
MENTAL HEALTH
AND DEVELOPMENT
IN LATER LIFE
(ECAP6005)



Dementia Care and Provision for the Elderly in Wales

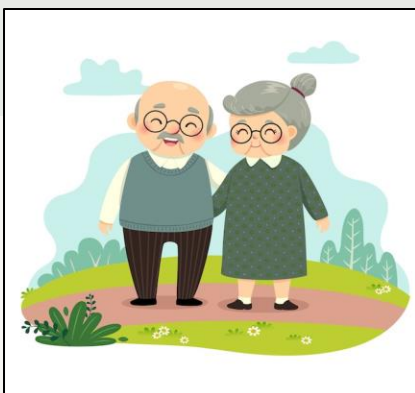
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OVERVIEW

This portfolio is split into two parts, the first part demonstrates three initiatives available in Wales for the elderly with Dementia, detailing 1. Me, Myself and I, 2. Ty-Golau and 3. Ty-Hapus. Including their background, aims and activities they provide.

This is followed by part two, which is an essay on the impact dementia has on an individual and those that care for them, supported by empirical research.





Part 1 : Initiatives available to support the elderly with dementia in Wales



ME, MYSELF & I



Me, Myself & I

Background and what they provide

The Me, Myself and I charity is based in Neath, Port Talbot and began in 2013. It provides different social opportunities to enhance



connection, reassurance and emotional support for people and families living with dementia. The charity offers day breaks, friendship activities and community care programs through their companionship services (charity shop to raise funds for activities, social events to promote connection and training and employment programs to promote awareness about dementia) in a welcoming and friendly community.

Goal and Benefits

The goal of the charity is to provide all adults with all kinds of abilities an equal opportunity to access services, advice and information and feel connected and accepted. All services are continuous with a core rationale of "People Helping People" being demonstrated in everything they do, meaning everyone helps each other with no discrimination, promoting fulfilling lives.

The benefits of the charity are widespread, due to the various aspects that they provide, they strengthen problem solving skills, social skills and increase friendships, which are all key principles in evidently slowing the progression of dementia (Maki, et al.,2020).

ME, MYSELF & I

DAY BREAKS



Half day (£40 pp) and full day breaks (£60 pp) currently being held on a Tuesday and Thursday. Including meals, drinks, socialisation and care

At Briton Ferry, Me, Myself and I provides half or full day breaks to encourage connectiveness and relaxation. Delivering personalised service which are tailored to individual needs. With access to hot and cold homemade meals and drinks, quizzes and sing-alongs. However, there is the option to relax with friends in a sofa room instead.



According to Paggetti et al. (2025) encouraging the elderly to do quizzes promotes cognitive stimulation and contributes to the maintenance of problem-solving skills and social interaction which is often slowed by dementia. Allowing a sense of accomplishment and engagement in a fun, non-pressurising scenario.



"I look forward to a Thursday, I get to see my friends and I love the homemade cakes we have" Mrs C

ME, MYSELF & I

Friendship groups

The friendship groups with Me, Myself and I are held in Briton Ferry , Tuesday-Thursday, every morning (10.30am-12.30pm) and afternoon (2.00pm - 4.00pm).

Some of the activities included involve :

- Pool and Games
- Art and Crafts
- Cooking
- Dancing and Singing
- Games and Quizzes
- Bingo
- Bowls

Costing £6,
including
bottomless drinks
and snacks



Providing an opportunity to meet new friends and enjoy an afternoon of activities. Beyond cognitive benefits, these activities promote emotional well-being and self-expression. Arts and crafts are characterised by being a hands-on approach which contributes to the maintenance of fine Motor skills. The tactile and visual elements in crafting activities evoke sensory memory, heightening self-esteem and sense of accomplishment. Aiding quality of life of those living with dementia (Robertson, 2021).



ME, MYSELF & I

Benefits of the 'Me, Myself and I' activities

Benefits of cooking with those with dementia

Cooking with individuals with dementia grants several benefits for their well-being. It importantly stimulates various senses through being a tactile activity (smell, touch, taste) which keeps the brain engaged in the activity (Jakob and Collier, 2017). Further strengthening neural connections by following instructions, gaining a sense of accomplishment and feeling fulfilled (Majlesi et al., 2016).

Benefits of quizzes

Quizzes benefit a range of cognitive functions in those with dementia (Webb et al., 2020). Improving their memory and recall skills by also strengthening neural activity in the brain which evidently slows down cognitive decline (Gates et al., 2011).

Benefits of bingo

Encourages levels of concentration, alertness and engagement to the task at hand. Getting involved in social interaction, decreasing loneliness and isolation. Gaining a sense of accomplishment and belonging while increasing well-being. (Sobel, 2001).

