Background:
The incidence of residents with dementia in residential care has increased greatly over the past number of years. As a result of this staff at the Meath Community Unit felt that we needed to change our approach to care to meet the complex needs of the residents in our care. Person centered care is recognised as the gold standards of care for older people and while we were using a person centered approach we felt we could improve. We engaged the Bee Inspired Programme to support us in establishing a better person centered philosophy and develop a more therapeutic environment.

Aims & Objectives:
The aim of the Bee Inspired© Programme is to enhance therapeutic skills in staff through training, supervision and support and to develop a more therapeutic environment for residents and staff by:
• Auditing and improving workforce behaviours
• Auditing and improving the physical environment
• Implementing a whole team approach to an activity model of care
• Implementing a sustainable programme.

Project Description:
15 staff from across the unit attended a 2 day education programme. These staff then acted as dementia champions in their work area. A number of 1 day education and team building programme were delivered to 98% of staff of all grades and all areas. During the day staff divided into groups to develop action plans for improvements on ‘Becoming More Person Centered’. These plans were then implemented onto the wards and evaluated at monthly mentoring sessions. Anything that was working was further developed and if it wasn’t working changes were made. The project was evaluated through audit of the workforce well being and audit of the physical environment.

Conclusion:
At the end of the 1 year project the overall therapeutic environment score had gone from 38% to 70%. We conducted the audits again in August 2016 (14 months on) and the total score remains high at 76%. Staff morale has improved and there is a better sense of team spirit. Staff continue to try new ideas to improve the lives of the residents in our care.

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