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Assessing and Responding to Wandering in Residential Care - What is the Evidence Base?

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Professor of Nursing



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How could 94-year-old 'slip out?' family asks

By -----

UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

November 27, 2007

ESCONDIDO – A 94-year-old woman who wandered away from a nursing home early Thanksgiving morning and was then struck and killed by a car was wearing an alarm bracelet designed to alert staff if she left the building. Shortly after 12:30 a.m. Thursday, ----- was hit by a car while walking in a traffic lane on Grand Avenue near Ohio Street, a few hundred yards from the nursing home.

Suit Over Wandering Nursing Home Resident's Death Settled for \$750,000

By -----, Andrews Publications Staff Writer

A Philadelphia federal judge has approved a \$750,000 settlement between a Pennsylvania nursing home and the family of a Alzheimer's patient who died from injuries sustained while wandering from the facility.

-----alleged that his mother, -----, 83, died Nov. 5, 2005, from head injuries suffered in a fall she had while wandering from the ----- in -----, Pa.



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Nursing home fined \$12K after patient's death
Report: wandered from facility three times

By

Staff Writer

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

An elderly patient who died last winter after wandering away from the Carolina House nursing home had escaped the facility twice before in the days leading up to his death, according to a ----- County Department of Social Services report.

-----., an 86-year-old minister and former longshoreman, froze to death after wandering away from the nursing home the day after Christmas and was found dead four days later.



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Sister of Boxing Great Found Frozen to Death After Wandering Away from Assisted Living Facility

Monday, February 25, 2008 - Robert Carter

The 92-year-old sister of boxing great Joe Louis was recently found frozen to death outside of the assisted living facility at which she was a patient. Louis' sister, who had Alzheimer's disease, was last seen on Sunday, February 17, 2008 and was found outside one day later dressed only in pajamas and wearing one shoe. An autopsy confirmed she died of hypothermia.



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Woman dies after wandering from nursing home

Posted Fri Nov 5, 2004 7:22pm AEDT

The body of an elderly woman missing inI since early this morning has been found in a creek.

The 89-year-old woman wandered away from her nursing home about 4:00am AEDT.

.....from Police Search and Rescue says she was found about a kilometre from the home.

"It's always disappointing when you find somebody deceased," he said.

"We were hoping that she'd either found a vacant house, or doorknocked and someone was giving her shelter for the day until police were notified or they saw it on the media, but unfortunately that was not the case."



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A definition to aid universal understanding of the behaviour

“syndrome of dementia-related locomotion behavior having a frequent, repetitive, temporally-disordered and/or spatially-disoriented nature that is manifested in lapping, random, and/or pacing patterns, some of which are associated with eloping, eloping attempts, or getting lost unless accompanied”.

Algase, D. L., Moore, D. H., Vandeweerd, C., & Gavin-Dreschnack, D. (In Press). Mapping the maze of terms and definitions in dementia-related wandering. *Aging and Mental Health*