Benefits of dancing/exercise

Dancing is proven to improve coordination (Mabire et al., 2019) increase the mood of those with dementia by boosting serotonin and decreasing anxiety and stress (H'luz, 2023). Enhancing cognitive function by following instructions and copying others, engaging with others also improves their social skills (Woods et al., 2023).

Ty-Golau is a charity based in Kidwelly, Carmarthenshire. Working with individuals with dementia type illnesses and memory loss. Offering a wide range of mental stimulating activities.



Activities include:

- Reminiscence Therapy
- Reality Orientation
- Themed Quizzes
- Sing-a-longs
- Life Story work
- Exercise and Relaxation
- Music and Movement

Costing £5 per session (including drinks). Family and carers pay £1 for tea/coffee and biscuits.

All activities have been chosen to promote cognitive stimulation which has been demonstrated to slow down the aging process, especially in those with dementia. Asking individuals to reminisce on their past and thinking of the present improves overall well-being and improve general cognitive long-term function by re-visiting past and present memories.



Improving memory through slightly challenging the brain stimulates brain plasticity and the ability for the brain to adapt to new connections more efficiently. Improves attention and social interaction which both are both principles which can aid the management of dementia.

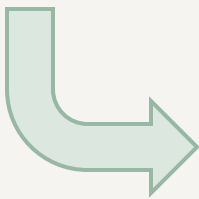
TY – GOLAU

Typical session example

To begin, individuals are welcomed by refreshments, cake and biscuits. Followed by a reality orientation stage, this examines the extent service users know information about the present day, place, weather and season.



Secondly, the session is followed by a memory game or quiz such as Kim's game (items are shown and then covered to test recall skills at the end of the session and busy picture tests.



Thirdly, this is a reminiscence stage. With regular visits from local schools, it helps the elderly recall their past. This is done through several topics which cover school days, famous faces, music and royal family recall.

This is followed by a memory tray activity or memory picture, to test how many items can be remembered at the end of the session which progresses to chair exercises and relaxation to music.



To conclude the session, everyone is thanked for their cooperation and can take part in a sing-a-long to the Ty-Golau theme song, short prayer of blessing and short discussions about the session (thoughts and improvements from those that took part).



Benefits of activities at Ty-Golau for Dementia



Reminiscence Therapy

This type of therapy uses memories/experiences to stimulate engagement. This can be done using objects or photos to evoke conversation. This can strengthen relationships with others, encourage cognitive neural connections and increase self-esteem (Woods et al., 2018).

Reality Orientation

This involves providing an individual with information about their surroundings – but more precisely minor details. Including time, place and the people around. For an individual with Dementia, this enhances their understanding of what is around them and can aid memory decline and decrease confusion (Camargo et al., 2019).

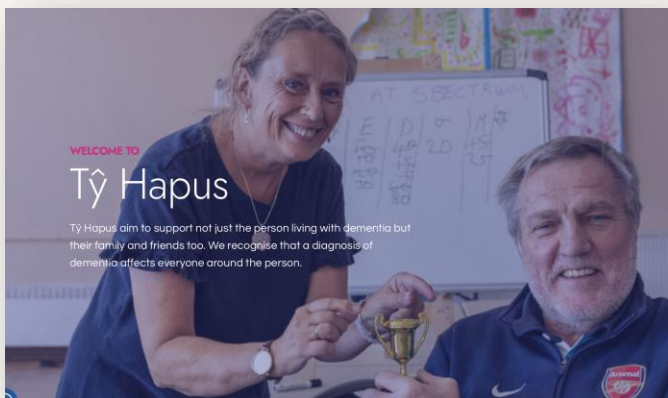
Life story work

This includes documenting the life of an individual and their past, current and future aspirations. This keeps a record of their lives and enhances a sense of identity, improves understanding of self and from others. Facilitates memory retrieval and the aid of stronger social connections (McKeown et al., 2010).

Music

Music grants many benefits for those with Dementia, especially if they find difficulty expressing themselves verbally. It can reduce anxiety and stress, improves mood and overall well-being (Baird & Samson, 2015).

Ty - Hapus



Ty Hapus (or happy house in English) is a registered charity based in Barry in the Vale of Glamorgan, although also run services in Cardiff. They aim to support those impacted by Dementia and their families.

Providing respite care in a homely and comforting environment, where individuals can take part in activities such as singing, chatting to others or purely relax. Themed events, lunches and sporting activities take part in their lounge and garden areas, as well as doing day trips to parks, cafes and museums nearby.



