



UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David

LONDON

COURSE TITLE: LIVING WITH CARE: THE OLDER PERSON

COURSE CODE: BMHP600

TERM 1

ASSESSMENT 2

LECTURER'S NAME: DIOLA BIJLHOUT

STUDENT'S NAME: GEORGE ONYEKA

STUDENT'S NUMBER: 1919241

CONTENT

- 1) Introduction
- 2) The debate
- 3) Statistics of the elderly in the UK
- 4) Government Policies
- 5) Recommendations
- 6) Conclusion
- 7) References

Introduction

This paper examines the argument that using technology is not essential for the UK's elderly population or for older people in general. Caregiving for the elderly requires meeting their basic requirements and necessities peculiar to them, which includes attending to their unique worries and specific needs. Hospices, nursing homes, care in homes, daily care, and assistance can all offer these services (Definitions, 2022).

The paper also looked at the standpoint of the opposing team, the policies put in place by the government in support of the elderly, and the impact of Covid-19 on the older population in the UK.

The debate

Our team comprising eight people argued that older individuals may maintain their health without reliance on the use of technology. I made the following two points in support of our group's argument and did the recommendations and conclusion of our position.

- In the EU, it has been discovered that 9 percent of older adults 75 and older have visual impairments, 18 percent have hearing issues, and a similar amount has a physical or medical condition that makes it difficult for them to read. They have a problem called leathery fingertips, which makes it difficult for them to use touch screen phones or tablets (Eurostat, 2017, in No isolation, 2021)
- Due to their limited technological knowledge, older individuals tend to be apathetic toward it. Up to 77 percent of elderly adults are thought to require assistance to utilize a smartphone or tablet. Some of them find it challenging to use social networking sites and to become used to using the internet. Most older individuals have no knowledge of using technology, so they found it difficult to use.

The rest of the group came up with the following arguments.

- Due to the high cost of some of these new artificial intelligence gadgets, some older folks who are retired and rely on their meager pension as income find technology to be quite pricey and unaffordable.

- The fear of social isolation. Older folks worry that technology will keep them from attending the social engagements with their peers that they so dearly value, thereby isolating them in the process. They feel cut off from society when relatives refuse to see them in person but instead call them on the phone (ScienceDaily, 2018).

2

- Their cultural, social, emotional, and physical health demands cannot be met by technology. Technology is still unable to make intelligent, objective decisions. Older people have complex needs that are beyond the capabilities of current technology. Human caregivers, however, can form relationships with patients and provide compassionate, empathic care (Greulich-Smith, 2018).
- Data breach: Due to the prevalence of internet fraud, there is a considerable risk that the personal health information of elderly patients would be compromised (Healthcare Business Club, 2022).

The proposing team offered the following arguments in support of their assertion:

- Telemedicine: This is the practice of diagnosing and treating people across a distance using technology without physically encountering them. The senses of touch and sight, which are essential to an aged person's care, are removed from this approach to diagnosis and treatment.
- Using monitoring equipment Monitoring systems that collect information on things like movement, sleep habit falls, temperature, etc. are included in this. Without meeting the elderly, caregivers and other support staff can monitor how they are doing daily (Whitley, 2021).

The two points focus on how machine-based care and diagnosis methods fail to consider the psychological, bodily, and visual clues that older people experience, which are essential to human management and care.

Statistics of the elderly in the UK

Figures released by the office of national statistics in 2018, broke it down as follows; 11.9 million people are above the age of 65 out of which people aged 75 and above number up to 5.4 million people, and those aged 85 and above number up to 1.6 million, those aged 90 and above make up over 500,000 while those aged 100 and above are about 14,000.

In the UK, an additional 8.6 million people will become 65 or older over the next 50 years. According to estimates, 1 in 5 people in the UK, or 21.8 percent, will be 65 or older. 6.8 percent of the population will be 75 years or older, and 3.2 percent will be 85 years or older. Of those 65 years of age and older, 55 percent are women.

