

The Perspectives of People Living with Dementia on Enablement Services at Home

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Introduction/objective: UK Government policies emphasize the need to support PwD to live independently and improve their quality of life in own home environment. Social Services Homecare Enablement teams provide a time-limited intensive intervention which aims to improve service users' ability so as to prevent them from prematurely going into care. Occupational therapists play a crucial role in the implementation of homecare enablement in dementia care. Knowledge about the benefit of such services is fragmented. This study aimed at exploring PwD's experience.

Method: Following research governance and ethical approval, up to 20 PwD were invited to take part in two semi-structured interviews via local social services enablement teams. Overall findings from initial interviews were taken back to the participants at the follow-up interviews for member check. Interviews focused on PwDs' perception of what Enablement services meant to them including the process, expectations, success, barriers and feelings. Interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed and analyzed using grounded theory.

Results: Successful factors of enablement services would be discussed. A wide-range of strategies adopted by PwD included exercising choice and agency, maintaining meaningful routine, enhancing interdependency, taking positive risks, keeping healthy, family support, getting out and about. Barriers included constant challenges within the context of uncertainty, fragmented services and emotionally drained.

Conclusion: The findings provided deeper insight into the process of enablement from the users' perspectives. This has implications for occupational therapists to develop a realistic enabling intervention framework and to deliver the best possible support to PwD at homes, despite progressive decline in cognitive function.