They also offer other activities for those that prefer to be kept busier such as walking, fishing and exercises with music. Day services are available in the Sbectrwm Centre in Fairwater, Cardiff. There is also six free counselling sessions available for family and friends of those living with dementia with a third year degree student of the University of South Wales.



The charity importantly gets to know all individuals involved to tailor the correct support to their individual needs. They also ensure that all dementia support meets local and national government standards of care.

Within the charities support program

Social interaction and cognitively stimulating activities with active engagement are key principles in the support carried out by the charity. Using local amenities to increase a sense of belonging for the individuals also.

The cost

While the charity is a free service, a donation of £15 a day contributes to amenities such as drinks and food and activities which require other funds. This also contributes to transport and admission to other venues. However, Ty-Hapus is a voluntary organisation with unsalaried volunteers.

Links to elsewhere

The charity works closely with other health and social care organisations to provide the correct and secure dementia care. With links to the Counselling and Psychotherapy departments at the University of South Wales.



Part 2 : The impact Dementia has on the individual and/or those who care for them

The impact Dementia has on the individual and their caregivers

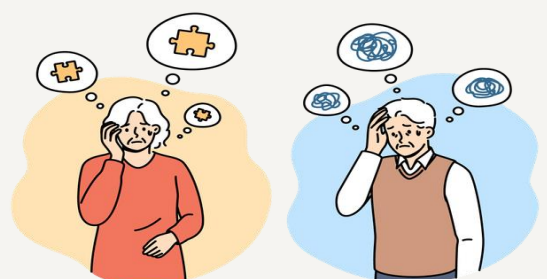
Dementia is a progressive, neurodegenerative condition which is a collective phrase used to express a decline in cognitive abilities (Fymat, 2019). While it is commonly associated with old age, it can happen at earlier stages of life and can impact aspects far beyond biological alterations (Dziechciarz & Filip, 2014). It presents impairments in memory, problem-solving, language, judgement and changes to personality, which can gradually interfere with daily functioning (Cipriani et al., 2020). According to the Alzheimer's Society, almost one million people in the UK have dementia (1 in 11 people over the age of 65) and it is estimated that there is 55 million people worldwide, with others awaiting a screening (Pathak, 2019). This essay will critically discuss the impact dementia has on an individual and those who care for them.

There are several types of dementia, including Alzheimer's Disease, Vascular and Lewy Body Dementia to name a few, that all impact the brain and the individual in different ways (Karantzoulis & Galvin, 2011). The phrase is defined as a gradual loss of self, especially during the earlier stages, which usually consists of gradual memory loss or confusion (Adams et al., 2013) but as it progresses this decline becomes more salient, which leads to a loss of independence or dependence on others (Cipriani et al., 2020).

Dependence is heightened when the dementia has impacted an individual's cognitive abilities to successfully conduct problem solving, use language and carry out good judgement. As well as keeping on top of medication, finances and everyday tasks. The recognition and understanding of risks decreases which entails greater importance to those who care for them to ensure they are safe and healthy (reference). While dementia is usually associated with memory loss alone, there is other factors such as impairments with mood and behaviour too (Henskens et al., 2019) which are often misunderstood, especially if an individual becomes particularly aggressive (James and Jackman, 2017).

While this behaviour is uncontrollable, it can lead to higher levels of anxiety, depression and agitation for the individual (Rapaport et al., 2018) particularly during the earlier stages of the progression, while they are more conscious of their decline (Summers & Saunders, 2012). This was demonstrated in a study by Steeman et al. (2006) in which the earlier stages of dementia contributed to a decrease in quality of life and emotional distress. Particularly highlighting feelings of helplessness and frustration. The earlier stages involve issues with recognition, memory of events, disorientation and false belief of the reality around them (Pathak, 2019). Causing embarrassment and can progress into isolation. Especially as communication gets more difficult (Riley et al., 2014). However, given the right support an individual can continue to express happiness and feel a sense of belonging while this progression is happening (Maki et al., 2020).

While dementia can progress at different frequencies, if it is fast paced the subconscious changes can be psychologically challenging (Evans, 2008). This can increase the likelihood of an individual struggling with their daily functioning and mental health. Is important to consider that studying someone with progressed dementia comes with ethical and scientific challenges. Especially when it comes to memory as they may forget the task at hand, providing consent and not remember what they have agreed to do. Yet it is important that the dignity and respect for the individual remains throughout their care, throughout all stages of the progression.



In a systematic review, Caddell and Clare (2010) investigated the impact on the self and identity of those with dementia. Which detailed some evidence of little persistence of identity during the mild and severe stages of illness; however, many demonstrated a worsening in identity the more dementia progressed. In favour, Van Gennip et al. (2016) investigated how dementia affects personal dignity, through interviews with fourteen individuals with mild-moderate dementia, results similarly indicated that participants felt reasonably dignified, although decline in dignity was associated with cognitive impairments and diminished autonomy. However, was dependant on the social context of the individual. More recently. Scott (2022) conducted interviews with twelve women exploring the impact of dementia on social identity. There was a wide-ranging impact on identity and a higher loss of self-esteem, sadness and anger.

