



Staff Attitudes toward Care of People with Dementia in Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities

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A detailed black and white line drawing of a dandelion seed head on the left, with several seeds blowing away towards the top right. The drawing is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the title area.

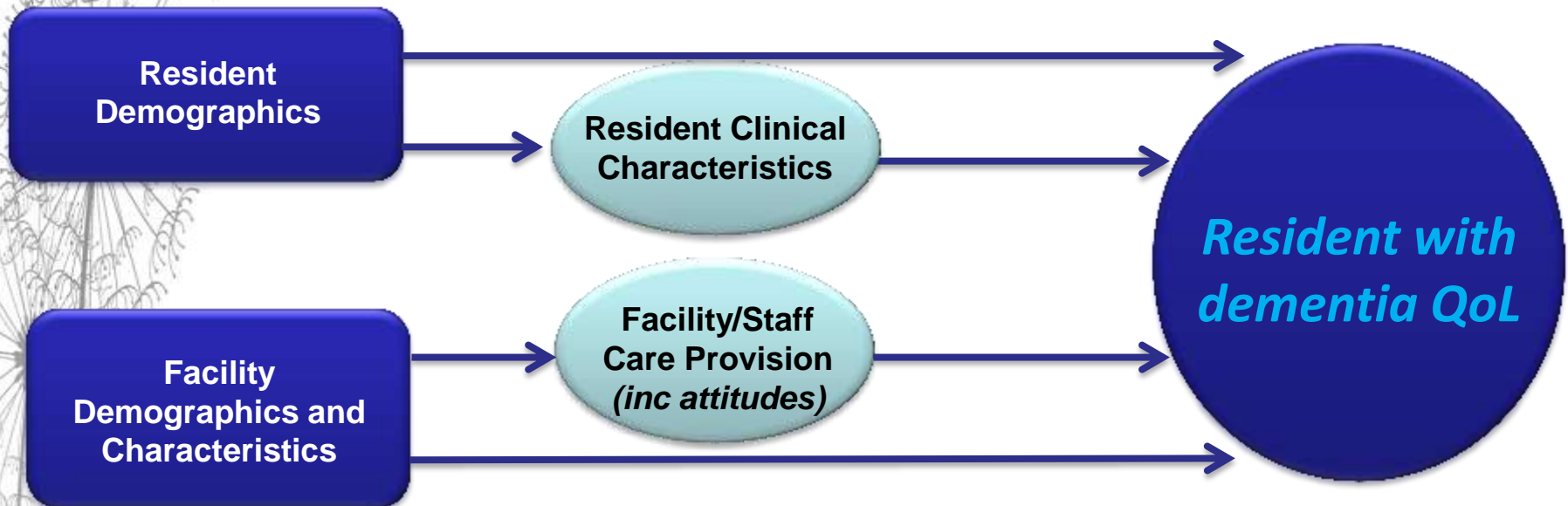
The AusQoL project:

Quality of life for people with dementia in Australian residential aged care facilities.

- **Aims**

- Investigate quality of life for people with dementia in Australian residential aged care facilities from **multiple perspectives**
- Explore the **relationship between resident, staff, care, and facility characteristics and QoL** for people with dementia in Australian RACFs

Factors underlying resident quality of life for which data were collected



- **Today's Focus:**
 - the **attitudes** of residential aged care **staff** as one of the elements contributing to the QoL of people with dementia.

A detailed black and white line drawing of a dandelion seed head on the left, with several seeds blowing away towards the top right. The title 'Staff attitudes' is written in a bold, red, serif font to the right of the dandelion.

Staff attitudes

- Quality care for people with dementia relies on staff experience and attitudes – **more favourable attitudes are related to better care.**
- Positive attitudes among staff are **beneficial also to the facility** (lower staff turnover) **and the individual** (higher job satisfaction and enhanced self-efficacy).



A detailed black and white line drawing of a dandelion seed head, showing the intricate structure of the seeds and the stem. Several seeds are shown floating away from the top of the head, indicating the wind-blown nature of the plant.

Aim of this presentation

- Offer insight into staff attitudes towards people with dementia within Australian residential aged care facilities (RACFs).
- Explore the relationships between staff demographic, experience and educational characteristics and attitudes.



Methods: Sampling Design



- Goal: recruit all staff members having care-related activities in a **nationally generalisable** sample of Australian RACFs.
- Starting from a list of all Australian RACFs, very small (< 25 bed) and remote facilities (N=250) were eliminated for **practical** reasons.
- A **stratified random sample** of all other facilities (N=2,524) ensured representation by **geographic area** (major city, inner regional, outer regional) and **organisational type** (charitable/religious, private, public).

