

Taking into account significant activities in volunteering with residents with

dementia

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Résumé de recherche

La participation aux activités significatives des résidents en centre de soins de longue durée (CSLD) entraîne des bénéfices documentés sur la santé. Leur implantation dans les CSLD demeure un défi. De plus, la littérature porte sur la participation sociale et les bienfaits, et peu sur l'importance de la langue et d'autres éléments facilitant cette socialisation. Un projet de bénévolat formel dans un CSLD est établi dans le cadre d'une étude plus vaste (projet REVIVRE), afin de permettre une interaction entre étudiants-bénévoles et résidents atteints de démence, dans leur langue maternelle. Le projet a pour objectif d'analyser le développement de cette relation interpersonnelle, ainsi que leurs divers facilitateurs. Afin de mieux comprendre ce sujet, une revue de littérature sera effectuée sur l'importance des activités significatives et de la langue. Puis, l'analyse des rapports à remplir par les étudiants-bénévoles suite à chaque séance sera réalisée à l'aide d'une approche qualitative. Les notes portent sur des questions de participation du résident, des barrières ou facilitateurs rencontrés et leur besoin de motivation. Elles seront compilées dans le logiciel NVivo pour identifier des thèmes décrivant les observations des étudiants-bénévoles sur leur interaction. Cette analyse permettra de comprendre comment favoriser cette interaction.

Method

Research subject		Data collection	
Theme	Significant activities	Participants	Students from the B. Sc. In Health Sciences who volunteered for the project
Research question	What is the importance of significant activities as a facilitator of interpersonal relationships between the resident and the student-volunteer?	Procedure	Report to be filled by using Fluid Surveys Software by the volunteer-students after every meeting with the resident.
Main research themes for the literature review		Questions to report on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation (or lack of) of the resident to significant activities Barriers/facilitators that were encountered Need of motivation, methods used to engage the resident
Importance of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant activities Participation and social roles in LTCF Language and active offer of French health care Knowledge of life history Impact of culture on the significant activities 		Data analysis	
Main key words for the peer-reviewed article research		Approach	Qualitative Content analysis to extract themes from the volunteer-students' description of their experiences during their meetings with the residents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of life LTCF Dementia Participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocational occupation Elderly ADL (Activities of Daily Living) 	Data processing software	NVivo

Conclusion

Unanswered questions

- "What is the importance of significant activities on interpersonal relationship facilitators between the resident and the student-volunteer?"
 - Delay in data collection.
- "Why are residents and their families unwilling to participate in an interaction project with volunteers?"
 - Should be further researched.

Next step for the project

- Contact other LTCFs for possibility of recruitment.
- Continue resident recruitment process within the LTCF already addressed.

Future contribution

The findings in the scientific literature have allowed the research team to be more aware of the impact of significant activities, which will be important in the next stages of the project.

The results of this study will allow a better understanding of social interactions of residents in LTCF with dementia. This could help establish beneficial activity programs in LTCF in the future.

Current state of knowledge

The importance of significant activities in long term care facilities (LTCF) has been documented in scientific literature.

- Knowledge of life history reduces aggressive behavior and conflict with family and personnel (Reichman *and al.*, 2004; Egan *and al.*, 2007).

- Lack of activities leads to
 - boredom
 - apathy
 - disruptive behavior
 - loss of self-esteem
 - depression
 - social exclusion
 - solitude (Kolanowski *and al.*, 2006).

- Significant activities include
 - reminiscence
 - leisure
 - expression
 - vocational occupation (Smit *and al.*, 2014).

- The implementation of significant activities in LTCF is difficult

- lack of financial and personnel resources (Train *and al.*, 2005; Harmer and Orrell, 2008).

Project

- A formal volunteer project is put in place in a LTCF to create an interpersonal interaction between volunteer-students and residents with dementia in their mother tongue.

- This research will help understand how a good social interaction and participation in significant activities by residents can be achieved in LTCFs. This information will be helpful in activity planning.

