

Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme



A partnership between
Alzheimer Scotland and Glasgow Life

Project Evaluation: December 2014

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Executive summary

Background and rationale

Over 90,000 people in Scotland are estimated to have some form of dementia and, if trends continue, this figure is expected to double within a generation as our population ages. This not only affects the people with the illness, it also impacts on their partners, spouses, families, friends and neighbours who care for them.

Over 7,000 people across Glasgow have dementia. If each of those people has at least one person who cares for them, it means a minimum of 14,000 Glaswegians are directly affected by the disease.

Physical activity and dementia

Promoting physical activity is a key part of the Scottish Government's Reshaping Care for

Older People initiative; it has enormous positive impact, helping older people maintain good physical and mental health and improving their quality of life. The World Health Organization defines active ageing as "the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age."¹

Although research is continuing, there is no known cure for dementia and current drug treatments have limited impact, although they do help some people manage symptoms for a while. Research is also continuing into ways of preventing people developing dementia in the first place, or at least reducing their risk or delaying the onset of the illness. While physical activity does not necessarily prevent dementia there is growing evidence to suggest it may help towards reducing people's risk of developing dementia.

Maintaining community connections

People with dementia and their carers often lose social contact and can experience

detachment from mainstream community life. Encouraging people living with dementia, their families and carers to remain connected to their communities is a key objective of both Alzheimer Scotland and Glasgow Life.

Project objective

Alzheimer Scotland sought to take advantage of the high profile of the forthcoming

Commonwealth Games to work in partnership with Glasgow Life. The objective was to encourage leisure centre activities to be more dementia-friendly and increase opportunities for people with dementia, their families and carers to participate in sport or healthy activities. Glasgow Life already had an Active Living Programme for people over the age of 50; the Live Active Scheme with direct referrals from GPs, nurses and physiotherapists; and Silver Deal Active which provided exercise and arts classes to Glasgow Housing Associations, Sheltered and Very Sheltered Housing Complexes (citywide) on a weekly basis.

¹ World Health Organization, 2002. Active Ageing: A Policy Framework. Geneva: WHO.

Project aims

Enable activity programmes for older people to be dementia-friendly
Introduce dementia training to key Glasgow Life staff using the Promoting Excellence Framework.²

Provide guidance and advice on how to make facilities more dementia-friendly

Assist managers and staff in centres to consider ways to ensure a dementia-friendly environment.

Ensure agreed referrals pathways are in place from post-diagnostic teams/ Link Workers to activity programmes

Work with the Link Workers, the Community Older People's Mental Health teams and Dementia Advisors to promote referrals and ensure people diagnosed with dementia are made aware of Glasgow Life programmes.

The Project received one year's funding via the Reshaping Care for Older People Change Fund. A Dementia Activity and Training Coordinator was recruited, and successful collaborative working, combined with increased knowledge, has resulted in a series of recommendations to ensure that people with dementia, their carers and families will continue to use Glasgow Life sports facilities. In addition, a case for further development across other Glasgow Life departments is made.

The Langside and Linn Local Community Planning Partnership Board also awarded funding of £16,860 to fund coaching staff and venue costs for two years.

Outcomes

The Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme, delivered in the south of Glasgow, has made a difference to people living with dementia and their families and carers. Such initiatives succeed in reducing the stigma of dementia by using community facilities and venues, and integrating people with dementia into them.

Results suggest exercise, combined with fun activities, is an effective intervention and empowers people to strive towards individual active ageing goals.

Glasgow Life is achieving a successful and sustainable cultural shift, and greater awareness of dementia. Coaches report feeling more confident in supporting people with dementia in classes and activities.

Glasgow Life has demonstrated a real commitment to improving the understanding of dementia, and has included Promoting Excellence training material in their corporate training programme. There is a plan to deliver 'Dementia Informed' training to staff in each sector.

² Scottish Social Services Council and NHS Education for Scotland, 2011. Promoting excellence: a framework for all health and social services staff working with people with dementia, their families and carers. Edinburgh: Scottish Government.

Recommendations

The Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme was a year of intensive and successful partnership working in three leisure centres in the south of Glasgow, with engagement from many staff in Glasgow Life and the development of activities and groups for people with dementia and their carers.

