

# Group based psycho education for family carers of people with dementia



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive



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## Introduction

The number of people in Ireland being diagnosed with dementia is increasing. The majority live with family carers in the community though two thirds of these carers are 'completely overwhelmed by caring' (O'Shea, 2003)

Psycho education is recommended to support carers of people with dementia (NICE clinical guidelines for dementia care, 2006)

## Intervention

The HSE and the Alzheimer Society of Ireland came together to facilitate group based psycho education for family carers of people with dementia.

Adapted from the Alzheimer Society of Ireland 'Living with dementia' programme, the training took place one evening per week, over six weeks.

Topics covered include:

- Overview of dementia
- Changing relationships
- Communication strategies
- Assisting with personal care
- Nutrition and eating well
- Understanding behaviour
- Engaging in life activities
- Safety at home
- Accessing information and support
- Legal issues

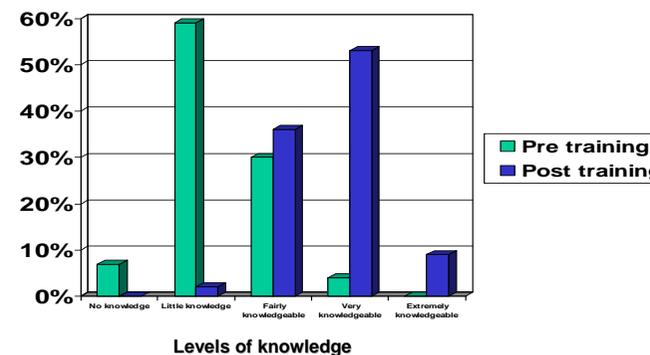
## Participants

- Four training programmes in Mallow Primary Healthcare Centre since May 2011
- 67 participants completed training
- 11 men and 56 women
- Spouses, children, niece, nephew, grandchildren

## Outcome measures

- Non standardised measurements of knowledge and confidence pre and post training
- Zarit Burden Interview

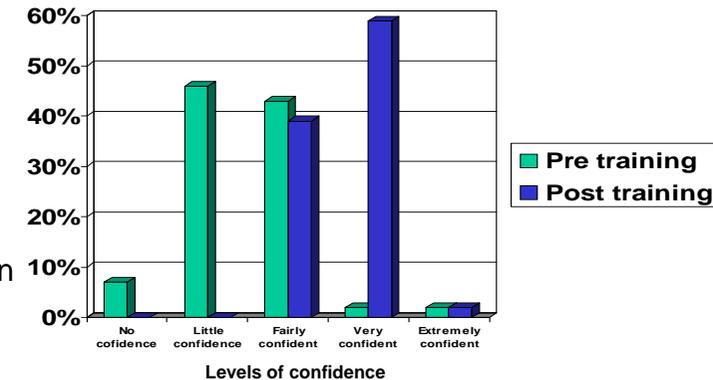
## Outcomes



## Zarit Burden Interview

Average pre training score : 41 ('moderate to severe burden')

Average post training score : 33.67 ('mild to moderate burden')



## Follow up

On completion of training, carers identified that they wanted to continue meeting. Follow up sessions are facilitated every 6 weeks, providing carers with access to ongoing support, education and services.

## Conclusion

Group based psycho education increases carers knowledge of dementia. It also reduces their levels of burden and increases their confidence when caring for a family member with dementia.

## References

- National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2006) 'Supporting people with dementia and their carers in health and social care', National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health
- O'Shea (2003) Costs and Consequences for the Carers of People with Dementia in Ireland. *Dementia* (2) 201-219