A detailed black and white line drawing of a dandelion seed head on the left side of the slide. The seed head is large and spherical, with many fine lines radiating from its center to represent the seeds. Below it are two smaller, similar seed heads. To the right of the main seed head, several individual seeds are shown in flight, with their long, feathery parachutes trailing behind them as they move upwards and to the right. The title 'Methods: Survey Measures' is written in a bold, red, serif font, partially overlapping the top of the dandelion illustration.

Methods: Survey Measures

- **Paper cross-sectional survey** administered to staff
- **Measures** related to staff experience:
 - **Demographics** (e.g. Gender, age, highest level of education, working hours, dementia-specific education etc.)
 - **Strains in Dementia Care Scale (SDCS)**
 - **Staff Experience Working with Demented Residents (SEWDR)**
 - **Approaches to Dementia Questionnaire (ADQ)**

Approaches to Dementia Questionnaire (ADQ)

- Developed by **Lintern & Woods (1996)**
- ***Subscale 1 – Hope (8 items)***
 - Level of **hope for people with dementia and their life** (higher scores indicating higher levels of hope)
- ***Subscale 2 – Recognition of Personhood (11 items)***
 - Recognition that people with dementia are **sentient human beings** (where higher scores indicate greater recognition of personhood)
- Each item scored as follows on 5-point Likert scale from *Strongly Agree* (1) to *Strongly Disagree* (5)
- We present **mean score within subscale** for ease of understanding



Examples of ADQ Items

- **Subscale 1 - *Hope*:**
“There is no hope for people with dementia”
- **Subscale 2 – *Recognition of Personhood*:** *“People with dementia need to feel respected, just like anybody else”*



Results



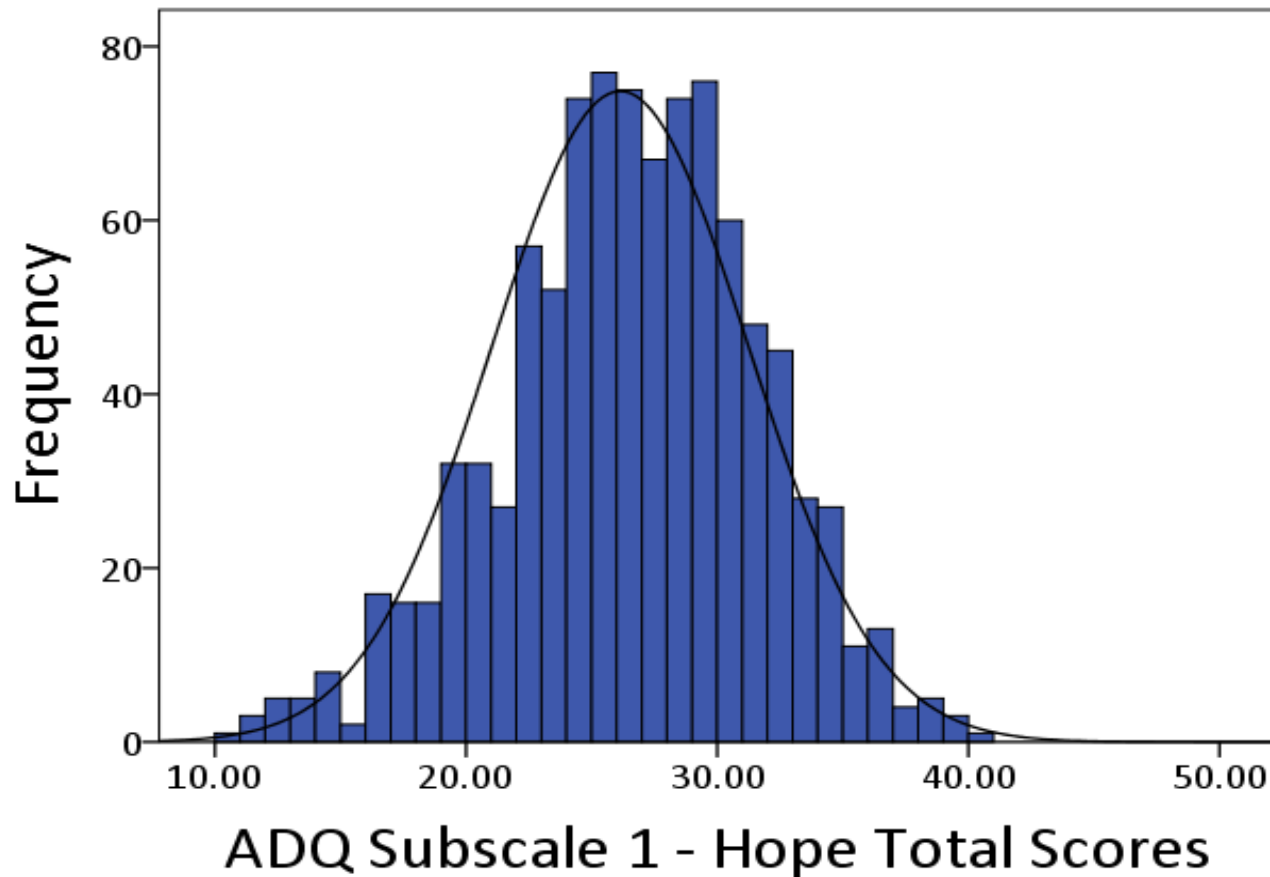
- From a sample of **53 facilities**, a total of **nearly 1000 staff** (n=978) were surveyed
- Majority **female** (n = 851, 90.5%)
- More than half **aged 41-60 years** (n = 545, 55%)
- Most common level of education was **TAFE or other diploma**
- Most common professions:
 - **Personal Care Assistant (38%)**
 - **Assistant in Nursing (26%)**
 - **Registered Nurse (11%)**