Results suggest shorter exercise sessions, combined with fun activities and opportunities for peer support, is an effective intervention and empowers people to strive towards individual active ageing goals. A combination of having some bespoke groups for people affected by dementia, plus a greater understanding of the illness by staff running the wider programme aimed at older people, is likely to maximise the opportunities for people as they progress through the illness.

There is scope for further development within the south of the city, and to extend the model beyond sporting venues to other sectors across Glasgow Life. The project coordinator has received numerous enquiries as to whether the project could be rolled out further.

These suggestions are worth further exploration in the longer term; in the short to medium term Alzheimer Scotland would hope Glasgow Life will continue to ensure dementia remains a priority and will therefore be committed to supporting a significant group of people living in Glasgow.

Throughout the project all Glasgow Life staff were extremely co-operative and engaged and it would be hard to find a better example of partnership working. However, if funding were available to roll out the project, it has been recommended that the Leisure team would take the lead.

More specific recommendations are as follows:

Enabling activity programmes for older people to be dementia-friendly

1. Dementia training to be mandatory for all customer-facing staff, using training at the 'Dementia Informed' level of the Promoting Excellence Framework as part of induction for all staff and included in personal learning plans.
2. Training at the 'Dementia Skilled' level of the Promoting Excellence Framework for key staff such as Glasgow Life trainers and Good Move advisers.
3. Consider rolling out appropriate training to Glasgow Life.

Providing guidance and advice on how to make facilities more dementia-friendly.

4. Continue with a number of bespoke groups in appropriately identified leisure centres, including the bowling group in Castlemilk
5. Design of bespoke groups to be dementia-friendly – short sessions, less structure, social support.

6. Consider having 'Dementia Champions' in each sector.
7. Explore funding options for groups, such as the bowling group in Castlemilk and the Dementia-Friendly Easy Exercise classes in Gorbals, beyond the two years of Langside and Linn Local Community Planning Partnership Board funds.
8. Establish an enduring relationship with Alzheimer Scotland to ensure literature is supplied to leisure centres and Dementia Advisors assist with agreed groups.
9. Ensure re-branding includes principles of good design. This includes signage, seating and flooring.

Institute agreed referral pathways from post-diagnostic teams/Link Workers to activity programmes.

10. All staff in NHS Community Older People's Mental Health Teams to receive information about referral to Good Move.
11. Dementia training for Good Move advisors.



Linda Tod, Dementia Activity and Training Coordinator, Alzheimer Scotland & Frances McSorley, Glasgow Life Cultural Services Officer, South Area Team.

Introduction

By 2031, the number of people in Scotland aged over 65 is projected to increase by 62 per cent. The number of people aged 75 and over is set to increase by 75 per cent between 2004 and 2031, and for the over 85 age group the expectation is a projected 144 per cent increase.³

This will bring with it a marked rise in the number of people with long term conditions, particularly dementia, which is set to double over the next 20 years from the current estimate of 90,000.

Older adults who take part in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and cognitive function. Some physical activity is better than none, and more physical activity (within the ability of each individual) provides greater health benefits. Recent research also suggests that regular physical activity may reduce the risk of developing dementia and limit the effect of some symptoms for those already diagnosed.

The Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme was launched as a year-long partnership with Glasgow City Council's Glasgow Life, to provide support and advice for those affected by dementia. The aim of the project was to encourage more people with dementia and their carers to use leisure facilities by making them more dementia-friendly, achieving this through training, listening to people using groups and classes, and providing a bespoke programme of dementia-friendly leisure activities aimed at integrating people living with dementia and their carers into Glasgow Life exercise classes.

The project commenced with the ethos of ensuring people with dementia and carers would have an opportunity to feed back on the programmes and contribute to improvements.

The initial idea for a partnership project between Glasgow Life and Alzheimer Scotland came from a meeting with Commonwealth Games and Legacy Manager, Lawrence O'Neill.

The Langside and Linn Local Community Planning Partnership Board awarded funding of £8,430 per year for two years (total £16,860) to fund coaching staff and venue costs.

