

Hints for approaching older-person care home to offer reflexology.



By Lynne Booth

I have worked as a reflexologist in a large care home complex (200 plus residents from 24 nursing care to sheltered housing) for nearly 30 years and it is where I discovered Vertical Reflexology.

I always suggest reflexologists use the term "older people" rather than "the elderly". In recent years, "Older people" is the appropriate term used by care providers as it is much more of a positive recognition of those in later years. If you are thinking of approaching care home, please use that term when you email a care home as they will be familiar with the change of emphasis on how the aging population is viewed.



You could approach care homes by offering reflexology and state the benefits of reflexology and stress hand reflexology is important as some older people do not want their feet worked (or health conditions prevent it). 30 minute sessions are considered optimum both for duration and also cost. You could offer the care home manger (or a couple of staff member) a free sample reflexology session. Or offer to give a short talk to all levels of staff, residents and family members.

Send them articles like the ones linked below plus reflexology research papers - not many but there are some on older people. Tracey Smith at the AoR could help if you are member. Reflexology is a wonderfully rewarding therapy and the power of the therapeutic touch should never be underestimated. Be prepared to stop treatments early or adapt is a resident is uncomfortable. I suggest you do not wear "whites" or a uniform as such. Many older people associate those with medical intervention. I always wear my normal clothes. This is essential when working with those living with dementia. At my care home: all the staff wear their own clothes in the dementia wings to make it feel like family. All the first positive results and research in VRT came about working with the aging population. Good luck to anyone who is thinking of working in this sector. It is rewarding and so helpful to older people and the body has a great capacity for regeneration given the right impetus.



St Monica Trust residential care home complex.

Bristol. UK where VRT was discovered and developed. <https://www.stmonicastrust.org.uk/>

Here is an article on protocols for working with dementia but it also can apply to offering hand reflexology in general. <https://boothvrt.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Lynne-Booth-Reflexology-and-Dementia-December-2014-.pdf>

Plus an article I wrote for Positive Health on caring for older people.

<http://www.positivehealth.com/article/reflexology/reflexology-caring-for-older-people>

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