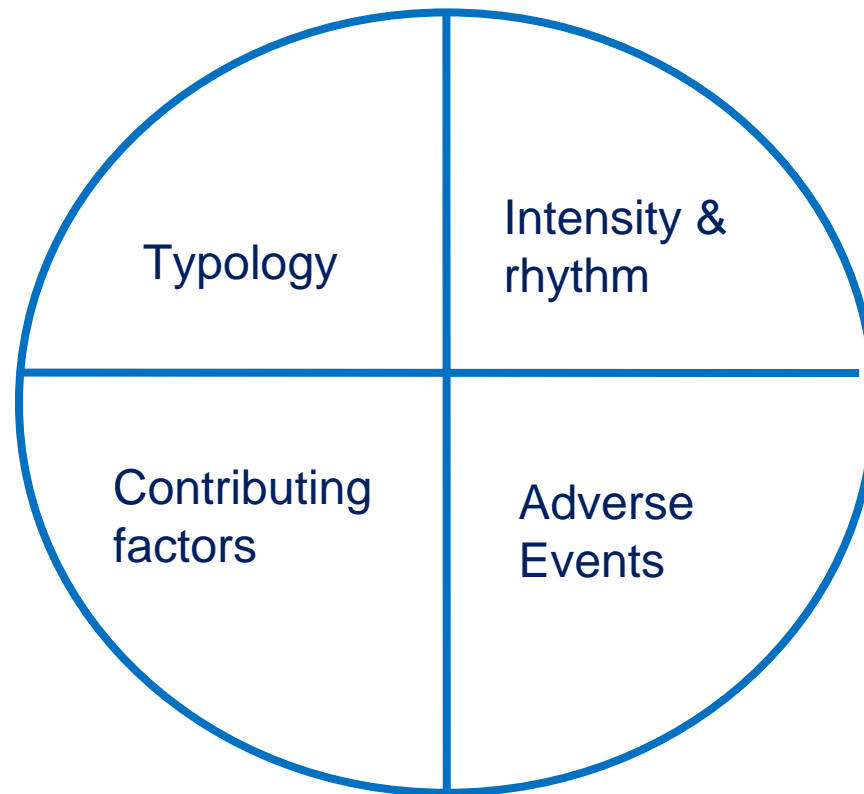


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Wandering Typologies

- Various typologies of wandering have been proposed with little/no empirical support.
- One exception is a typology developed through videotaped observation of nursing home residents with dementia, which revealed three types of wandering behaviors: random, lapping and pacing.
- This typology has been applied in several descriptive studies of wandering demonstrating