With the support of the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Older People's Planning Programme Group, Alzheimer Scotland made a successful bid to the Reshaping Care for Older People's Change Fund to create a position for a Dementia Activity and Training Coordinator whose role was to improve the accessibility of sporting venues for older people, in particular those with dementia and their carers. The project was a pilot and therefore concentrated on development and learning in the south of the city.

³ Long-Term Conditions Alliance Scotland, 2012. PATH to active ageing: promoting the benefits of physical activity for older people. Sharing Learning and Knowledge in Scotland in the European Year for Active Ageing 2012. Glasgow: LTCAS. p5.

⁴ Department of Health, Physical Activity, Health Improvement and Protection, 2011. Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers. London: Department of Health.

The Change Fund awarded £38,000 to fund the Dementia Activity and Training Coordinator post which Alzheimer Scotland filled in November 2013. A Steering Group was formed, and three Glasgow Life leisure facilities in the south of the city were chosen as appropriate to work with. The Coordinator worked in close contact with the Steering Group to deliver the aims of the project.

The project was awarded the use of the Commonwealth Games branding and logo, and this enabled the project to have a strong identity from the beginning.

Taking the project forward

Meetings took place with Glasgow Life to agree partnership working and to begin to identify training requirements for staff.

The group identified the need to liaise closely with Community Older People's Mental Health Teams, Alzheimer Scotland Link Workers, Dementia Advisors and council colleagues to make services more accessible to people living with dementia and their carers.

Before commencing with the pilot groups, the Coordinator consulted with younger persons living with dementia who attend day opportunities at Alzheimer Scotland. After participating in 15-minute taster sessions, they agreed to be part of the pilot class at the Glasgow Club Gorbals.

The facilities chosen for the pilot project were: Glasgow Club Gorbals, Glasgow Club Castlemilk, and Glasgow Club Bellahouston. Health walks with starting points at Castlemilk Community Centre, Pollok Park and Queens Park were also included.

A programme of staff training was rolled out across the three leisure centres in the south of Glasgow. Throughout the year of the Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme there was close collaborative work between Glasgow Life Area Teams, Glasgow Life Sport, Glasgow City Council Cordia Department and Alzheimer Scotland. Identifying and involving relevant teams ensured that the project training was marketed and delivered locally to the appropriate frontline staff, i.e. receptionists, leisure attendants, sports coaches and catering staff.

Various methods were used to publicise the project, including leaflets, lunch clubs, taster sessions, key link workers, and through a local memory clinic for people recently diagnosed with dementia.

Processes were already in place for GPs, nurses and physiotherapists to make direct referrals for specific programmes of activity and discussions were started to see how these established referral routes could include older people's mental health teams.



Glasgowlife

Come along with your carer/friend/family
and sample our

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

for you to enjoy together.



**Glasgow Club Gorbals &
Glasgow Club Bellahouston**
Swimming for 60+

Glasgow Club Castlemilk
Indoor Bowling, Easy
Exercise, Chair Aerobics

**Govanhill Neighbourhood
Centre**
Easy Exercise

**Castlemilk Community
Centre, Pollok Park &
Queens Park**

Health Walks (starting points).
Sessions are free at present but
may be subject to change.

These are just a few of the
activities you may enjoy, for
further details please contact:

Linda Tod 0141 418 3930
Dementia Activity Co-ordinator
Alzheimer Scotland

Polly Mark 0141 410 1076
Dementia Advisor
Alzheimer Scotland



Training

By arrangement with the managers of the relevant leisure centres, the Dementia Training and Activity Coordinator delivered 'Dementia Informed' training to all staff on site, including coaches, leisure attendants, catering staff and receptionists. Over 200 staff were trained.

The training was designed using the Promoting Excellence Framework, a programme of different levels of training designed by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) for staff working with people with dementia, their families and carers, enabling staff to learn how to provide a suitable and safe environment for people who have cognitive impairment.

Training was delivered to groups of staff carrying out the same activities to encourage sharing of experience and ideas. For example, after the Health Walk Development Officer, Heather MacLeod (Glasgow Life) met the Dementia Training and Activity Coordinator, she informed the health walk instructors about the Dementia Informed training and a session was arranged. The session provided instructors with a greater understanding of the condition, and gave practical advice on how to support a person with dementia on walks.

"The training was very valuable in opening our minds to the extent of the issue, and helped us to understand the challenges and also how positive people can be. One of the issues that was important to us as walk leaders was the importance of a carer being with a walker. We support the whole group, but cannot do one-to-one except in an emergency situation. Recently this was vividly apparent with a difficulty that occurred with a walker who was verbally abusive to his carer and one of the walk leaders. Because of our training we understood that this behaviour was part of the illness."

Valerie, Health Walk Instructor, Queen's Park

'Dementia Informed' training was also delivered to Encore catering staff after discussions to develop the Easy Exercise class as there was a keen desire from this group of staff to be able to welcome people with dementia and their carers into their catering facilities.



Potential barriers, such as signage, menus and overall communication were highlighted. Portable signage and dementia-friendly menus in cafes, which are more suitable for the older eye, were placed in the venues.

A booklet, Helpful Hints and Tips, was developed for staff.

Staff at Glasgow Club, Gorbals presented with Dementia Training Certificates by Linda Tod, Dementia Activity and Training Coordinator, Alzheimer Scotland

Working alongside staff

Throughout the project, the views of people with dementia, carers and staff were sought to ensure an end of year report would capture as much of the lived experience of the project as possible. The following are examples of the rich feedback received.

Vicky (leisure attendant) mentioned an instance of an older lady who attended her exercise group and who distrusted staff when they tried to explain the cost of the class to her. Vicky's concern was that the lady felt members of staff were working together to try to get her to part with her money. After receiving training, Vicky felt more confident in dealing with the problems that might arise, and she now has a better understanding of communication issues.

"The training has really empowered me with a better knowledge of dementia. I didn't know that simple things like prominent signage could make a difference to someone's life."

John, Leisure Attendant, Castlemilk



John, Leisure Attendant at Glasgow Club, Castlemilk receives his Dementia Training certificate from Gemma Wood, Assistant Cluster Manager, Glasgow Life and Coaches Donna and Laura.

Some members of staff explained that they thought dementia meant memory loss only, and were surprised to learn of the other effects.

Staff who have family members affected by dementia felt able to share their personal experience with the group.

After training, the group felt their ability to communicate with people living with dementia would be greatly improved.

"I always thought there was a cure for dementia. I didn't think this illness was progressive."

Stuart, Leisure Attendant, Glasgow Club Gorbals.

Throughout the project, staff were enthusiastic and, by coming together in group sessions, felt able to share their own personal experiences of dementia and how it had affected their own family members, as well as discussing issues arising through work.

“In my job people have to be instructed how to use the equipment, this is part of the induction. If someone has dementia and can’t remember instruction, what should we do?”

Joanne, Coach, Bellahouston

Staff had lots of questions about the condition, which were answered and advice was provided. The staff reported that, after training, they felt they better understood the condition, and were more able to support and make a difference to someone using their venue.



Pilot Group for Music and Movement at Glasgow Club,

Working alongside people with dementia and carers

There were two bespoke groups developed during the year of the project, following consultation with people with dementia and their carers, and a lot of work was undertaken with one of the existing Health Walks programmes to assist them to be more dementia-friendly. The bespoke groups were an Indoor Bowling Group in Castlemilk and a Dementia-Friendly Easy Exercise in the Gorbals. The first bespoke group to be developed was the bowling group.

Indoor Bowling

There was no cost to this activity or any other others except for lunch, as the funding provided by the Langside and Linn Local Community Planning Partnership Board was specifically for venue hire and Glasgow Life staff costs. Due to the popularity of the bowling group it was extended to eight weeks, and then to 10 months. Twenty people, plus three volunteers and the Coordinator attended the group.

Mary is married to Bob and is his carer.

"We are both bowlers, we didn't know anything about this until Alzheimer Scotland told us about it. Our son didn't think there was enough for his dad, and he phoned a helpline. The first time, Bob didn't want to come, and he has no confidence, but now he's on playing every time, it's his day. I come for the company, I can sit and have a blether. Bob doesn't go on the walk because he's too slow, but this is easier for him. It's made a difference to us because he is mixing with people and we can have a blether."

