G2.4: Therapeutic Computer Activity Intervention in Persons with Dementia

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Abstract:
Introduction: This study examined the effects of a 12-week Therapeutic Computer Activity Intervention (TCAI) program (5 days a week for up to 30 minutes per session) on cognitive ability among nursing home residents with dementia.

Method(s): Fifteen participants (10 experimental and 5 control groups) completed the study. Nine participants were African American and six were Caucasian. A monitoring log was used for data collection during each session. Data were analyzed using 462 observational logs of TCAI sessions.

Results: The participants’ mean Mini-Mental Status Exam score was 14.9 (S.D. 5.5). Their mean age was 82 (S.D. 10.1) years. Nine participants were African American and five were Caucasian. Participants with severe dementia needed assistance most in opening/closing an activity menu and as a reminder for moving to next step in their activity. Participants engaged in 33.0 (S.D. 10.5) sessions and spent 936.5 minutes on the computer on average. Each session lasted a mean
of 28 (S.D. 3.1) minutes. Slide shows with music were the most preferred activity in participants with severe dementia. Participants with mild (n=3) or moderate (n=7) dementia also liked playing a cognitively challenging game such as solitaire. The intensity of participation, measured on a scale of 0-3, was high during sessions (mean score of 2.2 out of 3.0). Memory was significantly improved in experimental group after the program (t = -2.69, df = 9, p< .05) while there was no significant change in control group.

**Discussion & Conclusions:** TCAI is possible for persons with dementia. It is important to take into account different levels of cognitive and physical functioning and different interests and use adaptive accessories to increase participation and satisfaction.

**Abstract History:**
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**Financial Disclosure:**
No, I (or a member of my immediate family) have not received something of value* from or own stock (or stock options) in a commercial company or institution related directly or indirectly to the subject of my presentation.

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