

Does Targeted Dementia Care Training Boost Caregiver Knowledge?

A Study by CareAcademy and Custom Home Care

WHITE PAPER



CareAcademy is committed to ensuring that we're helping our customers provide high-quality care via high-quality training. As part of our commitment, we partner with our agency customers to measure our classes' impact on direct care workers' learning by measuring knowledge and care experience outcomes.

Overview

The number of Americans living with Alzheimer's and other dementias is rising fast, and CareAcademy is committed to equipping direct care workers with the knowledge and skills to meet this growing need. CareAcademy's Dementia Care certification is also recognized by the Alzheimer's Association as reflecting best practices in dementia care. Offering 10 hours of content over 17 courses, our training covers foundational topics related to dementia care, such as fundamentals of dementia, effective communication skills, addressing challenging behaviors, and assisting with activities of daily living.

Using these training requirements as a guideline, CareAcademy conducted its first knowledge study to measure how well CareAcademy courses improved direct care workers' proficiency in dementia care. In partnership with Custom Home Care, a home care agency serving the Chicago area, we curated six courses from our content library to meet their training needs and measure proficiency and confidence among their staff. Over the course of 60 days, staff completed a demographic survey, a pre-test assessment to establish a knowledge baseline, six hours of training, a post-test to assess knowledge gains, and a self-efficacy survey. Forty-one direct care workers completed all components of the study, and their results are the focus of this white paper.

The Curriculum	Hours
Introduction to Dementia Care	1hr
Communicating with a Person with Dementia	1hr
End-of-Life Dementia Care	1hr
Managing Agitation and Aggression in Dementia	1hr
Safety in Dementia	1hr
Parkinson's Disease Dementia	1hr

Results

After completing six CareAcademy dementia courses, a majority of participants received a passing score on the final exam. The average test score of all test takers increased to 84%, a passing score. We saw 95% of individual test takers improve their test scores by an average of 17 percentage points ($p < .001$) after completing courses.

	Before Training	After Training
Passed ($\geq 80\%$)	5	28
Failed ($< 80\%$)	36	13
Passing Rate*	12%	68%
Average Score	66%	84%

$N = 41$

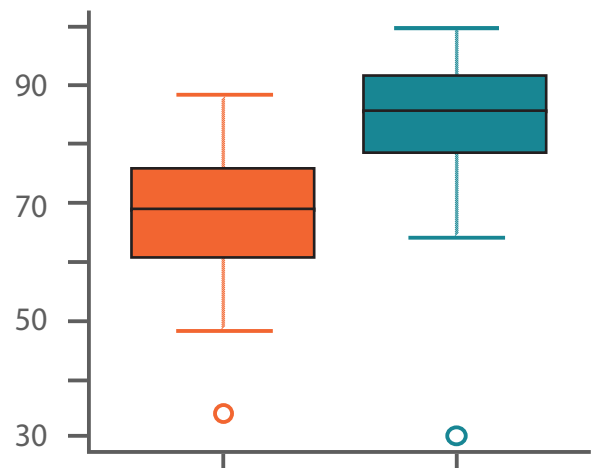
Note: Results are shown for the 41 participants who completed all components of the study: pre-test, post-test, self-efficacy survey, and six dementia courses.

Before Training vs. After Training

Before

After

$N = 41$

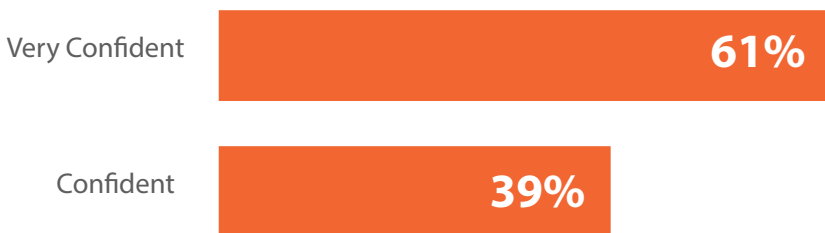


Direct care workers are confident in their ability to provide care to people with dementia.

In addition to testing direct care worker's proficiency in the fundamentals of dementia care, we also surveyed participants on their confidence in how they would apply the training in their roles providing care to people with dementia. For example, how confident are they in their ability to keep clients safe and comfortable when experiencing common challenges when caring for older adults with dementia. Many of the participants are veterans in the industry, with over 60 percent reporting that they had over 10 years of experience in the home care industry. With improved dementia care knowledge, all participants rated themselves as confident or very confident in their ability to care for clients with dementia after completing all courses.

