

AwareCare

**An observational tool
to aid in identifying awareness and responsiveness
among people with severe dementia**

Linda Clare and Catherine Quinn

2012

Contact: l.clare@exeter.ac.uk

**Developed as part of the AwareCare study
funded by the Medical Research Council
(G0701817)**

My notes about my AwareCare observation

Name of Staff member:	Staff member ID:
Name of Resident:	Resident ID:
Date:	Time started/finished:
What room is the resident in? e.g. dining room, large lounge.	
What is happening in the room that the resident is in? e.g. there are 5 other residents in the room, the television is on, one resident is shouting, etc.	
Background: note any relevant information about the resident e.g. family visited yesterday, medication changed this morning, etc.	

Please write down anything else you noticed about the resident's behaviour while you were observing him/her.
--

Observe for at least 10 minutes. Record whether the resident responded to an event with a \checkmark . You can tick more than one box. You only need to tick the box the first time you see the response.

	Did this occur in the session (Yes or No)	Eyes			Face		Head		Arm		Body		Sounds		
		Eyes flicker	Makes eye contact	Explores with eyes	Smiles	Frowns	Nods or shakes head	Moves head	Reaches	Grasps or holds	Moves towards	Moves away	Single words	Mumbling	Shouts or moans
Events that happened															
Someone is nearby															
Resident is touched															
Resident is spoken to															
Talking nearby															
Loud noise															
Object nearby															
Food or drink															
Introduced events															
Call by name															
Take hand															
Introduce one object: Picture or Lavender pillow or Textured cushion (please circle)															
Or introduce a more personal object (please state which):															

DEFINITIONS OF EVENTS AND RESPONSES

EVENT	DEFINITION
Someone nearby	Another person is near the resident. Can include people passing by.
Person is touched	Someone touches the resident, e.g. a carer takes resident's hand.
Spoken to	Someone speaks to the resident, e.g. a carer asks if she or he would like a cup of tea.
Talking nearby	People talking near the resident.
Loud noise	A new or sudden loud sound, e.g. an alarm, someone shouting.
Object nearby	An object near the resident, e.g. a magazine, a table, a hoist, etc.
Food or drink	The sight or smell of food, e.g. cup of tea, plate of biscuits. Can include the resident eating food or having a drink. Can also include someone helping the resident with food or drink.

RESPONSE	DEFINITION
Eyes flicker	Resident makes subtle eye movements or brief glances. Does not include blinking.
Makes eye contact	Resident switches gaze from somewhere else to make eye contact with another person, or seeks eye contact with someone.
Explores with eyes	Resident moves eyes to look at something, e.g. a magazine, or tracks or scans the movement of something, e.g. a carer walking by.
Smiles	Resident raises corners of mouth. Can include attempts to smile, e.g. a slight raising of the corners of the mouth.
Frowns	Resident wrinkles his or her brow.
Nods or shakes head	Resident makes a deliberate head movement, which is distinctive from 'moves head'. Lowers and raises head to show agreement or to give a signal. Moves head from side to side in order to express disagreement or sorrow.
Moves head	Resident makes a deliberate head movement, e.g. turning head to look at someone.
Reaches	Resident extends arm or hand out.
Grasps or holds	Resident clasps hands around something, e.g. an object, a person's hand.
Moves towards	Resident moves or leans his or her body towards something, e.g. leans towards the person talking to him/her.
Moves away	Resident moves or leans his or her body away from something, e.g. walks away from another resident.
Single words	Resident utters audible single words. e.g. to answer questions.
Mumbles	Resident speaks by whispering or mumbling. May involve silent mouthing in which inaudible word-like shapes are being formed by mouth, e.g. 'hello'. Does not include chewing movements.
Shouts, moans	Resident calls out loudly, makes loud sound. This might be words or a sound. Could also include a decrease or increase in loudness, e.g. person shouts louder if they are touched.

How to use AwareCare

Location of observations

- Only observe residents in communal areas of the home and not bathrooms or bedrooms.
- When observing a resident, try to place yourself close enough to be able to see changes in the resident's eye movements or facial expression, but not so close that you are invading his/her personal space. Try to place yourself somewhere where the resident is not too aware that you are observing, e.g. do not stand right in front of him or her. It can help if you sit down whilst doing observations so that you are less noticeable to the resident.

Timing of observations

- Try to observe the resident at different times of the day, e.g. late morning, late afternoon. You may find that there are times when the resident is more alert.
- Your observation session may be interrupted. For instance, the resident may fall asleep or be taken to the bathroom while you are observing. Similarly, you may have to attend to another resident. If there is an interruption, make a note of it, and you can come back and finish your observation at another time.

Recording observations

- Sometimes a resident will react to a stimulus with several responses, e.g. when spoken to she/he could respond with 'moves head', 'explores with eyes' and 'makes eye contact'. Similarly, sometimes several stimuli can occur at the same time, e.g. 'resident is touched' and 'resident is spoken to'. In these situations you can tick all the boxes that apply.
- On the front of the observation sheet there is a section for you to note down any other behaviours that have occurred during the observation period, e.g. resident waves at family members, resident tidies tablecloth, etc. You can also note down any factors that you feel may have influenced the resident's behaviour, e.g. medication changed, family visited this morning.
- If you are unable to conduct an observation please note down the reason why, e.g. I was on holiday, the resident was in hospital.

Introducing items

- You can introduce one of the items provided to the resident or you can introduce an item from the home that may be more appropriate for that person, e.g. if a resident likes football you could introduce a football, if there is one available, or something else related to football, such as a football scarf or pennant. You may find it interesting to introduce a variety of items. Please record on the observation sheet what item you have introduced.
- You may find that you have to wait before introducing an item to the person, e.g. they may have fallen asleep or be having their lunch.