Zorgbib

A book and a visit
- also for people with dementia
What is Zorgbib?
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- ‘Care library’
- Part of Humanitarian Services of Red Cross Flanders
- Funded by Flemish government as library for target audience
- Policy mission: Library service & social contact
  - General hospitals
  - Psychiatric hospitals
  - Centres for asylum seekers
  - Retirement homes
How Zorgbib works

+ Central library in Mechelen
  - Acquisition, storage and distribution of collection

+ At request of care facility: start-up of library point
  - Delivery books, cd’s, dvd’s, comic books, games, ...
  - Tailored to needs and interests of patients/residents
  - In agreement with care staff
  - Collection changes twice per year

+ Local Red Cross volunteers run library point
‘A book and a visit’
- Een boek en een bezoek

+ Books as a means to social contact
+ Key element in trainings for volunteers
+ 900 volunteers
+ 370 library points
Zorgbib head office

- Management of collection
- Support to local library points
- Development trainings and guidelines for volunteers
- Centre for Evidence Based Practice Red Cross
Recent evolutions
Recent evolutions

+ Decrease of Zorgbib in general hospitals

+ Increase of Zorgbib in retirement homes
  • 2/3 library points and ↑
  • Person-centred care

+ Consequences for Zorgbib
  • Average age reader is 85
  • Higher care profiles
Recent evolutions

Ever fewer people reached by ‘classical’ library
  • Visual problems
  • Concentration problems and dementia
  • Even large print and Daisy no longer an option

But:
  • Books were never the main goal
  • Need for social contact unchanged
  ➔ How else?
Dementia
Dementia

+ Set of symptoms of mental decline
  - Alzheimer’s disease & vascular dementia
  - Memory loss

+ Global prevalence
  - 50m in 2017 > 152m in 2050?

+ Earliest memories intact the longest
Roll-back memory (Huub Buijssen)

The memory of someone in the advanced stage of dementia – only the memories of his early childhood remain.

Childhood & early adulthood

- Memory = event + strong emotion
- ‘First Times’
'The Songs That Bind' (Seth Stephens-Davidowitz)
*New York Times*, 10/02/2018

‘Loved it as a teen, Love it forever’
Dementia

+ Loss of cognitive abilities – but:
+ Increased importance of sensory world
  • Music, touch, smells, colour, movement, ...
  • Good atmosphere, positive emotions

→ Two new collections at Zorgbib
New collections for the elderly and people with dementia

1. Reminiscence collection
2. Activity-oriented collection
1. Reminiscence collection

- Reminiscence = to recollect memories

- Photobooks, magazines, music cd’s and dvd’s (documentaries & movies)
  → To trigger memories of younger years

- Collection scope shifts along with audience
  - Right now: ‘40’s, ‘50’s and 60’s (average age 85)
Reminiscence collection

+ Popular themes
  - School days, my village/town, wedding day, my job and hobbies, pets, radio, television & movies, my holidays, ...

+ ‘Universal themes’ also work
  - Nature, animals, children, popular holiday destinations, ...

Recognisable content

It’s in the details

Local content
Reminiscence collection

+ Great conversation starter
+ Often suitable for reading aloud
Elektrische apparaten van toen
Reminiscing with people with dementia
A method

- Flemish Centre of Expertise on Dementia
- Howest College
- Zorgbib
  - Reminiscence clips
  - Distribution to volunteers in library points
2. Activity-oriented collection

- Together with volunteer (or caregiver, family, occupational therapist, ...)
- Non-therapeutical
- Facilitating social contact
Activity-oriented collection

1. (Reminiscence) puzzles
Activity-oriented collection

2. Creative materials
Activity-oriented collection

3. Reminiscence games: Scentscapes
Activity-oriented collection

4. Conversation cards
Activity-oriented collection

5. Extra-large board games
Extra coaching for volunteers
Extra coaching for volunteers

- Reminiscence and activity materials are only as good as the one working with it
- More intense and personal contact
- An additional training for volunteers
  - Setting up a reminiscence activity
  - Selecting the right material
  - Creating a good setting
  - Conversation techniques, especially with people with dementia
  - Responding to sensitive subjects, privacy
Further information

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