A detailed line drawing of dandelions. In the foreground, three dandelion heads are shown on tall, thin stems. One is fully open, another is partially open, and a third is a seed head with several seeds blowing away. In the background, more dandelion heads are visible, some in bloom and some as seed heads, creating a sense of depth and movement.

Employment Characteristics

- Most staff reported that their **role always involved communicating with people with dementia** (66%)
- Majority worked **permanent part-time hours** (over 70%)
- Almost half had **worked in aged care between 3-10 years** (46%)
- Majority (87%) had **some dementia-specific training**, mainly (multiple possible):
 - Facility in-service course
 - Self-directed learning
 - Dementia specific conferences

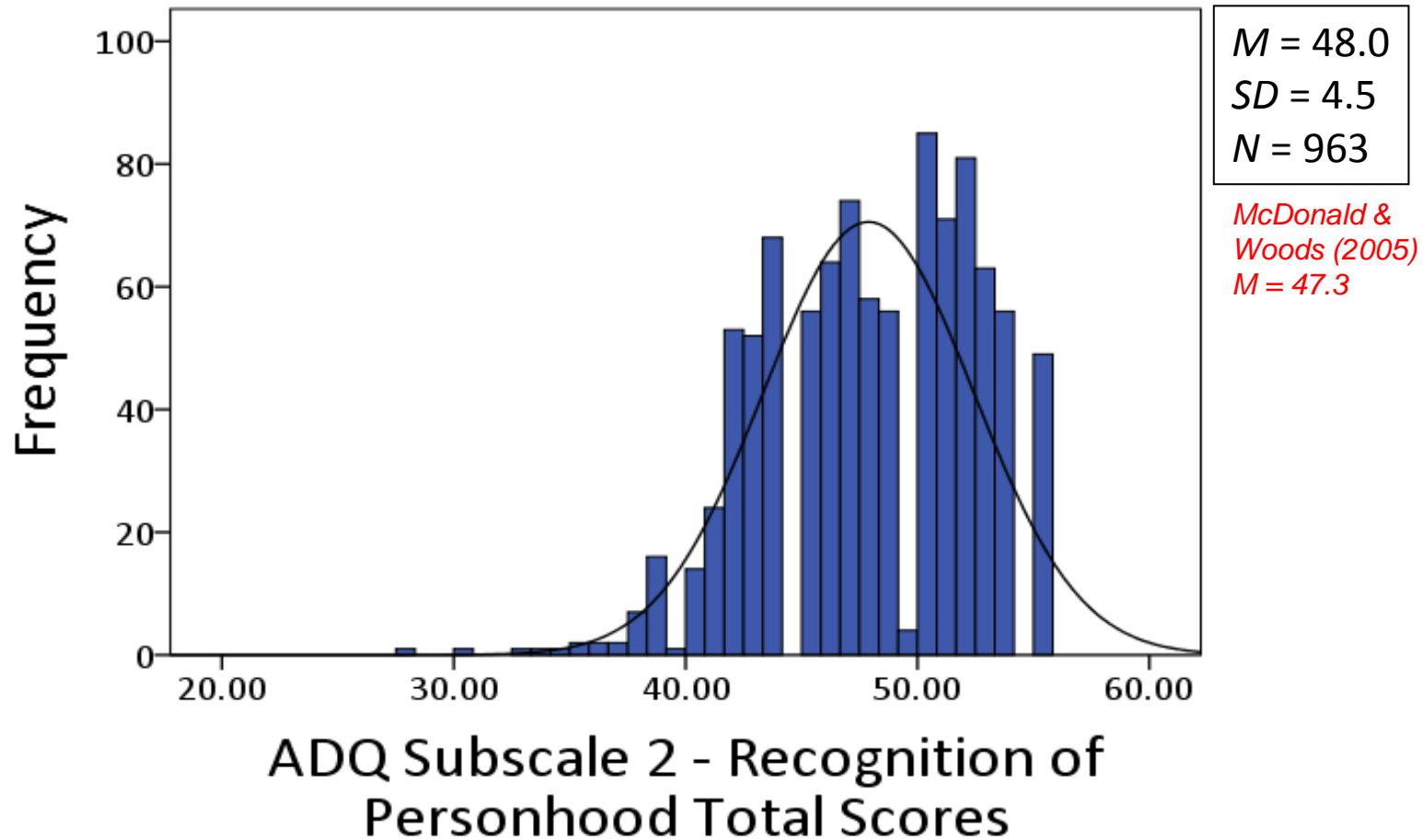
ADQ-Hope Mean Scores



$M = 26.1$
 $SD = 5.10$
 $N = 961$

*McDonald &
Woods (2005)*
 $M = 28.5$

ADQ-Personhood Mean Scores





Predicting ADQ

- In a regression model, the following staff characteristics showed a significant relationship with the **Hope** subscale:
 - **Professional group** (see later table)
 - Length of **time in aged care** work (**more time working** → **higher hope**)
 - **Frequency of communication** with people with dementia in daily job (**more communication** → **higher hope**)
 - **Night duty** (**Day staff** → **higher hope**)

A detailed line drawing of dandelions. In the foreground, three dandelion heads are shown on tall, thin stems. One is fully open, another is partially open, and a third is a smaller, younger head. In the background, several dandelion seeds are shown floating away from their heads, scattered across the upper left and center of the slide.

Predicting ADQ

- In a regression model, the following staff characteristics showed a significant relationship with the **Personhood** subscale:
 - **Professional group** (see next page)
 - **Frequency of communication** with people with dementia in daily job (**more communication** → higher **Personhood**)
 - **Night duty** (**Day staff** → higher **Personhood**)
 - **Dementia-Specific Education** (**Yes** → higher **Personhood**)

A detailed illustration of a dandelion seed head on the left, with several seeds blowing away in the upper left quadrant. The title text is positioned to the right of the illustration.

ADQ Subscales

Mean Scores by Profession Group

| Profession Group | Hope mean (s.d.) | Personhood mean (s.d.) |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Care (PCA, AIN) (n=607) | 25.2 (5.15) | 47.4 (4.65) |