stability of patterns over several days in nursing home residents and relationship of patterns to degree of cognitive impairment.

Martino-Saltzman, D., Blasch, B., Morris, R., & McNeal, L. (1991). Travel behavior of nursing home residents perceived as wanderers and non-wanderers. *Gerontologist*, 11, 666-672



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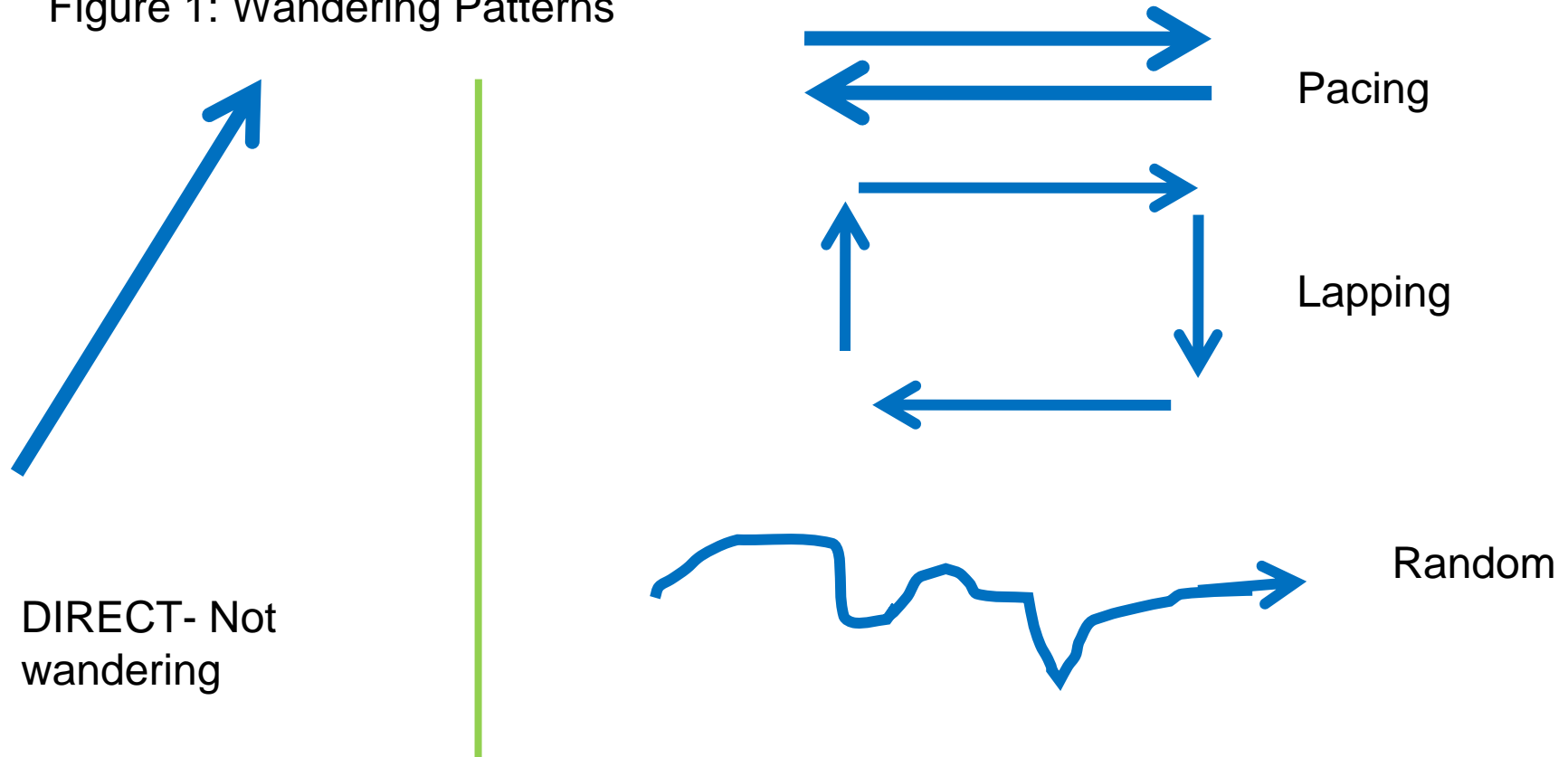
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Figure 1: Wandering Patterns



