

Establishing Expert Consensus on Core Competencies for Dementia Caregivers

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INTRODUCTION

- Dementia care relies heavily on informal, unpaid caregivers.
- Caregivers often receive little structured training.
- Existing education is fragmented and inconsistent.
- No standardized competency framework currently exists.

PURPOSE

- To identify and establish consensus on core competencies for informal dementia caregivers using a modified Delphi approach.

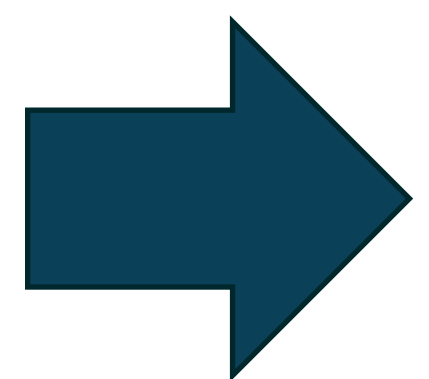
METHODS

- Modified Delphi design used to establish dementia caregiver Core Competencies.
- Focus on informal caregivers in home and community settings.
- An interdisciplinary expert panel (N = 75) participates in multiple iterative survey rounds.
- Open-ended responses will be followed by structured ratings to determine consensus and stability.

FROM FRAGMENTATION TO FRAMEWORK

Fragmented Caregiver Education

- Program-dependent
- Variable literacy demands
- No shared standards



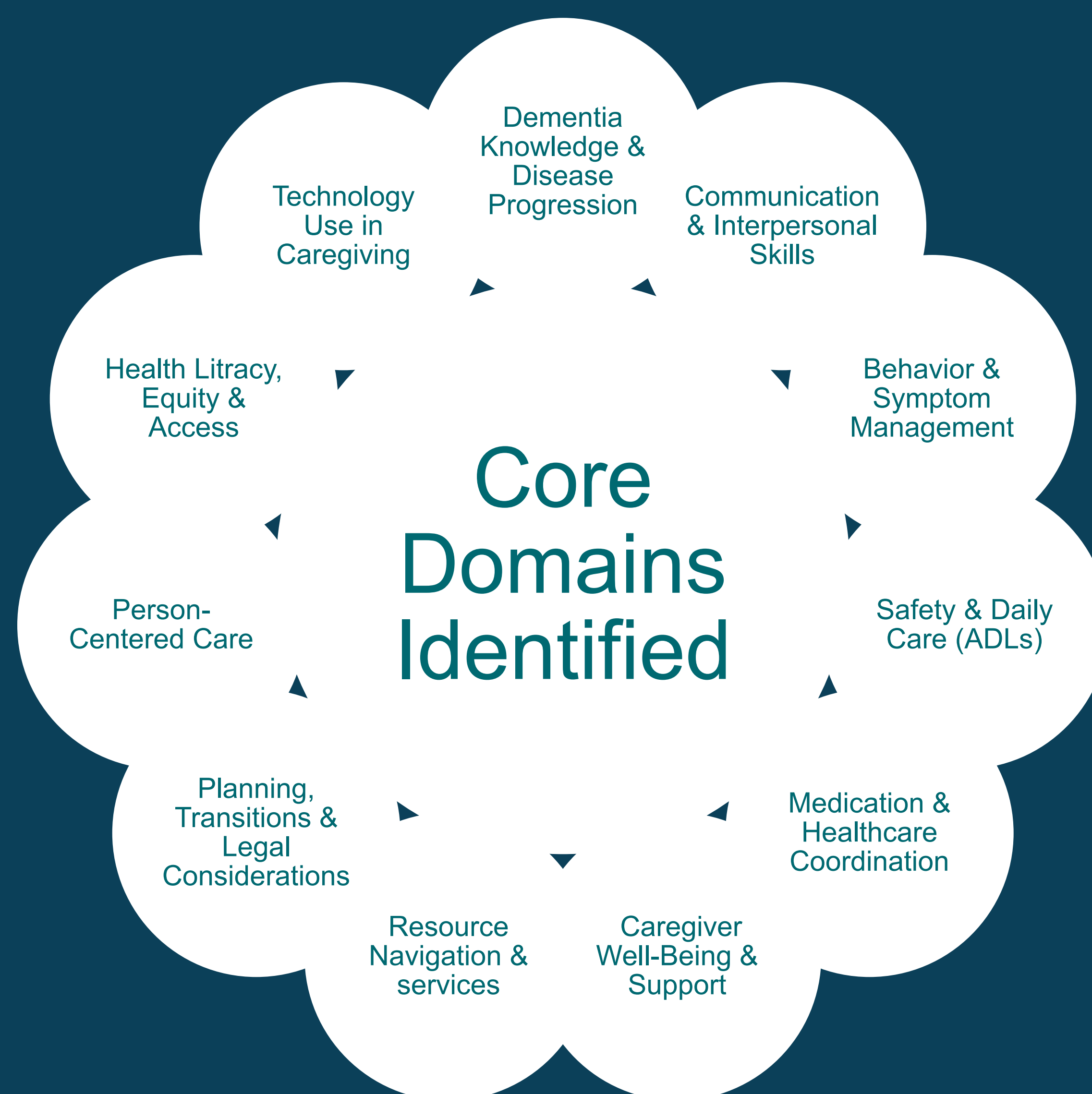
Consensus-Based Core Competencies

- Standardized expectations
- Transferable framework
- Equity-oriented design

PRELIMINARY RESULTS (n = 17)

- Preliminary findings indicate strong emphasis on caregiver ability to navigate systems of care, manage behavioral symptoms, and sustain their own well-being alongside providing person-centered support.

There is currently no standardized framework defining what informal dementia caregivers should be supported to do; this study addresses that gap through a structured, consensus-based methodology.



Preliminary Round 1 Findings (n = 17)

DELPHI PROCESS FLOW

Round 1

Open-Ended Competency Elicitation



Round 2

Importance Rating (Median ≥ 4.0 ; IQR ≤ 1.0)



Round 3

Re-Rating + Stability



Final Output

Consensus-Derived Core Competencies

EXAMPLE QUOTES

- “Understanding of the disease process...”
- “Respite to relieve caregiver stress...”
- “Effective communication and patience...”

COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

- Themes are being translated into measurable competence statements for validation in subsequent Delphi rounds:
 - Demonstrate understanding of dementia progression
 - Use effective communication strategies
 - Manage behavioral symptoms using nonpharmacological approaches
 - Access and utilize community-based supports

DISCUSSION

- Preliminary findings highlight the need for structured, accessible caregiver training framework.
- Emphasize real-world caregiving demands.
- Equitable supports in rural and underserved communities.
- Foundation for standardized caregiver education.

NEXT STEPS

- Complete Round 1
- Conduct Round 2 importance rating.
- Establish consensus thresholds.
- Refine competency framework.
- Conduct scoping review and meta-analysis.

References

Alzheimer’s Association (2025); AARP & NAC (2025); Gitlin & Rose (2016); Czaja et al. (2013); Huggins et al. (2024); Innes et al. (2011); Lwi et al. (2017).

Full references available upon request.

Acknowledgements

Youngstown State University • Dr. Daniel Van Dussen • Dr. Amy Weaver • Dr. Nicolette Powe • Scholars in Aging Program • Delphi panel participants