



## Benefits of Socialization For The Dementia Population

Families of those suffering from dementia are often encouraged to have their loved ones participate in social activities to prevent isolation and depression. New research shows that regular cognitive stimulation for those suffering from dementia also has beneficial effects on both memory and communication.

The study, conducted by the Dementia Services Development Center at Bangor University in Wales, consisted of 15 trials with 718 participants. Trained staff members conducted bi-weekly sessions with small groups that included cognitively stimulating activities such as baking, indoor gardening, word games, puzzles and discussion groups. The findings showed that the sessions had beneficial effects on the memory and thinking scores of participants. Improvements in communication, interaction and overall quality of life were also reported.

Adult Day Centers are an excellent option for cognitive stimulation and socialization for the dementia population. When evaluating day center programs families should seek out curriculums that offer a wide variety of relevant and age appropriate activities. Therapists and staff members should have a good deal of experience in conducting cognitive stimulation exercises, and should also be well- trained in delivering services to the dementia population. Finally, group activities should be small and intimate to insure that your loved one enjoys active participation.

For more information on this study or to receive a copy of the abstract, please call Clarendon Adult Day Center at (973) 369-7147.

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