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IMPACT OF DEMENTIA CARE HOME LEARNING COMMUNITY IN DEMENTIA CARE HOMES IN TORBAY, DEVON, UK

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Background: South Devon, UK, has 196 care homes with a population of 296,000 and 1 in 8 homes were rated poor by the Care Quality Commission in 2010. The 2009 SouthWest Dementia Partnership study identified the quality of leadership, clarity of role for staff, the quality of person-centred care, care planning, environment and meaningful activity as the key differences between poor and excellent homes. Consultative and collaborative interventions have been shown to improve the quality of life for residents (Alzheimer's Society, 2008).

Objectives: The Dementia Care Home Learning Community (DCHLC) project aims to

- improve the quality of care in residential homes, and
- reduce unplanned (emergency) hospital admissions.

Methods: The DCHLC carried out the following interventions in 13 intervention sites (compared with 12 control sites that received regular visits):

- Dementia learning facilitators trained a dementia champion.
- All the staff received a 4-h core dementia awareness training and 3 h of 'Aspiring to make a difference' sessions in appreciative inquiry with 'plan, do, study, act' (PDSA) cycles.
- The dementia champions participated in additional learning modules.

Findings: Independent evaluation by Plymouth University reported

- Most participants (dementia champions) and carers reported satisfaction.

- The intervention site residents reported higher quality of life in quality of life in late-stage dementia (QUALID) on three scales (compared with control sites).
- A distinctive feature was the dementia champions sustained PDSA activity beyond the first cycle.

Conclusions: The DCHLC project won the BMJ Dementia Team of the Year 2015 award to improve quality and safety of people with dementia in care homes by improving the skills and self-confidence of staff and the satisfaction of carers.

Reference

Alzheimer's Society (2008)