Government policies

The government has put in place some policies in place to help take care of the elderly. I will mention three of them in this report. They are,

- Equality Act 2010: It aims to clear society of discrimination against vulnerable people, such as the elderly (Gov.uk, 2016)

- The Care Act 2014: This deals with safeguarding duties that apply to elderly persons who are unable to cater to themselves and have a need for care and may be facing the risk of abuse or neglect (SCIE, 2022).
- Mental Capacity Act: This aims at protecting and empowering those who are not able to make decisions about their care and treatment, such as people with dementia and stroke (MIND, 2022).

3

The impact of Covid-19 on the elderly in the UK

Covid-19 impacted the elderly in the UK disproportionately than the younger generation. The elderly accounted for 80% of hospitalisation and 23% risk of death. The rate of health problems among the elderly is also higher. The use of digital technology was quite difficult for the elderly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **2010 to 2015 government policy: older people.** It contained strategies aimed at taking care of the elderly. These strategies should be implemented. They include the following:
- **Improving recruitment and retention of an ageing workforce:** Aimed at keeping the elderly in employment even after retirement.
- **Helping older people get online:** Aims to familiarise them with the internet.
- **Celebrating Older People's Day:** celebrated every 1st October of the year which tallies with the UN International Day of Older Persons.
- **Improving local services for older people – 'LinkAge Plus'** Their work is helping to reduce isolation, building up their social networking, and bettering their general wellbeing (Toynbee Hall, 2022)
- **Supporting councils to provide a better quality of life for older people through local services – 'Ageing Well'**(Dept for Work and Pensions, 2015)

CONCLUSION

Our group was able to point out that, with the high cost of technology, the complications and sophistication of the equipment, making them feel isolated and their failing health conditions, technology is not necessary for the elderly in the UK.

All the elderly population need is humane and empathetic, care from a dedicated team of carers who can communicate with them and are able to respond to their physical, emotional, and psychological needs. The best technology can never give them the required

care that suits their changing needs.

References

AgeUK, 2022. *Policy position paper (England and Wales)*. [online] ageuk.org.uk. Available at: <<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/policy-research/policy-positions/>> (Accessed 15 July 2022).

Definitions, 2022. *What does elderly care mean?*. [online] Definitions.net. Available at: <<https://www.definitions.net/definition/elderly+care>> (Accessed 21 July 2022).

Dept for Work and Pensions, 2015. *2010 to 2015 government policy: older people*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-older-people>> (Accessed 20 July 2022).

Gov.uk, 2016. *Equality Act 2010: guidance*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: <<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>> [Accessed 11 August 2022].

Greulich-Smith, T., 2018. *Can artificial intelligence care for the elderly?* | GovInsider. [online] GovInsider. Available at: <<https://govinsider.asia/innovation/artificial-intelligence-ageing-population/>> (Accessed 13 July 2022).

MIND, 2022. *Mental Capacity Act 2005*. [online] mind.org.uk. Available at: <<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/mental-capacity-act-2005/overview/>> (Accessed 11 August 2022).

No Isolation. 2021. *Why do many seniors have trouble using technology?*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.noisolation.com/research/why-do-many-seniors-have-trouble-using-technology#:~:..>> (Accessed 13 July 2022).

SCIE, 2022. *The Care Act: Assessment and eligibility*. [online] Scie.org.uk. Available at: <<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility/>> (Accessed 11 August 2022).

ScienceDaily, 2018. *Why some older people are rejecting digital technologies*. [online] Sciencedaily.com. Available at: <<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/03/180312091715.htm>> (Accessed 13 July 2022).

Toynbee Hall, 2022. *What is Linkage Plus?*. [online] Toynbeehall.org.uk. Available at: <<https://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/linkage-plus/>> (Accessed 21 July 2022).

Whitley, M., 2021. *5 Helpful Elderly Monitoring Devices*. [online] A Place for Mom. Available at: <<https://www.aplaceformom.com/caregiver-resources/articles/senior-monitoring-sensors>> (Accessed 23 July 2022).