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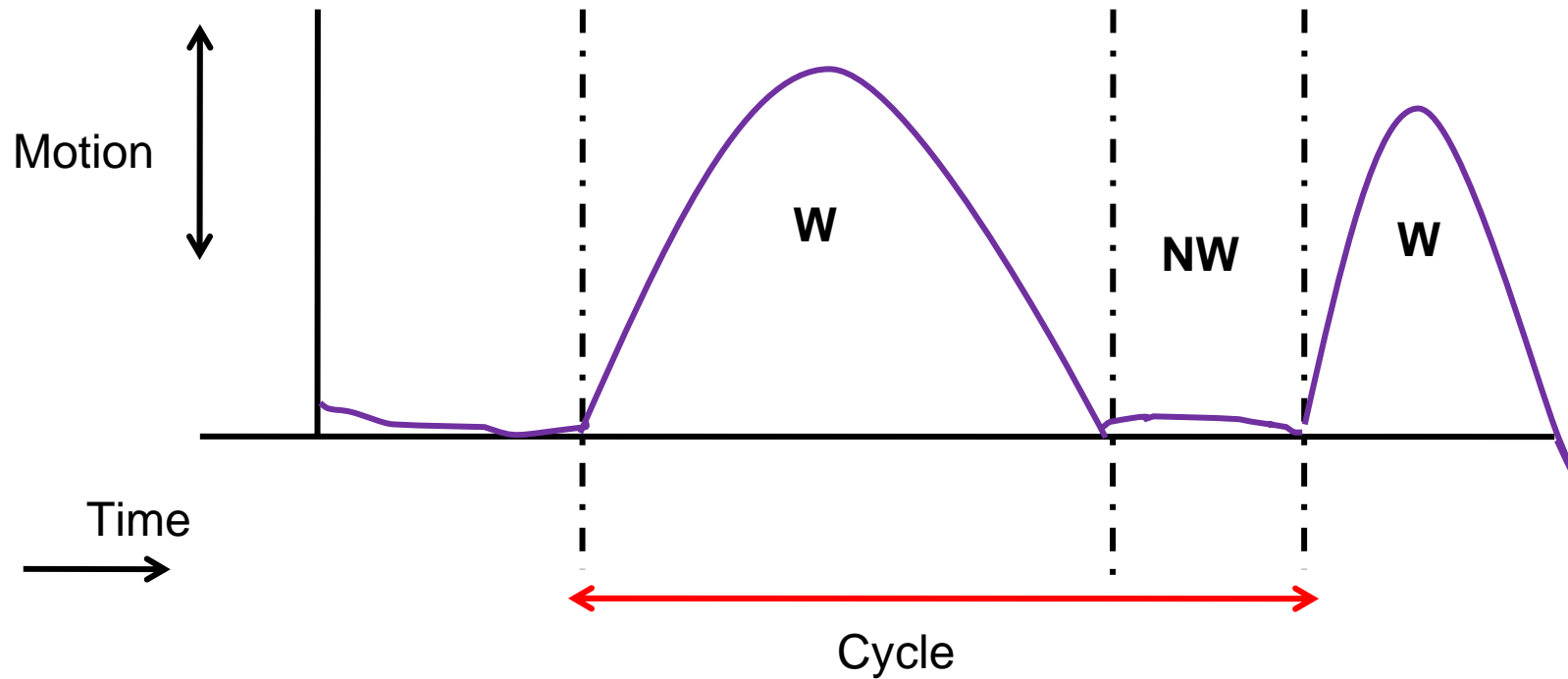
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Wandering as a Rhythm



