

## Implementing non-pharmacological interventions

**Non-pharmacological interventions are first line for management of behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia and should be continued if drug therapy is trialled.<sup>1</sup>**

BPSD includes disinhibited behaviours, wandering, nocturnal disruptions, vocally disruptive behaviours, agitation and aggression.

### When implementing non-pharmacological interventions

- ▶ Use the patient's background, likes and dislikes, cultural, linguistic and religious factors, and life experiences to guide interventions<sup>2,3</sup>
- ▶ Consider the skills and resources available at the residential aged care facility<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Document the target behaviour(s) and evaluate patient response

### Categories for specific non-pharmacological interventions<sup>3</sup>

#### Social contact: real or simulated

- ▶ Individualised social contact
- ▶ Simulated interactions (eg, family videos)
- ▶ Reminiscence therapy

#### Structured activities

- ▶ Recreational activities
- ▶ Outdoor walks
- ▶ Physical activities
- ▶ Established routines (eg, for dressing and bathing)

#### Training and development

- ▶ Staff education on verbal and non-verbal communication behaviours
- ▶ Staff support

#### Sensory enhancement/relaxation

- ▶ Massage and touch
- ▶ Individualised music
- ▶ Sensory stimulation (eg, aromatherapy)

#### Environmental modifications

- ▶ Wandering areas
- ▶ Light therapy
- ▶ Reducing excess noise, people or clutter

#### Behaviour therapy

- ▶ Differential reinforcement
- ▶ Stimulus control

**For more information visit: [www.nps.org.au/professionals/antipsychotic-medicines](http://www.nps.org.au/professionals/antipsychotic-medicines)**

#### References

1. Therapeutic Guidelines: Psychotropic version 7. West Melbourne: TG Ltd, 2013  
 2. Clinical practice guidelines and principles of care for people with dementia. Sydney: Guideline Adaptation Committee, 2016

3. Behaviour Management. A guide to good practice. Sydney: Dementia Collaborative Research Centre, 2012.