

Older People's Vision for Long Term Care

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Background

Older people with significant support needs constitute a large and growing sector of our population. Recent developments around independent living that enable people to have choice and control in their lives have been slow to engage with and respond to the varied needs and aspirations of older people. The key focus of this work is on distilling the critical elements of independent living for older people in order to determine how these lessons can be spread, embedded and sustained over time. This is particularly important for older people living in care homes and other forms of supported housing.

Aims

Our overarching aim is to: "Identify the role(s) and features of residential and nursing care within a future vision of a continuum of independent living support for older people". There are four key objectives:

- Consider current approaches to residential and nursing care and whether these can be improved
- Ensure older people are at the heart of the work and that their perspective is central to the output
- Provide a realistic assessment of the present and future roles of statutory, voluntary and commercial providers in this sector and the possibilities of influencing them.
- Ensure that the existing low profile and associated expectations of and for older people with high support needs are increased

Design and methods

This is a multi-method action research project in six phases:

- (1) A UK wide scoping study to gather information about the current range of approaches, options & opportunities including examples of innovative practice carried out by CPA;
- (2) Fieldwork in four localities -Liverpool, Norfolk, Kingston-Upon-Thames, and Inverness - to explore innovative practice with a range of stakeholders in each area including: older people who live in residential and nursing care; their relatives and friends; staff involved in the commissioning and provision of long term care; and user led organisations. The older people participating in the work and their relatives and friends will reflect a broad and diverse range of backgrounds and experiences. Staff and volunteers participating in this study will cover a range of commissioners and providers of long term care for older people across the statutory (health, housing and social care), voluntary and private sectors. Work in each study site will be led by two Associate Consultants from OPP using standard templates of topics, questions and issues identified out of the scoping study and refined with JRF's Independent Living Committee and Project Advisory Group. –The first of two visits to each study site will be designed to identify key features of success/good practice in relation to choice and control; and will explore with different stakeholders what works in enabling choice and control; what *makes* this work; and barriers to choice and control. This will be distilled to identify a set of critical quality and design features for independent living for older people with high support needs. The second visit to each study site will include discussions with older people living in a small sample of supported accommodation/care homes that have been highlighted in the scoping study as exemplifying "good practice". These discussions will focus on establishing if current residents experience choice and control as identified in the first visit.
- (3) Analysis/synthesis from key findings from Phases 1 and 2;
- (4) Four interactive workshops in the four study sites, to build the Vision & shape key elements, principles and practices of long term care with a broad range of stakeholders;
- (5) Testing this Vision with a much wider audience of stakeholders nationally;
- (6) Publication and dissemination of the findings, resultant Shared Vision and recommendations.

Analysis

Our analytical framework is based on Realistic Evaluation which seeks to answer the question: What works, for whom, in which circumstances and why? We use a combination of clear and consistent research questions, search terms and parameters, interview schedules and coding frameworks to ensure our analysis of the findings and implications are rigorous and transparent.

Influencing policy and practice

Policy and practice will be influenced through a variety of means including: vision shaping and testing events with those most affected by policy and practice, in Phase 4; a sounding board event with national bodies and policymakers in Phase 5; and wide dissemination of the report using collective networks and resources in Phase 6.