

Social Exclusion and Use of Care Services in Wales: Experiences of People with Cognitive Impairment and Dementia.



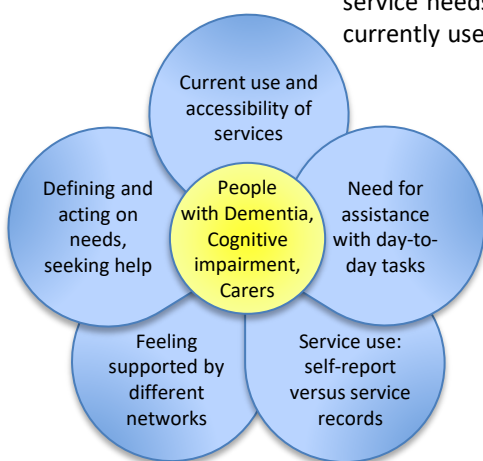
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Current forecasts suggest the number of people with dementia in Wales is increasing, resulting in greater need for health and social care support for people with dementia and their carers. A key challenge for service providers and planners is how to manage this increasing demand on services whilst continuing to provide the support and assistance people with dementia and their carers need to ensure a good quality of life. In order to effectively plan service provision it is important to understand current need and use of services.

Research Aims:

This research aims to gain a greater understanding of the current health and social care service needs of people with cognitive impairment and their carers in Wales, and how they currently use and access services.



We are using data from the Cognitive Function and Ageing Study - Wales (CFAS Wales), a large population based survey of people aged 65 years and over from North and South Wales. We are exploring how accessible people find services, whether or not people's everyday needs are being met, and possible factors that mediate the relationship between cognition and service use, including factors of environment, social support and personality.

Qualitative interviews explore how people with dementia, their carers, and people with mild cognitive impairment define and act on their needs, how supported they feel by existing networks (professional, community and social), and draw out detail about why people are/are not using or accessing services, and what support or information they may be missing.

We are also examining the extent to which self-report measures of service use reflect reports of service use in administrative health records, linking data from the CFAS Wales study with the Secure Anonymised Information Linkage (SAIL) Databank.

Public Involvement:

The project public stakeholder group is formed of people with dementia and carers. The group meets at key stages throughout the project, advising the team on different aspects of the project including helping to shape the focus of the work, the readability of participant documents, our interpretation of data, and our resulting recommendations. The project also has a public involvement champion, who meets with the principle investigator on a more frequent basis to provide continued input to the project to ensure the priorities of people with dementia are embedded in the project and the work produced accurately reflects people's experiences.



Findings:

We found that people with cognitive impairment were more likely to use social care services, but less likely to have their sight checked or visit a dentist than those without cognitive impairment:



MacLeod, C.A., Bu, F., Rutherford, A.C., Phillips, J., Woods, R. (2021). Cognitive impairment negatively impacts allied health service uptake: Investigating the association between health and service use. SSM – Population Health, 13, 100720. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2020.100720>

