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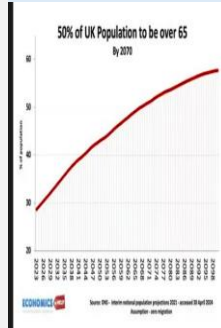
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Evaluating the care and support needs of older people

INTRODUCTION

- According to the most recent ONS statistics from 2024, 19% of the UK's population is over 65, and this number is expected to rise.
- The ageing population: due to declining birth rates and rising life expectancy, the proportion of the population that is older has grown (Age UK 2024).
- This poster explores care and support needs, the effectiveness of approaches and interventions, relevant policies and theories, challenges and recommendations and conclusion



Bing image (2024)

Care and support needs of older people

- **Physical needs:** mobility, nutrition, medication management or chronic conditions, and personal care (Glasby, 2017).
- **Emotional needs:** Older adults want to know that they feel mentally healthy, that they are feeling safe and that they feel their surroundings are safe and dignified.
- **Social needs:** Loneliness and isolation can be avoided by having contact with others. Taking part in the community is a fundamental part of health.
- **Empowerment:** safe housing, transport, accessibility, and assistive technology (Robertson & Gibson 2023)..
- **Critical evaluation:** Needs are diverse and interconnected. Personalisation and holistic assessment are vital for effective support.



Challenges

Digital exclusion — Many older adults lack devices, internet access, confidence, accessible design or language support; reducing exclusion remains essential (Wale et al., 2025).

- Chronic conditions, mobility restrictions (Rietkerk et al., 2019).
- Social isolation and loneliness have adverse consequences for mental health and physical health (Allen & Burns, 2022).
- Independence is restricted by environmental barriers: unsafe housing and transport limitations and digital exclusion (Williams & Kirkbride, 2025). A lack of opportunities and confidence also plays a part in ageism and in access to support (Ray, 2020).

The effectiveness of UK Approaches and Interventions

Wellbeing, choice and independence are key to the UK policies, including the Care Act 2014 (DHSC, 2021).

Falls prevention, reablement, social prescribing and integrated care models have been shown to improve rates of mobility and reduce hospital admissions, for example (LGA, 2023; NICE, 2022)

Barriers to Independence

Health Barriers

Chronic conditions and mobility restrictions. (Rietkerk et al., 2019)

Environmental Barriers

- Inadequate housing, restricted mobility and digital exclusion (Williams & Kirkbride, 2025).

System Barriers

- Limited staffing and resources affect service effectiveness (Oliver, 2021).
- Access is restricted by long waiting lists and regional inequalities (NHS England, 2023).
- There is also limited engagement due to ageism (Ray, 2020) and low confidence.

Relevant Theories

- Person-centred care theory: this is based on the needs and preferences of the individual (SCIE, 2023).
- Biopsychosocial model: highlights the importance of physical, psychological and social factors (CQC, 2023).

Relevant Policies

- Care Act 2014: Promotes support and person-centred care; insufficient money and workers to employ (DHSC, 2021; CQC, 2023).
- Mental Capacity Act 2005: Values independence and reinforces decision-making; is efficient while the workforce is constantly instructed (CQC, 2023).

Recommendations

- Build capacity within the workforce;
- increase access to reablement;
- increase social prescribing;
- enhance Mental Capacity Act training;
- address inequalities across the region;
- increase digital inclusion.
- Focus on the community

Conclusion

Older adults deal with a mix of challenges not limited to health concerns; they are also up against digital hurdles, environmental issues, and complicated systems. That's not just tough; it gets in the way of real independence and feeling well. If we want older people to thrive, we must break down these bigger barriers.

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