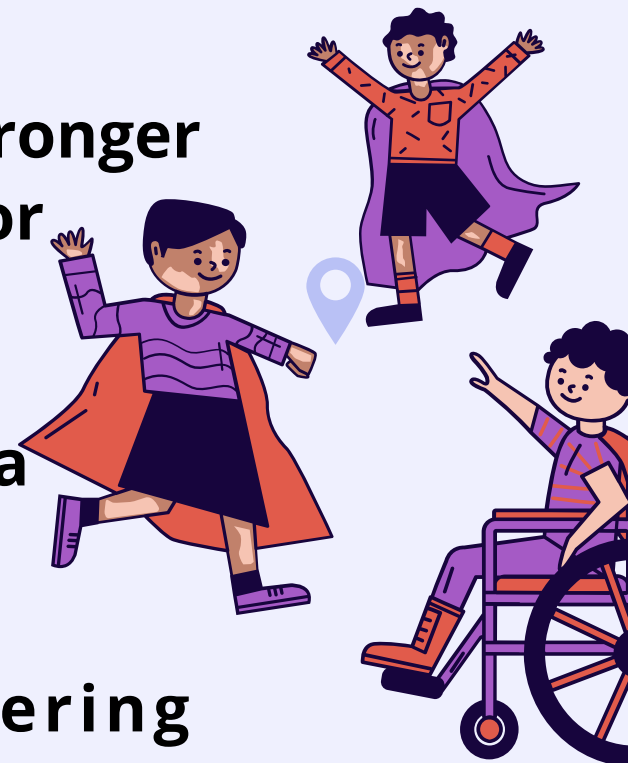




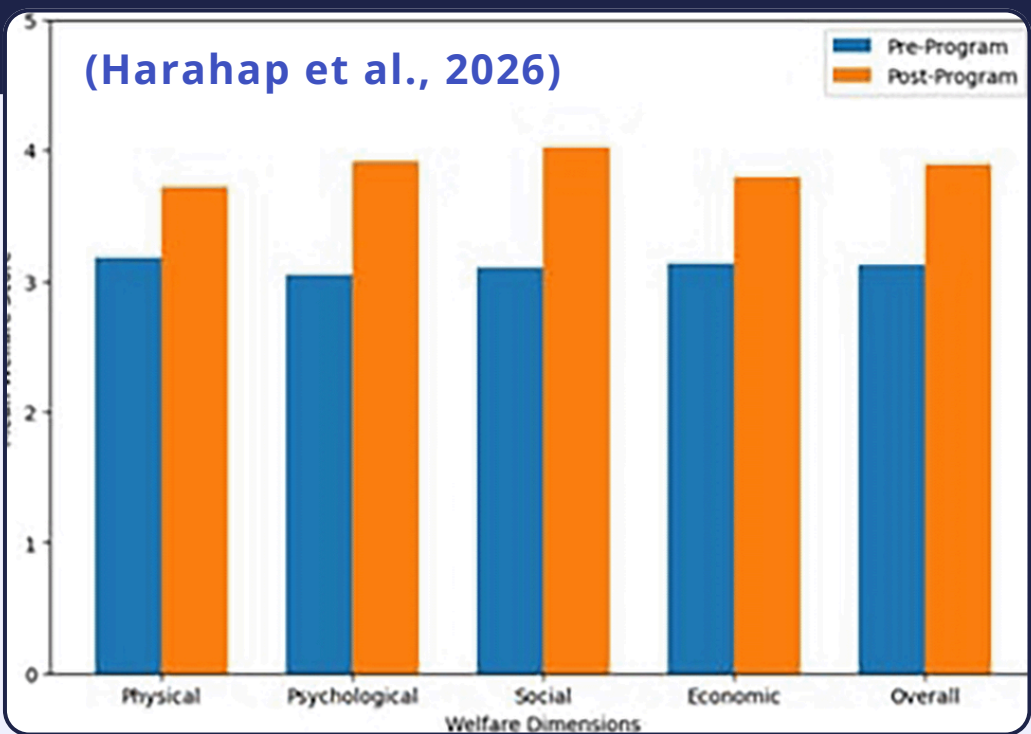
Growing Older, Living Stronger Care and Support for Independence



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Introduction

- ✓ Older people deserve to live with dignity, choice and independence.
- ✓ Reduced mobility, loneliness, long-term conditions and limited access to support can affect their daily lives.
- ✓ Care services, UK policies, interventions and technology can help older people remain safe, active and independent for longer.



Challenges to Independence in Later Life

- Reduced mobility and frailty can make daily tasks difficult (NICE, 2025).
- Long-term conditions may reduce confidence, safety and independence (NICE, 2025).
- Loneliness can affect wellbeing and reduce physical activity (Good Things Foundation, 2024).
- Poor housing and inadequate adaptations can increase falls risk and restrict independence (Good Things Foundation, 2024).
- Falls can reduce mobility, confidence and independent functioning (Montero-Odasso et al., 2022)

Key Statistics from the Older People's Empowerment Programme

- ✓ Physical outcomes increased by approximately 19%.
- ✓ Social outcomes increased by around 29%, showing the greatest improvement.
- ✓ Overall wellbeing increased from approximately 3.1 to 3.9, representing a rise of about 26%

(Harahap et al., 2026)

Empowering Older People Through Care and Support



- Support may be needed for mobility, personal care and medication (Age UK, 2024).
- Effective care should protect dignity, safety and wellbeing (British Geriatrics Society, 2024).
- Empowerment promotes choice, control and shared decision-making (NHS England, 2023).
- Population ageing increases the need for accessible housing, community support and appropriate services (ONS, 2022).
- Person-centred care balances safety, autonomy and choice (World Health Organization, 2024).

