



‘Knowing you, knowing me’: A person-centred approach and a collaboration between older persons and carers in a nursing home setting

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Project background

Ashley Court is a 52-bed nursing home in Edinburgh offering long-term nursing care to frail older people and dedicated care for people living with dementia and/or at end of life. Ashley Court also offers short-term and respite facilities for older persons. The project team recognised the care provided was of a good standard, but felt that they were not connecting to some of the important aspects of the persons’ lives and there was a lack of regular meaningful feedback from residents regarding their continuing life at Ashley Court. There is a large amount of paperwork in relation to residents in terms of care plans, life stories, activity care plans and preferences, yet there was little continuity between the various documents meaning that, to a large extent, residents’ care remained based on assumptions, routines and non-person-centred practices.

Aims and objectives

The project team aimed to achieve a person-centred approach and develop a collaboration between the older persons and the carers. It was hoped to achieve a home from home for the residents, where they felt safe, supported and able to express their individuality. To achieve this aim, the objectives identified were to:

- To engage the nursing and care staff in collaborating with residents and relatives to design person-centred individualised records to reflect the life of the residents
- To help nursing and care staff to develop new knowledge and skills to help them listen to and understand resident and family perspectives
- To develop useable and transferable documentation that clearly reflects the individual residents

Implications for practice

- Listening to relatives’ and residents’ views is as important as listening to those of nursing and care staff
- Using a variety of engagement methods enables different people to share their perspectives
- Understanding people’s lives, likes, dislikes and what they value is important in developing a person-centred culture
- Person-centred approaches apply to residents and to nursing and care staff

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Online

Further information about the project can be accessed from: fons.org/library/report-details?nstdid=74405

Key activities and outcomes

• Capturing the current experience: gaining nursing and care staff views

A flipchart was put in the staff room, with nursing staff and carers encouraged to share values and ideas for engaging residents more in their care. These were shared at an open staff meeting, where it was agreed the project team would focus on the following:

1. How can we find out what the residents truly like/are interested in?
2. How can we make it more like their homes?

• Capturing the current experience: key stakeholder drop-in

A drop-in event was held in January 2017. Individual invitations were sent to all residents, relatives and staff; two residents, three staff and 15 residents attended, and the project team members explained the project aims and asked for ideas. This exciting event revealed many insights and helped build relationships.

• Understanding the experience: project team reflection on the event

The project team met to explore their learning from this event. All were pleased at the support from relatives and several had discussed it further with staff after the event. Some of the team felt quite emotional because they had learned about different aspects of the lives of relatives and residents – aspects that they had not discovered before while looking after them.

• Improving the experience

The drop-in event generated many views and ideas from all the attendees. These were grouped into various actions.

1. *Knowing you:* Introduce one-page profiles, scrapbooks and first-person paperwork. Capture the life story of a resident as an ongoing process – and, if possible, start this process before admission.
2. *Knowing me:* Introduce one-page profiles for nursing and care staff, use photo boards, and hold a staff workshop to where strengths and ideas can be shared

• Measuring improvement

A variety of methods were used to chart improvements through the project, including a staff survey and questionnaire, and narrative feedback. Following an unplanned visit from the care inspectorate, the inspector commented in February 2018: ‘The culture encourages creative contributions from staff to suggest improvement in the running of the home.’ The home’s rating for quality rose from 4 to 5.

• Key learning for the project team

The team members felt that they had learned that using multiple approaches to engagement is important, celebrating small successes is a good thing as you progress and having a lead facilitator makes the process more manageable. The team made a video to summarise the project: youtu.be/OW_48E7d7w0