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## ART IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE IN ELDERLY PATIENTS LIVING IN NURSING HOMES: AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY FIBROMYALGIA AND CHRONIC PAIN

**Kannan Sharma\***

\*St. Mark's School of Texas, USA

**Introduction:** Studies suggest that more than 40% of nursing home residents feel the effects of depression (1). Art has been identified as a solution to improve quality of life (2-5). However, studies suggesting that the act of drawing improves quality of life are lacking. A drawing art program was developed to determine if drawing art improves the quality of life (QOL) in nursing-home residents.

**Methods:** As part of the program, nursing-home residents were taught to draw simple and complex objects, identify depth and dimension, and use colors appropriately. In order to track students' progress, a survey, asking residents to rank changes in coordination, enjoyment, relaxation, and willingness to come to class, was created and distributed after classes. They would rank these changes in a 1 to 5 scale: 5 being much improvement, 3 being no change, and 1 being worsening developments.

**Results:** After a few weeks, a trend was seen in 5 students (n=5). To the question: "Do you feel happier after art," 40% (n=2) of students responded with a 5, and 60% (n=3) responded with a 4. To the question: "Do you feel more relaxed after art," 40% (n=2) of students responded with a 5, and 60% (n=3) responded with a 4. To the question: "Has your hand coordination improved," 40% (n=2) of students responded with a 4, and 60% (n=3) responded with a 3. To the question, "Do you look forward to art class," 100% (n=5) responded with a 5.

**Discussion:** This observation indicates that there is a positive correlation between drawing art intervention and improvement in overall health in elderly people. It shows that there is a need for proper research to further address this subject. Lastly, it indicated that nursing homes should implement such simple art programs to help more senior citizens across the country.

### Biography:

Kannan Sharma is a high school student from St. Mark's School of Texas in Dallas, Texas, USA. He is a member of the Cum Laude society (honors program) and he is an eagle scout. He has been a painter for the past twelve years, and he loves to help the geriatric population in Dallas. In order to combine his two passions: art and helping the elderly, he created the program identified above in the abstract. He spent weeks organizing and meeting with the nursing home and identified the best way to use art in order to help geriatric patients with medical problems.

18sharmak@gmail.com

### Notes: