

The Home Based Memory Rehabilitation Programme in dementia – an update on the Occupational Therapy improvement journey in Scotland

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Background

Scotland's Allied Health Professional (AHP) Dementia Policy Connecting People, Connecting Support (Alzheimer Scotland, 2017) includes a key ambition around enhanced access for people living with dementia (plwd) to AHP led specialist interventions. Another key ambition is around innovation, improvement and research. Quality Improvement is a key priority for the Occupational Therapy profession in order to continue to demonstrate impact and value.

The Home Based Memory Rehabilitation (HBMR) Programme (McGrath, 2009) is an evidence based Occupational Therapy led intervention in post diagnostic support in dementia. HBMR had been piloted in one Board Area/partnership in Scotland and positive outcomes achieved. However the problem was that plwd were not receiving equitable access to Occupational Therapy within the PDS period (as evidenced by a national scoping exercise).



Aim

Improve the care and experience of people living with dementia and their carers by March 2019 by improving their access to a specialist Occupational Therapy post diagnostic intervention.

Methods/Intervention

A strategic partnership was formed between Alzheimer Scotland, Queen Margaret University and NHS Dumfries & Galloway (original test site). Occupational Therapy teams from across Scotland were invited to participate and the project was formally launched. A communication plan was agreed and each site was supported with improvement methodology.

- A standard set of outcome measures were agreed collaboratively
- Sites were provided with HBMR resources (developed by the original site).
- Engagement with potential referrers sharing original pilot outcomes
- Creation of a range of spaces to develop, maintain and facilitate engagement including webex, monthly teleconferences, listserve and a workshop.

Measurement of Improvement

12 out of 14 Board Area/Partnerships signed up to the HBMR project. Communication structures ensured shared decision making and problem solving, engagement increased as reflected in this graph.



Data continues to reflect an increase in use of memory strategies and decrease in reported everyday memory problems. This supports the message that people living with dementia CAN learn and maintain new skills.

Anecdotal evidence that people living with dementia are now being referred to Occupational Therapy earlier in their diagnosis:

“having a clear, defined contribution to PDS enabled OT the service to have conversations with potential referrers about early referral. HBMR helped them understand how and when OT might have a role in plwd’s journey.”

Emotional Touchpoints for gathering person’s experience:

“all these things...the routines...have helped me tremendously and given me the confidence to cope”

Case Studies for sharing impact:

“Since completing the programme, however, they have booked to go to France for three months and report feeling a lot more confident about going on this trip again since learning about different strategies that could help support them.”

Clinician’s have been proud to be involved in the project and have embraced the improvement approach:

“This programme puts the focus back on what the individual can do, their remaining skills, and not on what they are no longer able to do..... It has been an educational and exciting process being part of the wider occupational therapy community piloting this on a national level.”

Next Steps

13 Board Area/Partnerships are signed up to HBMR Phase 2 Project

HBMR Resources have been updated based on feedback from people living with dementia and the Clinicians involved. These are undergoing a rapid cycle of testing before any additional changes and finalisation of materials.

Electronic resource system created and being tested with aim of improving individual tailoring and person centredness

Suite of outcome measures have reviewed and and this is ongoing. The project is informing International Consortium of Health Outcome Measures (ICHOM) Dementia Standard set

Continuing to build on innovative partnerships with occupational therapists nationally and sharing impact of HBMR internationally.

Key Messages

Pay attention to variation in Service models when implementing change on a large scale

Regular communication is vital and has enabled strong relationships with a committed team.

“Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together.....is success.” Henry Ford

References

Alzheimer Scotland 2017 Connecting People, Connecting Support. Transforming the contribution of allied health professionals in dementia in Scotland 2017-2020 www.alzscot.org/ahp
McGrath M and Passmore P (2009) Home-based memory rehabilitation programme for persons with mild dementia. Irish Journal of Medical Science 178 (Suppl 8)