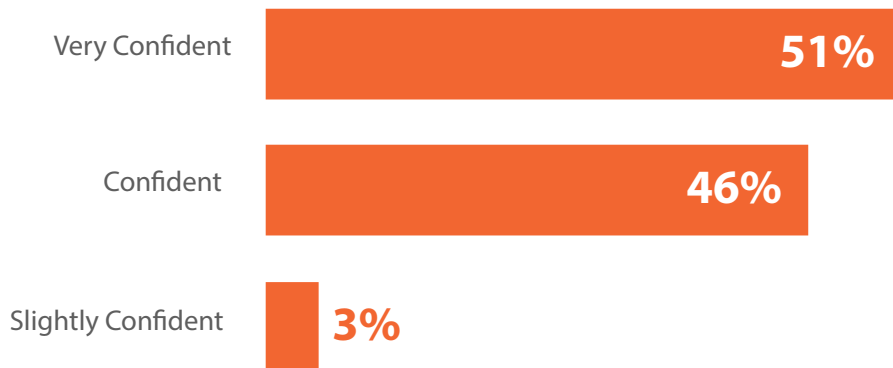
Over
60%
of direct care workers
are very confident in their
ability to care for a client
with dementia.

Q. After completing training, how confident are you in your ability to care for a client with dementia?



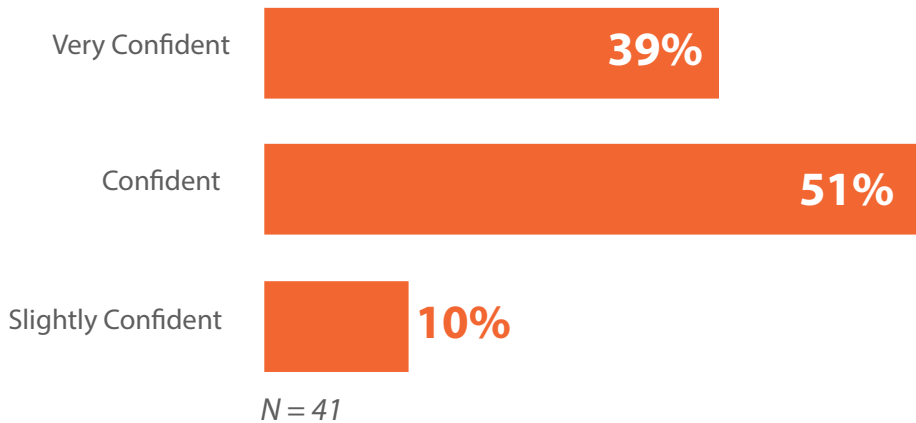
N = 41

Q. How confident are you in your ability to prevent accidents in the home of a client with dementia?



N = 41

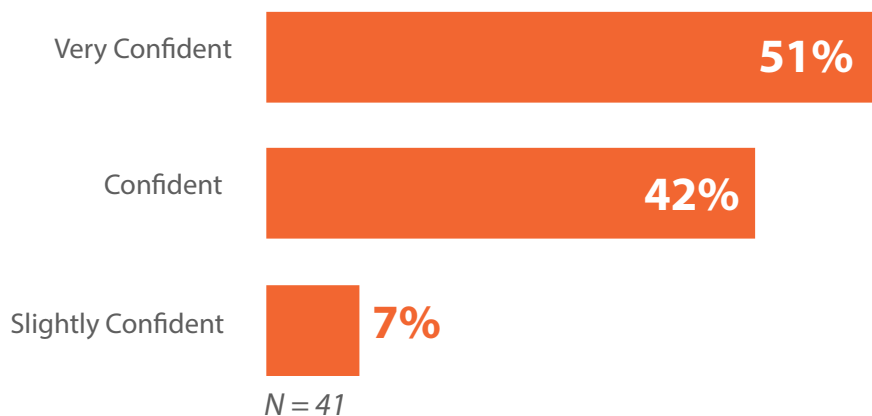
Q. How confident are you in our ability to prevent agitation and aggressive behaviors in clients with dementia?



90%

of participants are confident or very confident in their ability to prevent agitation and aggressive behaviors in clients with dementia.

