

## **The Effects of Reiki Treatments on Dementia Patients, A Pilot Study**

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**Background:** Reiki is a technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. Reiki involves the transfer of energy from practitioner to patient and claims to enhance the body's natural ability to heal itself through the balancing of energy. Reiki utilizes specific techniques for restoring and balancing the natural life force energy within the body. It is a holistic, natural, hands-on energy healing system that touches on all levels: body, mind, and spirit.

There have been studies showing the benefits of Reiki in persons with dementia: See *Reiki and Cognitive Function. Using Reiki to Decrease Memory and Behavior Problems in Mild Cognitive Impairment and Mild Alzheimer's Disease.*

J Altern Complement Med. 2006 Nov;12(9):911-913. Crawford SE, Leaver VW, Mahoney, SD. Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point, Perry, ME.

In August, 2010, Ardath Berliant, Reiki Master/Teacher of 19 years began training 7 Employee-Caregivers at Sunrise Senior Living – specializing in Memory Care in Wilmette, Illinois. The curriculum was taken from “Reiki Rays of Hope for Caregivers” which has been used to train physicians, nurses and caregivers at various hospitals and nursing homes in Cleveland, Ohio.

The group of Caregivers was trained over a four week period for two hours each week. Classes were taught by Ardath and two Teaching Assistants (also Reiki Masters). Training included Reiki history, visual aids and hands-on instruction for working with clients in wheelchairs and hospital beds.

### **January 2, 2011 – launched Pilot study.**

**Method:** Sunrise, Wilmette is home to 34 residents who are living with varying degrees of dementia. Six residents, who were not on psychotropic or depression medications were chosen to receive Reiki. Each resident was given two – 30-40 minute Reiki sessions each week for 4 weeks. All study residents were logged and tracked on: speech, mood, gait, level of engagement and appetite.

Beginning February 1, 2011, another 6 residents with similar histories were added to the study. Sleep habits began to be monitored.

**Results:** The study is in its infancy. However, those residents who receive regular Reiki treatments have shown signs of improved mood overall, improved interaction with Caregivers and family members, better appetites, decreased anxiety and agitation.

**Unexpected results:** The Caregivers who were trained were an extremely diverse group of individuals. By learning a unifying language with a uniform application, the training has united the Caregivers and thereby the residence as a whole.

### *Next Phase of Pilot Study*

Beginning week of April 25th, 2011

5 Residents who have not experienced Reiki Treatments were chosen – Each of these 5 Residents are being monitored twice during the week of the 25th for inflammatory markers: Heart Rate, Blood Pressure and Respiration.

The week of May 2nd, each of these 5 residents received an attunement from Ardath Berliant, and had a minimum of one Reiki Treatment that week. Each Resident will continue to have at least one Reiki Treatment the weeks of May 9th, 16th and 23rd.

The Reiki Treatments will cease at this point, but the monitoring of Heart Rate, Blood Pressure and Respiration will continue at least twice during the week of May 30th.

The week of May 23rd, the process will begin again with a new group of Residents.