

U-FIRST! curriculum



U-First! is a training program for professional caregivers to improve the quality of the interaction between the formal care provider and the person living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias.

It is a proven and effective approach to working with clients with dementia. Through this program, care providers develop a common knowledge base, a common language, common values, and a common approach to providing care for persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

This 6-hour workshop will train care providers in U-First!, a proven and effective approach to working with clients with dementia.

Curriculum for the Workshop:

1. Demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the individuality of the Person with dementia, their family and other team members by:

- Recognizing the impact of a person's life experiences, values, thoughts and feelings on their well-being and quality of life. These factors are equally relevant for the person's family and significant others.
- Serving as a role model for co-workers by focusing on the person with dementia, supporting their strengths and abilities, promoting their active participation in all aspects of their care and continuing to work with the team to meet the evolving needs of the person, their family/significant others.

2. Seek to understand the person living with dementia & associated behavioural changes by:

- Using the U-First! practical tool in dialogue with the team to flag risks and behavioural issues associated with cognitive/mental health needs and possible causes.
- Promoting dialogue with the team by sharing pertinent information and reflections to increase a common understanding of the person living with dementia and their family/significant other.
- Recognizing the rights of the person to make his/her own decisions according to mental capability and to the extent it does not infringe upon the rights of another individual.

3. Collaborate with the Team to ensure individualized support strategies are developed that recognize and respond to information gathered using U-First! and that take into consideration:

- Respect for the person's values, cultural beliefs, desires, goals, coping styles and communication patterns
- Identification of high risk situations
- Collaboration with family/significant others to develop approaches to care

Respect for all team members' knowledge, experience, involvement and contributions. Reflection and reporting of observations and interactions are valued in evaluating supportive care strategies and redefining goals of care, if necessary.