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Wandering Intensity

- Conceptualization and measurement methods have varied.
- Defined using some combination of distance, persistence over time, and the frequency and duration of specific wandering cycles.
- In nursing homes samples, intensity varies with degree of cognitive impairment, but also with time of day and may be a function of either fatigue or circadian rhythm disturbances associated with aging and dementia/ Alzheimer's Disease.

Algase, D.L., Beattie, E.R., & Therrien B (2001) Impact of cognitive impairment on wandering behavior. *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 23(3), 283-295.



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Adverse Events Associated with Wandering

- Mealtime impulsivity
- Food intake ↓
- Falling
- Eloping
- Getting lost

- Weight loss (in excess of the disease alone)
- Relocation
- Institutionalization
- Early mortality

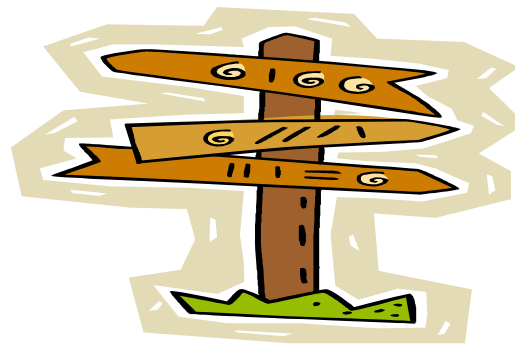


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Goals of Wandering Management

- Assuring safety
- Aiding navigation
- Minimizing restriction
- Using preserved skills and supporting abilities
- Providing physical and emotional comfort



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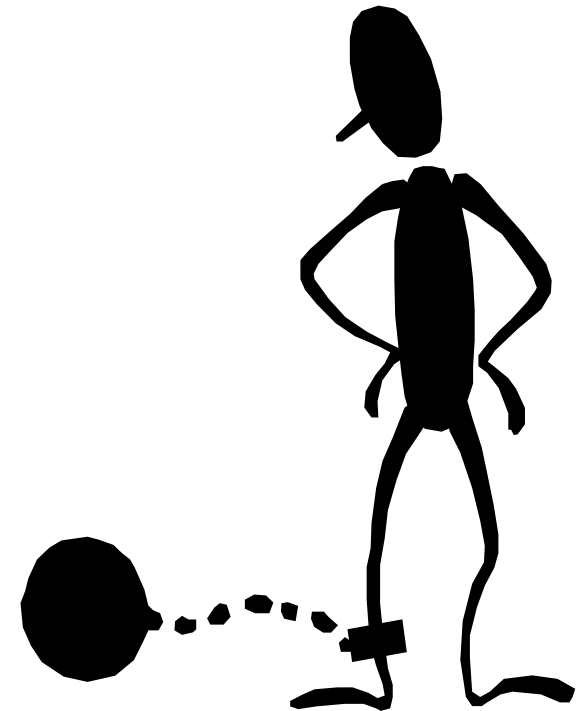