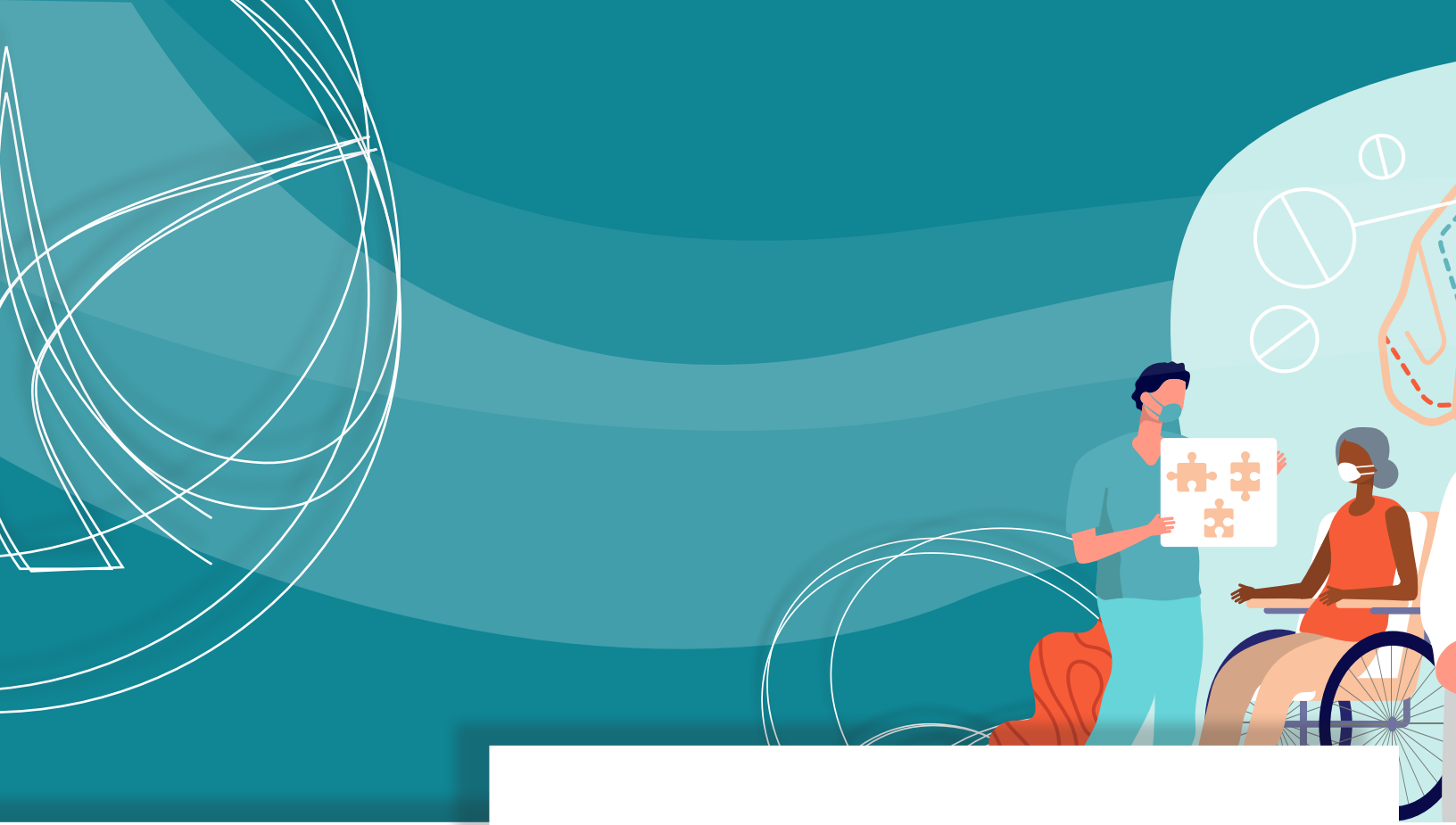
Q. How confident are you in your ability to communicate with clients with dementia in challenging situations?



