

Walking a Mile in Silver Sneakers: Geriatric Simulation Training

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Background

Medical-Surgical nurses voiced concerns and frustrations about the growing population of geriatric patients admitted on their units. Their complex medical needs were seen as a burden and nurses felt it was difficult to deliver quality care.

Methodology

A multi-modal training program was implemented starting with didactic presentation, followed by group role-play exercises and progressive, individual aging simulation scenarios. A convenience sample of nurses (N = 76) and nursing assistants (N = 15) were evaluated post training.

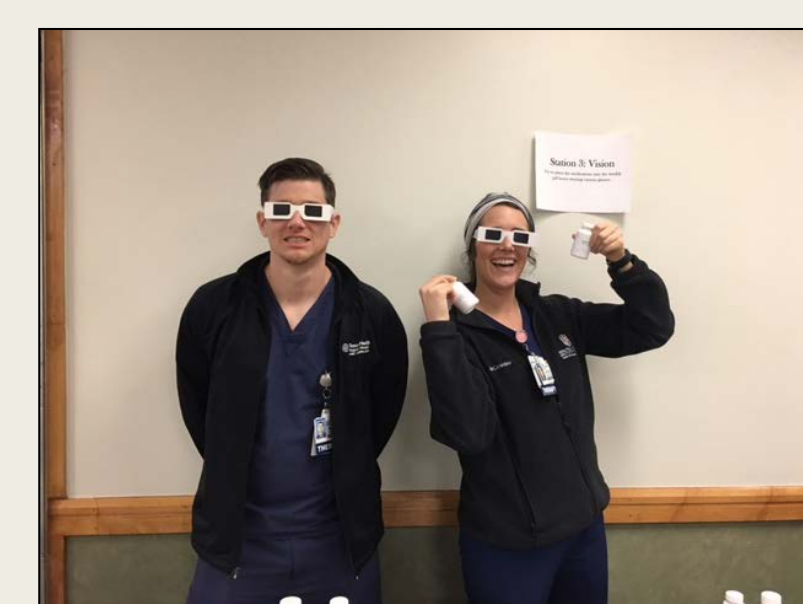
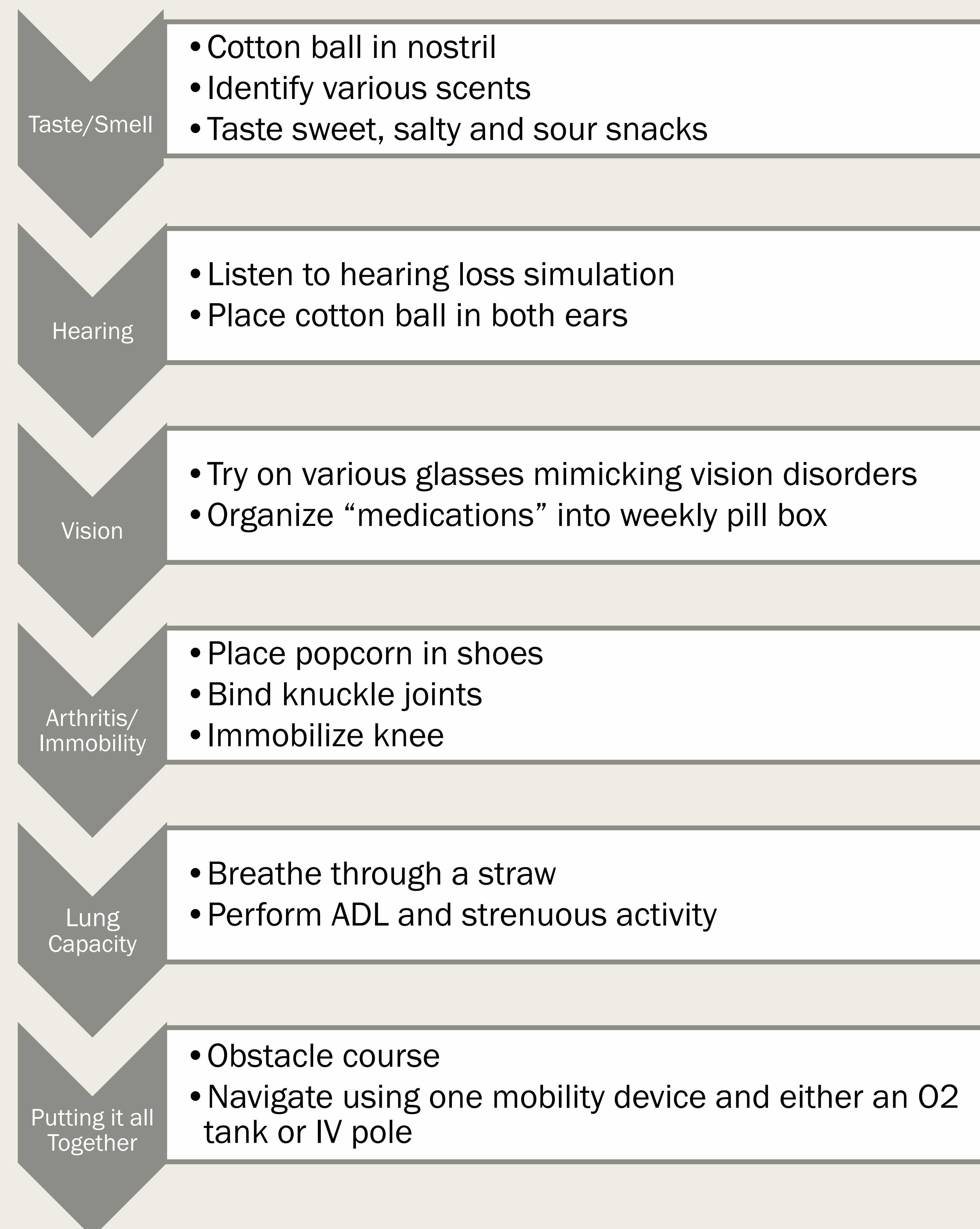
Presentation