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A multi-level approach to wandering risk

- The pre-admission wandering history
- Ongoing assessment
- Systematic re-evaluation
- To track or not to track?



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Ongoing Wandering Assessment

- Enduring
 - Personality factors
- Enabling
 - Mobility
 - Health Status
- Influencing
 - Neurocognitive
 - Pain
 - Vision
 - Medication
- Precipitating
 - Physical environment
- Reinforcing
 - Social environment
 - Unmet needs

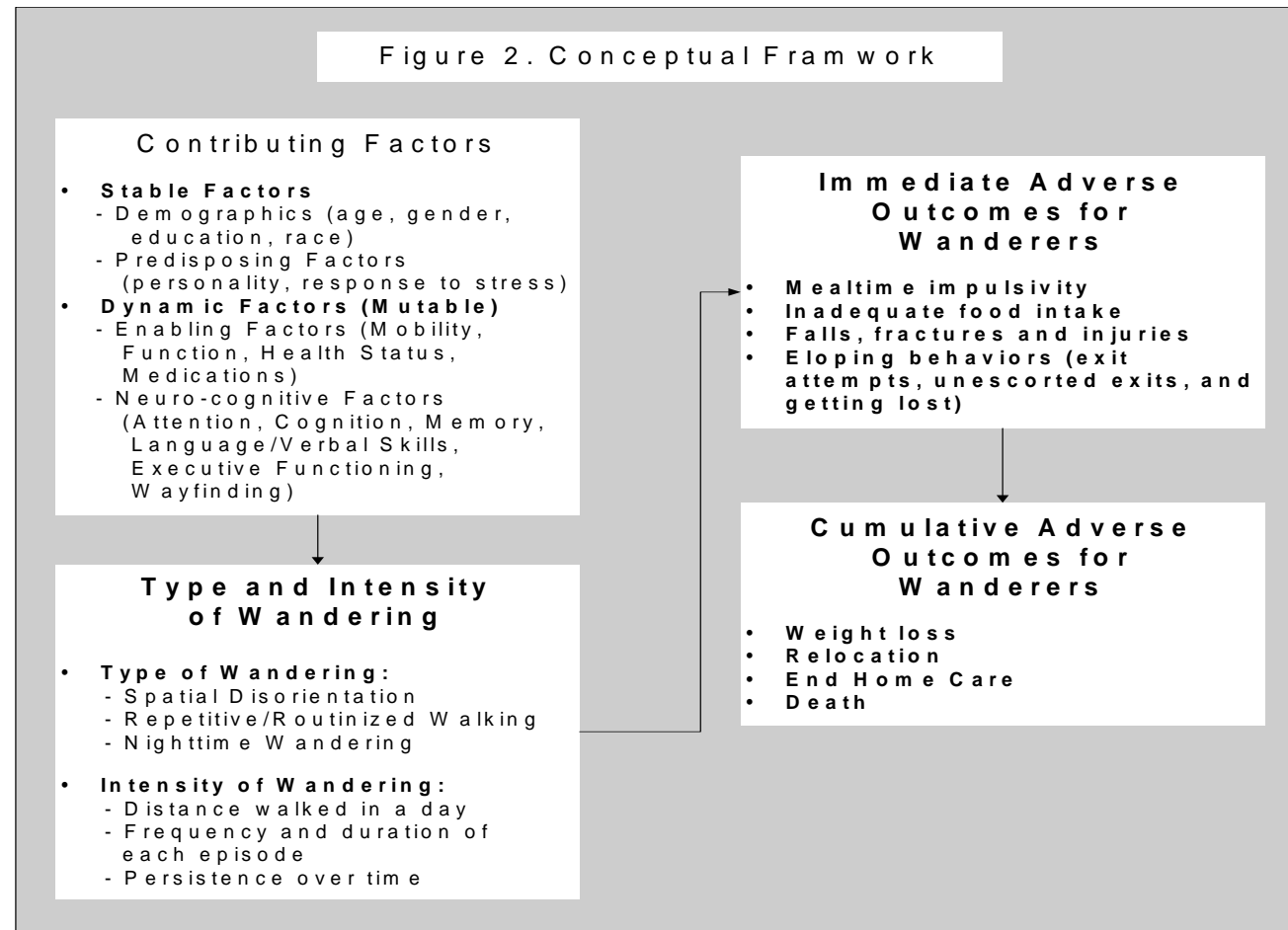


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Figure 2. Conceptual Framework



Algase, Beattie & Son, and the International Wandering Consortium, VA Patient Safety Centre, Tampa, FL, USA.



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A Tool to Measure Wandering Behaviour

- The Algase Wandering Scale caregiver reporting tool (NH & C versions)
- A 28-item questionnaire, based on three dimensions of wandering
 - Persistent walking
 - Spatial disorientation
 - Eloping
- Differentiates between non-wanderers, occasional wanderers, non-problem wanderers and risky wanderers (scale 1-4)
- Validated in an Australian community sample

Algase, DL, Beattie, ER, Bogue, E, & Yao, L. (2001). Algase Wandering Scale: Initial psychometrics of a new caregiver reporting tool. *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*, 16(3), 141-152.

Algase, D. L., Beattie, E. R. A., Song, J., Milke, D., Duffield, C. & Cowan, B. (2004). Validation of the Algase Wandering Scale (Version 2) in a cross cultural sample. *Aging & Mental Health*, 8(2), 133-142.



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- 84-year old widowed Caucasian female
- Height 5'5" , Weight 50kg.
- Medical diagnosis of probable AD
- 7.8 years post-diagnosis
- 6.2 years post-admission
- MMSE score = 0/30
- TSI score = 1.5/24
- Labs within normal limits



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- Global Deterioration Scale = Stage 6
- Functional ability scores (FIM) = 1/7, with exception of ambulation (7/7)
- History of dangerous wandering dating from six months pre-diagnosis
- Wandering a persistent feature of ambulation since admission