Over 90%

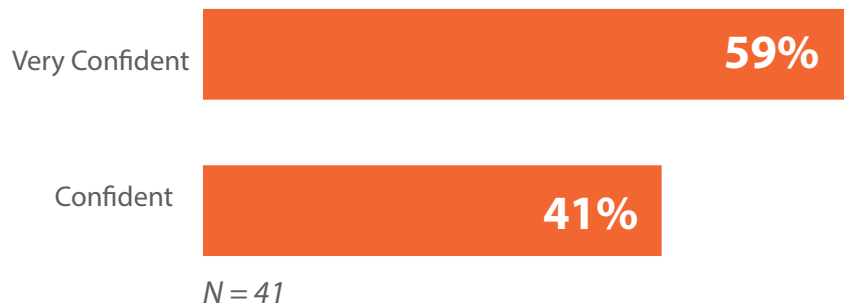
of direct care workers are confident or very confident in their ability to communicate with clients who show difficult or aggressive behavior.

It is common for people with dementia to display difficult or aggressive behaviors, and it is important for direct care workers to stay calm during these episodes. A majority of participants are confident in their ability to manage difficult situations to keep both themselves and their clients safe.



100%
of direct care workers
are confident or very
confident in their ability
to comfort clients with
dementia at the end of life

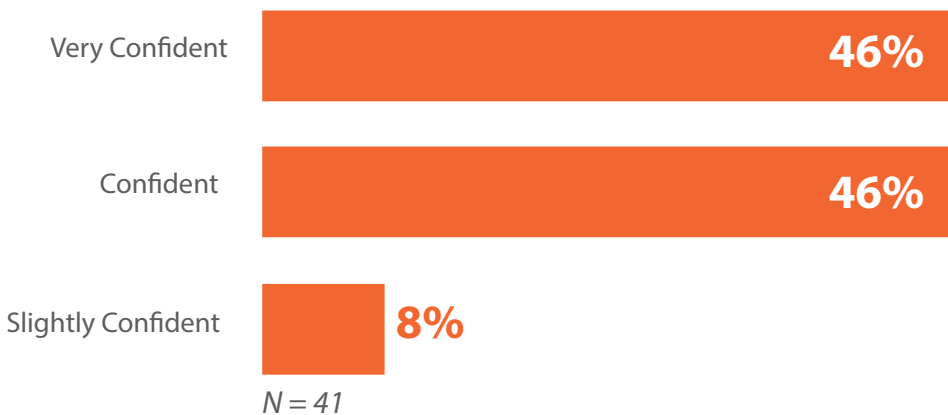
Q. How confident are you in your ability to comfort clients with dementia at the end of life?



Dementia is a terminal illness and well-trained direct care workers can provide crucial support to clients and their families during the late stages of the illness. All participants rated themselves as confident or very confident in their ability to comfort clients with dementia at the end of life.



Q. How confident are you in your ability to care for an older adult with Parkinson's disease dementia?



While Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, direct care workers must also be familiar with other dementias. Parkinson's disease dementia is different from other dementias because it may not develop until many years after the diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. It also puts clients at greater risk of injuries due to falls. Over 90% of study participants are confident or very confident in their ability to care for an older adult with Parkinson's disease dementia.

92%

of participants

are confident or very confident in their ability to care for an older adult with Parkinson's disease dementia.



**If you are interested
in conducting a study
with your direct care
workforce, contact us!**

<https://info.careacademy.com/contact>

Summary

With CareAcademy training, Custom Home Care was able to invest in its staff and improve their knowledge and confidence to provide care to people with dementia. A majority of Custom Home Care's staff who participated in this study identified as women, over 60 years of age, with over 10 years of experience in the home care industry. The pre-test results clearly identified a need among staff for continuing education around dementia care, with only 12% of participants receiving a passing score before completing the courses. After completing all six courses, test scores improved significantly by, on average, 17 percentage points, and over 68% of participants passed the post-test. Our study results show that Custom Home Care's staff are equipped with the right skills to care for people with dementia. As veterans in the industry, they are very confident in their ability to keep clients safe and comfortable when experiencing common challenges when caring for older adults with dementia.



CareAcademy™



About CareAcademy

CareAcademy provides high-quality, state-approved caregiver training for home care agencies that increases caregiver knowledge. Caregivers love to complete all of their needed training from an easy-to-use, mobile-friendly platform designed around their style of learning. Home care agencies know their caregivers are current with their training requirements and are able to manage their state specific compliance needs. Learn more at <https://careacademy.com/>

About Custom Home Care

For more than 25 years, Custom Home Care has provided a reliable and comprehensive array of home care services for seniors in Chicago and Chicagoland. Driven by compassion and love for seniors, our caregivers and staff provide premier quality home care for seniors. Learn more at <https://customhomecare.net/>