- Normal Aging versus Disease Processes
- Nursing Implications
- Mental Health
- Legal Considerations
- End of Life Decisions

Group Role-Play

- Relocation to Nursing Home
- Stroke

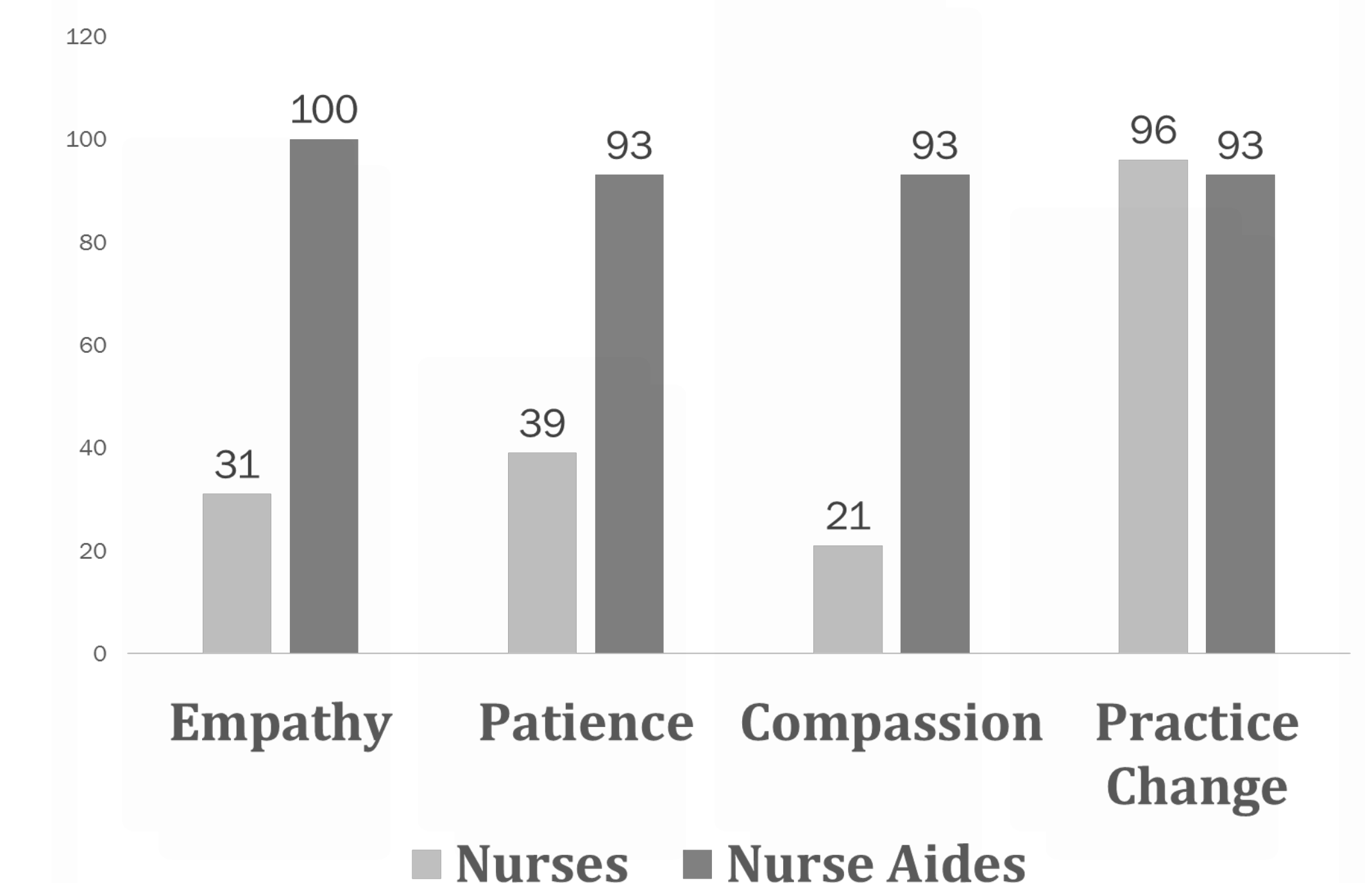
Progressive Aging Stations



Results

Ninety-one participant responses were analyzed for thematic content. They were categorized as empathy, patience, compassion, and professional practice. Each theme received staff self described improvement and awareness.. Overall staff feedback supported the use of simulation training as a valuable experience and the interactive design as an effective teaching strategy.

Post Simulation Results



Discussion

Focused geriatric simulation training provides nursing staff an opportunity to understand the aging process in a way that traditional classroom instruction cannot. The profound reactions of participants who experience age-related scenarios forces them to challenge their own thinking about geriatric patients. In response, nursing staff can better provide competent and compassionate care.