Policies, Theories and Interventions for Better Ageing

✓ **Person-centred care:** Person-centred care can strengthen dignity and independence by involving older people in decisions. However, its effectiveness may be limited by staff shortages, time pressures and restricted service availability (Department of Health & Social Care, 2025).

✓ **UK services:** Home and community services can delay institutional care and support independent living. However, unequal access and fragmented provision may prevent some older people from receiving timely support (NHS England, n.d.).

✓ **Health and Social Care Act 2012:** The Health and Social Care Act 2012 promotes integration and patient choice. However, organisational fragmentation may still create gaps between health and social care services (UK Government, 2012).

✓ **NHS 10-year Plan 2025:** The NHS Long Term Plan supports prevention and community-based care. Nevertheless, digital approaches may disadvantage older people with limited internet access or digital skills (Department of Health and Social Care, 2025).

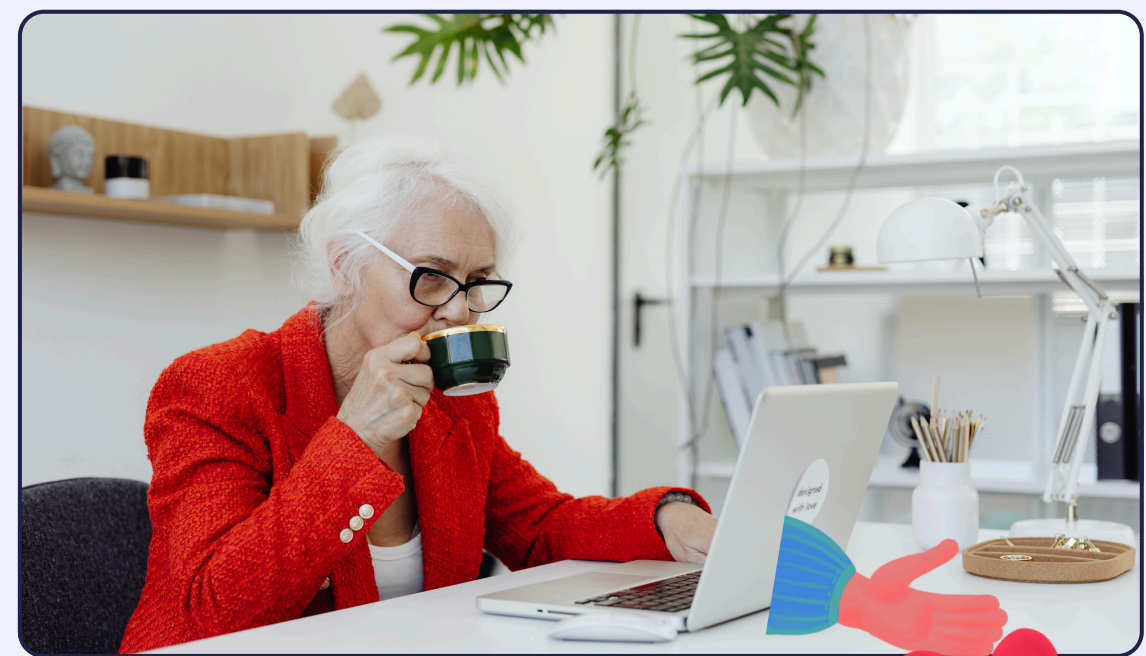
✓ **Biological Theory:** Biological theory explains age-related physical decline and supports early intervention. However, it may overlook psychological, social and environmental influences on ageing (Gianfredi et al., 2025).

✓ **Disengagement Theory:** Disengagement Theory suggests that social withdrawal may be a natural part of ageing. However, it has been criticised for normalising isolation and ignoring evidence that social participation can improve wellbeing and independence (Motamed-Jahromi and Kaveh, 2021).



Conclusion

Empowering older people requires more than providing services. Person-centred care, early intervention, home adaptations and community support can improve safety and independence. However, their effectiveness depends on accessible funding, coordinated services and attention to digital, social and housing inequalities. Therefore, support must balance protection with autonomy, choice and active participation.



Recommendations for Supporting Older People's Independence

- Expanding community care may prevent deterioration and hospital admission. However, this requires adequate funding, trained staff and consistent local provision (SCIE, 2023).
- Home adaptations and mobility aids can reduce falls and support independence. Their impact may be limited by assessment delays, cost and unsuitable housing (SCIE, 2023).
- Social programmes can reduce loneliness and encourage active ageing. However, transport difficulties, poor health and low confidence may limit participation (SCIE, 2023).
- Digital support can improve access to health services. However, online systems should complement rather than replace face-to-face care, particularly for digitally excluded older people (NHS England, 2024).
- Involve older people in person-centred care decisions (NHS England, 2024).



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