| Enrolled Nurse (n=113) | 27.0 (4.20) | 48.0 (4.13) |
| Registered Nurse (n=127) | 27.9 (4.36) | 48.5 (4.20) |
| Allied Health (n=94) | 28.2 (5.00) | 49.5 (4.06) |
| Management (n=11) | 30.7 (7.32) | 51.3 (3.66) |
| Total (n=952) | 26.2 (5.11) | 47.9 (4.53) |

Dementia-Specific Education

| Type of dementia education | Hope Means (s.d.) | | Personhood Means (s.d.) | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Any | 25.0 (4.15) | 26.4 (5.18)* | 46.8 (4.78) | 48.1 (4.48)* |
| Self-directed | 25.8 (5.14) | 26.6 (5.06)* | 47.5 (4.57) | 48.4 (4.48)* |
| Facility inservice | 25.7 (5.11) | 26.5 (5.10)* | 47.7 (4.83) | 48.0 (4.36) |
| Online course | 26.0 (5.15) | 27.5 (4.63)* | 47.9 (4.52) | 48.2 (4.79) |
| Dementia conference | 25.5 (4.95) | 27.5 (5.20)* | 47.6 (4.58) | 48.6 (4.42)* |
| Undergraduate course | 26.1 (5.17) | 26.7 (4.84) | 47.8 (4.56) | 48.5 (4.44) |
| Postgraduate course | 26.1 (5.09) | 27.9 (5.77) | 47.9 (4.55) | 48.3 (4.67) |

**No/Yes Difference is statistically significant*

Conclusions

- The relationship between **dementia-specific education and attitudes** is important for optimum care provision
- Perhaps person-centered dementia care principles are more readily understood and applied after dementia-specific training
- Findings suggest that **additional ongoing dementia-specific education and supervision** in enacting person-centered care is required for **direct care staff** who scored lower on both subscales compared with managers, allied health, RNs and ENs

A large, detailed illustration of a dandelion seed head on the left side of the slide. Several seeds are shown floating away from the top of the seed head, drifting towards the top right. The dandelion has a long, thin stem and a smaller seed head below the main one.

Acknowledgements

- *Thank you to all the facilities, their staff, residents and families for their participation in the project*
- *Thank you to **Lina Karlsson** for her assistance with data analysis and creating the slideshow*

Thank You

The text 'Thank You' is written in a pink, cursive font. It is framed by a green, stylized vine with leaves and a pink flower with a yellow center on the right side.



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This project is being conducted in affiliation with:



"The very act of inquiring about the quality of life of persons with dementia recognizes them as individuals rather than merely care recipients"

(Edelman, 2005, p. 27)