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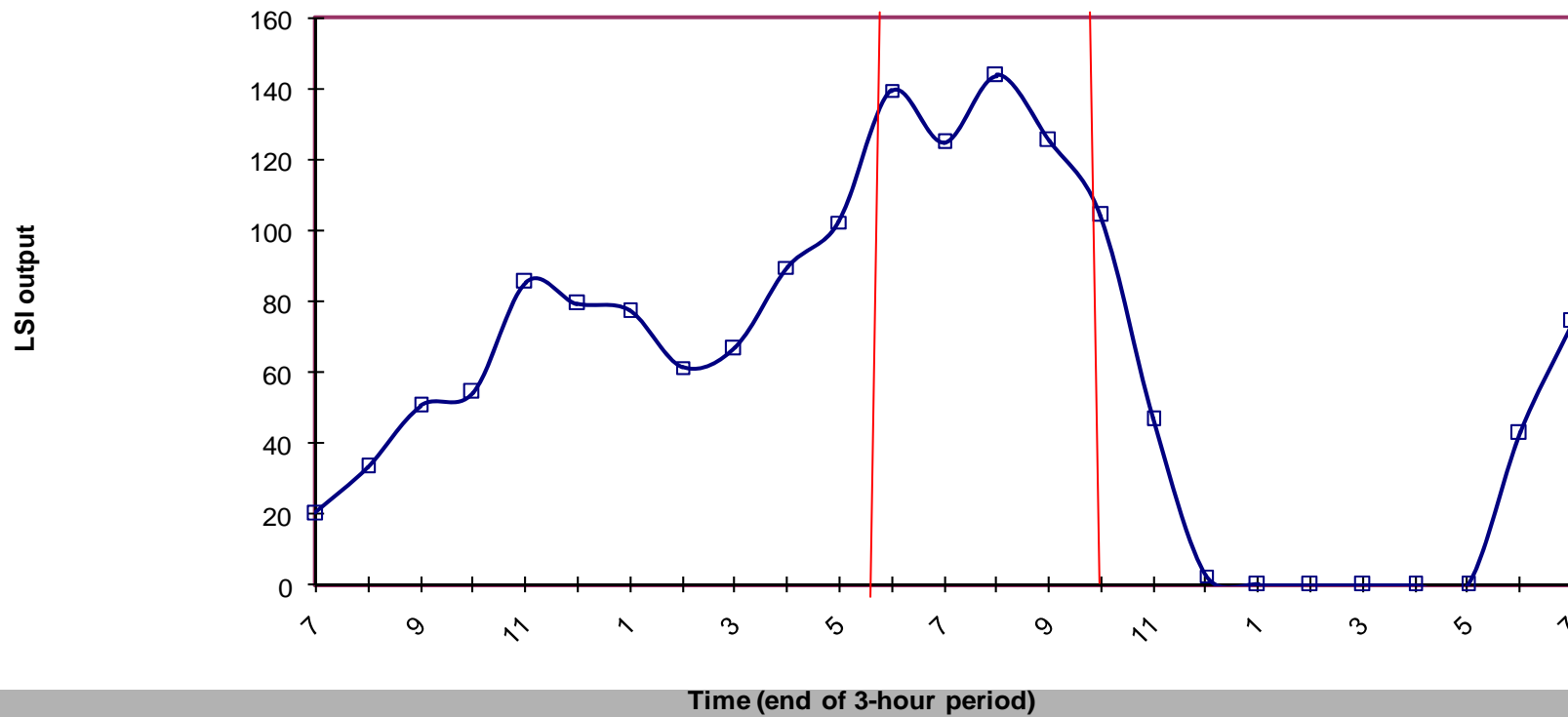
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Figure 3: Peak Period of Locomotion



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Table 1: Mean Frequency of Ambulation Cycles by Type per Day (n=12)

Variable	W2	W2	W3	W4
Mean frequency all locomoting cycles	28.9 (10.1)	25.8 (8.0)	26.3 (0.5)	29.3 (8.1)
Mean frequency direct (efficient) cycles	11.3 (6.4)	6.2 (2.0)	11.0 (4.0)	11.3 (6.6)
Mean % all wandering Mean frequency all-wandering cycles	62.08% 17.6 (3.7)	71.56% 18.6 (9.6)	58.21% 15.3 (4.0)	63.67% 18.0 (2.3)





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Person-centred care implications

- What does this person feel like?
Frightened? Lost? Tired? Frustrated?
Rested? Happy? Engaged?
- What needs might they be expressing
via the behaviour?
- What protection do they need from us?
hazards: physical, psychosocial and emotional.



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Evidence-Based Practice for Managing Wandering Behaviors (2007) (Nelson & Algase Edit), Springer: NY,NY

<http://books.google.com.au/books?id=jqoBxXzQSmIC&pg=PA338&lpg=PA338&dq=Empirical+Best+practices+Wandering+Springer+&source=web&ots=Z8Z6KVj4Jd&sig=Cs1cRuNbOyaE5PeySoPF1QnBfm4&hl=en#PPP1,M1>



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Follow me, you!..... Don't leave me.....watch where I am.....go where I go..... come on.....am I there?no, don't stop me!!how will I know?



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