

# POSTER

## Health and Self-Esteem

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**Purpose** Brain Fitness Club (BFC) provides a research-based program that promotes cognitive, physical, and social engagement for adults diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment or early-stage dementia. The program bridges the gap between diagnosis and later-stage services. BFC is committed to serving individuals with dementia with respect and dignity, while providing a space where their capabilities are acknowledged and their strengths are engaged. The program curriculum includes three types of facilitator-led activities: (1) cognitive, which target five domains of cognition: executive function, attention, memory, language, and visuospatial, (2) social, such as prompted discussions about personal experiences, and (3) physical, such as walking, ping pong, and dance classes. There are currently three sites operating in the Central Florida area, with others planned across the United States. Individuals wishing to establish a new site were previously required to attend a weeklong face-to-face training - a practice which proved disadvantageous for non-local sites. The current project aimed to design an online training program to facilitate growth of the BFC. A particular challenge of this training was the breadth of information that needed to be covered including (1) logistics such as financing and building requirements, (2) considerations for working with individuals with dementia, and (3) understanding and implementing the curriculum.

**Method** Information was gathered through a series of interviews with current BFC staff and local dementia resources, as well as observing classes and visiting local established sites. Additionally, we collected current training and class material to incorporate within the modules.

**Results & Discussion** The end result included 10 training modules (see Table 1), which encompassed information from site logistics to facilitator training. Additionally, videos were created to demonstrate both optimal and avoidable practices in facilitating activities and considerations for working with individuals with dementia. Important ideas and best practices were reinforced with short quizzes at the end of each module. The sequence of the training was developed so that different portions could be assigned depending on the job or timing of the hiring. For instance, an individual seeking to establish a new branch of the club may only complete modules 0 through 4, then hire a program coordinator to run the established club. The coordinator would then complete all of the modules. On the other hand, a facilitator hired to conduct classes would only complete modules 5 through 10. In this way, the training can continue to be utilized by existing clubs to ensure proper training of all incoming staff. Future work will include testing the training system on existing staff who did not receive the initial face-to-face weeklong training before rolling out the full system to new clubs.

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*Table 1. Online Training Modules for Establishment and Operation of a Brain Fitness Club*

<b>Module</b>	<b>Topic</b>
0	Introduction
1	Environmental Considerations
2	Funding
3	Community Partners
4	Program Coordinator
5	Program Facilitator
6	Member
7	Understanding Dementia
8	Daily Operations
9	Curriculum
10	Facilitating Activities