Furthermore, the individual's personal safety can become particularly alarming as dementia progresses, this means they require constant supervision and the correct support. Physically, dementia employs a higher risk of falls and increased infection tendency, gradually impacting an individual's performance of everyday tasks (Oksanen and Soni, 2015). In the later stages of the progression, an individual may find it harder to keep on top of personal hygiene, eating or drinking, increasing dependency on others (Murphy et al., 2021). Typically, close relatives, children or spouses become their new primary informal caregivers. While this new role is driven by a loving commitment to help the individual, it often leads the caregiver to experience several challenges, such as higher levels of stress, burnout and loss of employment if they've stopped working to become a full-time carer, which can consequently mean a loss of more income, especially if there's a lack of financial support and heavy medical costs. However, given the right support and respite resources, this transition can strengthen family bonds and make it a lot easier for the caregiver, although harder for lower-income communities.

La Fontaine and Oyeboode (2014) investigated the impact of family relationships on those with dementia through a thematic synthesis. Evidently presenting that they are important and that the individuals with these strong relationships displayed higher well-being and facilitated support. On the other hand, Pradana (2022) presented that those with dementia with a lack of support, evidently struggled a lot more. Similarly, both Kimura et al. (2015) and Goren et al. (2016) studied the impact of caring for someone with dementia. Kimura focused upon the psychological impact through semi-structured interviews which resulted in cares experiencing a poor emotional and social impact, as well as a reduction of work. Goren gathered similar results with productivity impairment and higher health risks. However, the most important similarity these two studies have is that they both requested the need for more support for caregivers of those with dementia.

More recently, Lindeza et al. (2020) stated that caregivers play a major role in providing all the support and care in daily activities. Investigating the perceptions of the caregivers on the positive and negative aspects of caring through a systematic review. The positives about caring ranged from personal accomplishment and strengthened relationships given that it was enhanced with good medical support. However, the care was emotionally challenging, and the costs of dementia care caused financial strain.



Another point of focus of the impact dementia has on caregivers is the experience of grief, while witnessing and dealing with the gradual decline of the individual and knowing that they cannot help (Chan et al., 2013). Known as an 'ambiguous loss' which can be psychologically exhausting (Pauline and Boss, 2009). This can also consequently be followed by an impact to mental health, with a higher risk of depression, sleep deprivation (McCurry et al., 2007) and neglecting their own health to look after someone else. Perrin et al. (2014) investigated health related quality of life and mental health in dementia caregivers. There was evidently higher caregiver quality of life related to better mental health although social functioning was negatively related to depression. There was a heightened risk of poor health outcomes, especially if health is not prioritised.

Socially, the caregiver can also become isolated by no longer seeing friends or family, or doing hobbies by prioritising this care, which in turn can lead to a loss of identity, freedom and psychological burden (Vasileiou et al., 2017). In a study by Srivastava et al. (2016) investigated burden and quality of life of caregivers of patients with dementia. 24 caregivers – all caregivers felt mild to moderate level of burden with lower physical and psychological correlation. Similarly, to Kimura et al. (2015) and Goren et al. (2016) states that more support will decrease the likelihood of burden.

However, recent research has developed the evidence of dementia prevention and early intervention and how it can benefit individuals with dementia (Robinson et al., 2015). While there is no way to stop the progression, it can be slowed down with prioritising cardiovascular and physical health earlier on in life. As well as remaining mentally active can benefit an individual with dementia. While dementia is consumed by negative associations, it can have a positive impact on an individual such as having deepened and closer relationships with others and enhanced emotional sensitivity, while it impacts everyone in different ways – most people remain the capability to enjoy creativity and interventions such as music therapy which could give an individual a more fulfilling experience through the aging process. However, this doesn't go without saying that it is an unpredictable time and that behavioural changes could happen quickly.

To conclude, dementia can have an extensive impact on an individual and those that care for them. Both cognitively and physically, it is one of the most heartbreaking diseases to deal with and to care for. Especially when witnessing a progressive and incurable decline. Though with secure support it can be positively managed and cared for.



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Ai – Acknowledgments

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to research. I used

the prompt(s):

1. The impact of Dementia on an individual
2. The impact of Dementia on the caregiver
3. Dementia Care

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated text as my own work. I confirm I Alisha Phillips

have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used before, and after the use of AI tools which I may be asked to provide in evidence.