

# Volunteers' experiences building relationships with long-term care residents who have advanced dementia

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- Over 60% of residents in LTC have dementia and are likely to be more dependent than residents without cognitive impairment.

-There is a call for relationship-centered approach which promotes mutually beneficial relationships between and among the person in need of care, their family members and friends, and paid care staff.

- The purpose of this study is to understand volunteers' perspectives on their work with long-term care residents who have moderate to advanced dementia.

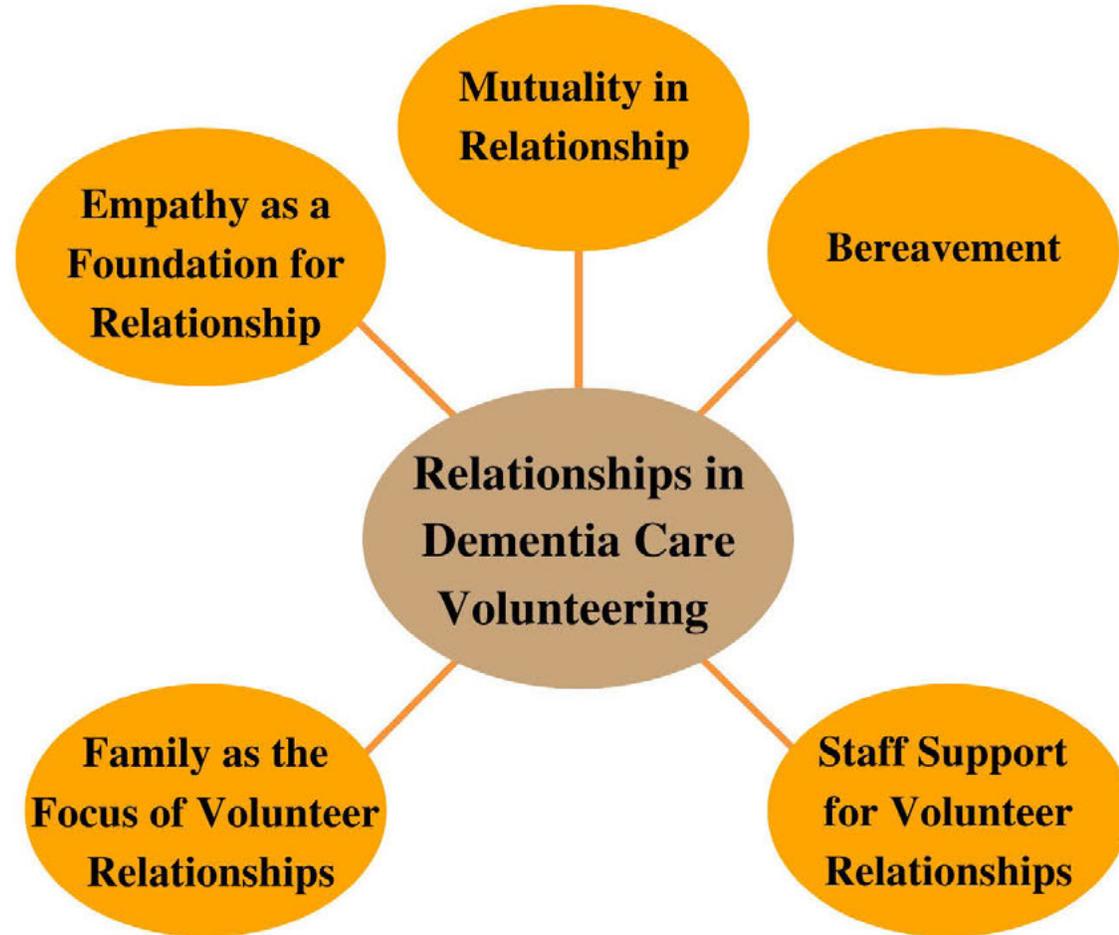


# Methods

- Explorative qualitative study.
- Volunteers recruited from a Transitional Care Unit in an acute care setting, as well as one medium and one large not-for-profit long-term care homes.
- Volunteers - adults ( $\geq 18$ ) with at least one-year experience volunteering with residents who have dementia.
- 16 volunteers were interviewed in three group interviews (Site 1, N=6; Site 2, N=4; Site 3, N=3) and three individual interviews.
- Volunteers' experiences interacting with people with advanced dementia - how they care for and interact with people with advanced dementia; how they involve family; and how they support staff.
- Data analysis - Braun and Clarke's (2013) approach to thematic analysis.



# Results



# Discussion

- With support and appreciation from staff and family members, volunteers were able to experience themselves as members of the care team, and this facilitated their work.
- We recommend further study of:
  - volunteer support and role preparation
  - volunteer preparedness for death
  - volunteers' interactions with families
  - incorporation of volunteers into care teams
- Work to further delineate the networks of relationships within LTC could enhance capacity by cultivating community.

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