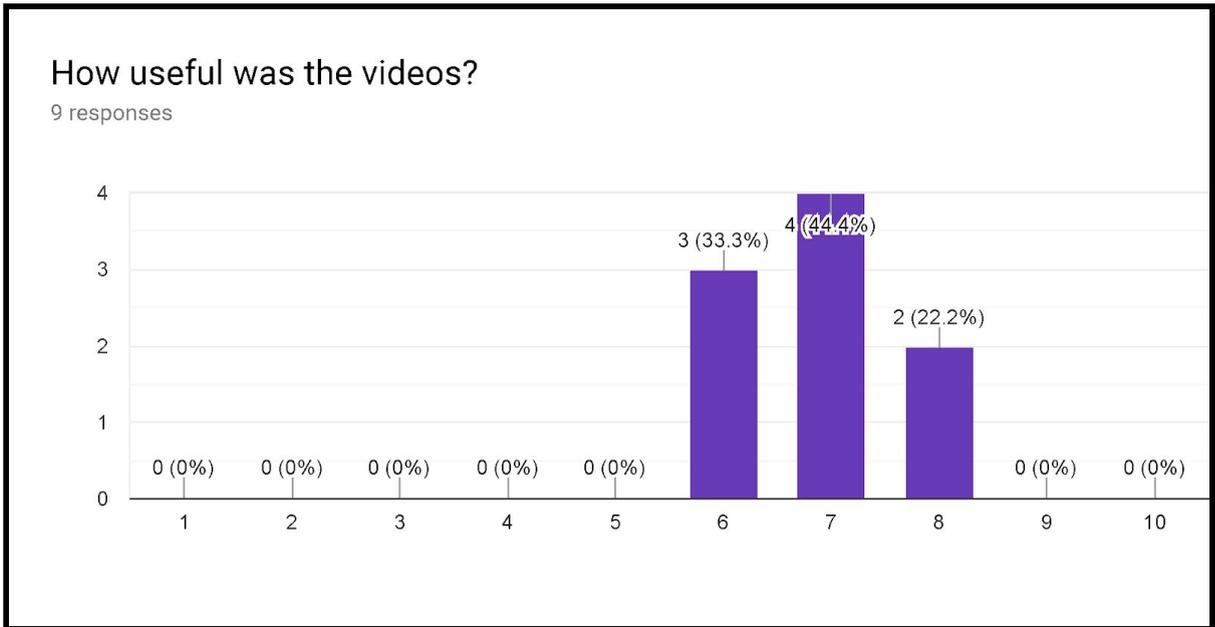


Fig 3.6

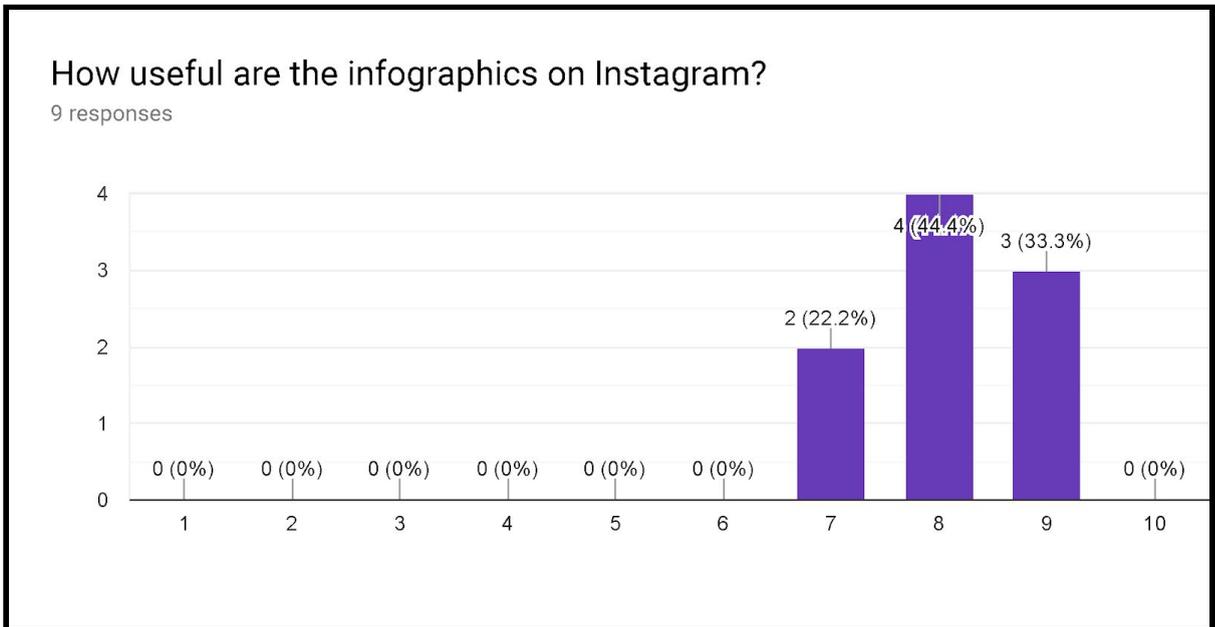


Fig 3.7

4 Outcome & Discussion

The feedback that the group received from the nurses and pilot tests were mostly positive and the group has identified room for improvement.

Although the resource package has been completed, the group feels that more can be done to publicise the resource. Initially, we tried to collaborate with dementia care centres like the Singapore Alzheimer's Disease Association in Singapore, but have unfortunately failed to link up with them. Hence, the group will continue efforts in contacting external organisations. This will benefit more people as the resource package would receive greater publicity. Furthermore, dementia care centres could also incorporate the resource package into their caregiver training programmes. The resource package would aid dementia care centres in their teaching as there would be a greater variety of visual aids.

5 Conclusion

Embarking on this project has helped the group to develop empathy with dementia patients. It is not uncommon to know someone who has dementia, and the team is grateful that the group has been able to understand the difficulties faced by dementia patients and gain certain skills so that the group can better interact with dementia patients. The group realised how difficult it is to be a caregiver taking care of dementia patients, thus the group sincerely hopes that caregivers of dementia patients would find our resources useful. Initially, it was difficult for us to contact medical professionals to meet up for interviews and obtain their advice. Thankfully, the group was determined and did not give up and the group eventually managed to contact a few medical professionals. The group has also learnt important teamwork skills as there were frequent meet up sessions to have discussions and complete the work.

Finally, the group would like to acknowledge Ms Dawn Chua, a NYP nursing student, and Alexius Lim, Staff Nurse of Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, for their time and feedback regarding our project. The group is also grateful to caregivers who have taken their time to help us complete our survey for our needs analysis and our schoolmates who also have provided valuable feedback via the pilot tests.

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