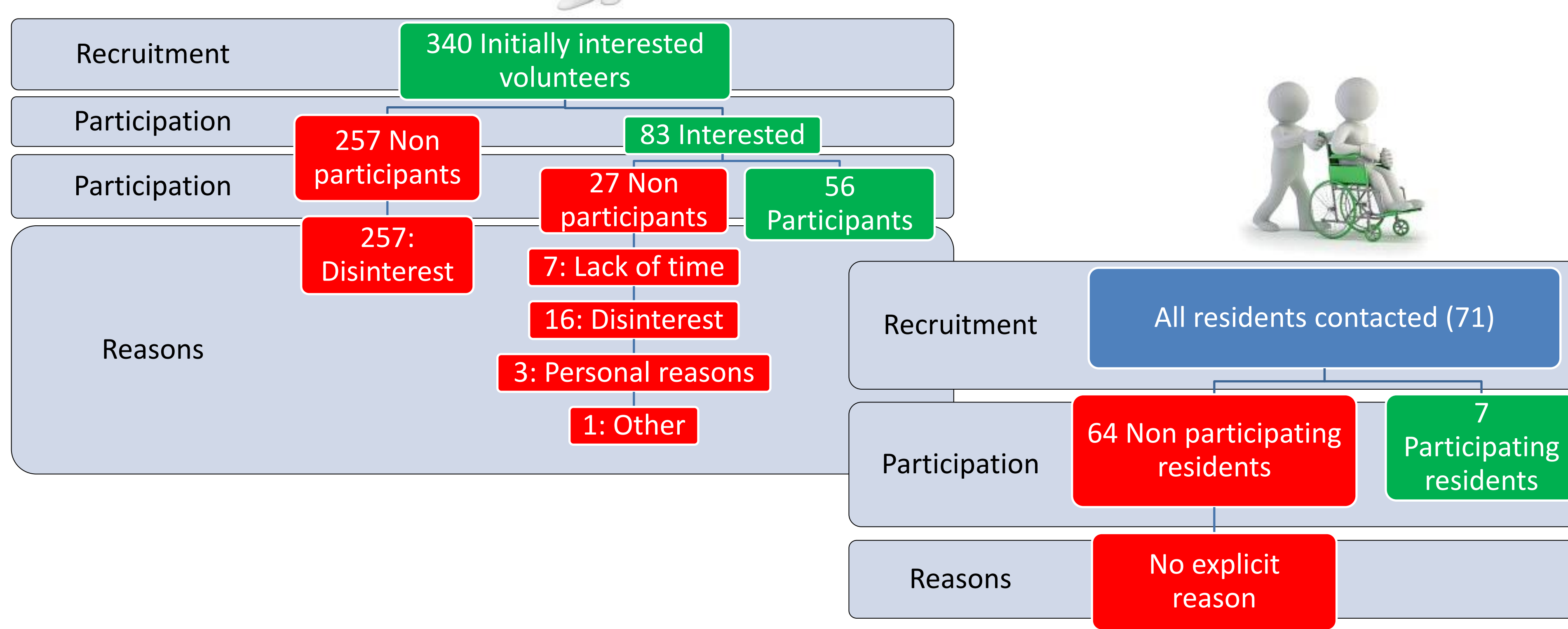
Current research status

The objectives of this research project were not met within the time restriction. Due to recruitment difficulties, no data related to the interaction between residents and volunteer-students has been obtained to this date.

Surprise!

Unexpected finding during the recruitment process:

Volunteer-students have been recruited, trained and are now ready to begin the volunteer project. However: The residents and their families are reluctant to participate.



Discussion

Why is there such a lack of interest among the residents and their families?

Hypothesis

- Family culpability.
- Family does not see their relative interest or capability to participate in significant activities.
- Family not aware of the potential positive impacts that activities in their mother tongue could have on the residents.
- Family may need proof that the program may be beneficial before they engage their relative in the experience.

According to the literature

- Placement in a LTCF of a spouse can generate feelings of guilt, responsibility, protectiveness, powerlessness, shame. (Høgsnes *and al.*, 2014).
- Significant activities can be simple: getting up, eating, receiving physical care, interest in objects, helping others, social conversation, etc. (Elliot, 2011).
- Patients are often unaware that these services exist or of their beneficial impacts.
 - Positive impacts of significant activities include
 - increased happiness
 - improvement of behavioral problems
 - decreased use of psychotropic drugs
 - improved nutritional status
 - diminished social isolation (Smit *and al.*, 2014).

Acknowledgments, contact information and references

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Images

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