Mary was interviewed at Glasgow Club, Castlemilk



Indoor Bowling at Castlemilk

Health Walks

Eunice is married to Bill and is Bill's carer.

"Normally, I don't like going places, and I came along with gritted teeth. I have gained a lot by coming here because I realise I am not alone. I thought I could just sit here while Bill went the walk. I didn't realise I could go walking too, and I'm enjoying it. We've got walking today, tomorrow Keep Fit and Wednesday, the bowling."

Eunice was interviewed at the Queen's Park Health Walk



Health Walk at Queen's Park

Iain is married to Nancy and is her carer.

"It's the company that's the big one, it influences the rest of the day. Everybody in this group has a different reason for being here, and for the carers, that pulls you out into a wider circle. You're not going to be sitting in the house miserable and lonely, thinking no-one is bothering about us."

Iain was interviewed at the Queen's Park Health Walk.



Dementia-Friendly Easy Exercise

Working closely with a Glasgow Life Vitality instructor, the younger persons' group with a diagnosis of dementia was asked for feedback on physical activity. The group agreed to undertake taster sessions for six weeks, and took part in an exercise session followed by a light lunch. Members of the group attended the Silver Deal seated exercise class, Music and Movement, which is not specifically tailored for people with dementia.

The feedback from the group was that, although they enjoyed the exercise, they had difficulty following the movements at the same pace as other users who do not live with dementia. The regular running time of the class is one hour. The group agreed that the appropriate duration for someone diagnosed with dementia would be 30 minutes. Staff at the Glasgow Club, Gorbals, including the Encore catering staff, were happy to design a class to include 30 minutes of fun activity, followed by a light, healthy lunch and a chance to chat.

" I love dancing, it keeps me active."

Person with diagnosis of dementia at Music and Movement, Glasgow Club, Gorbals

" I like to keep fit and meeting up with old friends and meeting new people has been a treat."

Person with diagnosis of dementia at Music and Movement, Glasgow Club, Gorbals

" Since joining the easy exercise I have met many new people and my blood pressure has improved."

Carer of a person with dementia at Music and Movement, Glasgow Club, Gorbals

Conclusion

The Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme, delivered in the south of Glasgow, has made a difference to people living with dementia and their families and carers. Such initiatives succeed in reducing the stigma of dementia by using community facilities and venues, and integrating people with dementia into them.

Results suggest exercise, combined with fun activities, is an effective intervention and empowers people to strive towards individual active ageing goals.

Encouraging people with dementia to keep active in a variety of ways is healthy but it also helps with maintaining social skills and preventing isolation. It promotes a sense of community connection and enables socialisation with peers.

People referred by Link Workers, Dementia Advisors and others participated in the classes and activities, and others with a dementia diagnosis saw the publicity and simply came to the venue to join in.

Glasgow Life is achieving a successful and sustainable cultural shift, and greater awareness of dementia. Coaches report feeling more confident in supporting people with dementia in classes and activities.

Glasgow Life has demonstrated a real commitment to improving the understanding of dementia, and has included Promoting Excellence training material in their corporate training programme. There is a plan to deliver 'Dementia Informed' training to staff in each sector.

The project has proved to be an excellent example of what positive partnership working, combined with multi-stakeholder engagement, can produce. Many adults living with dementia have been provided with the support and guidance to become involved with the comprehensive sport and activity programme currently on offer from Glasgow Life.

Integrating people living with dementia into exercise activities can take time and care, and it is often carers who provide the necessary one-to-one support. It would be a requirement for a booking process to be in place for access to these classes.

This was achieved by training over 200 frontline sports staff and programme deliverers across three sports centres in the south of Glasgow, including Encore catering staff based at Glasgow Club Gorbals.

The comprehensive staff training which is now on the Glasgow Life Gold training system, the training packs developed by Alzheimer Scotland which are available for sports centre staff, and the Hints and Tips booklet developed from questions asked by the staff themselves, will all ensure that there is a legacy from the programme.

There is still work to do to create lasting pathways for referral and ensure key health, social care and voluntary sector staff are aware of the support available through Good Move. This includes the need to design an appropriate referral form.

Furthermore, this project was confined to the south, although coaches and other staff came from across the city for training, and there is an excellent opportunity to keep this work alive and work with facilities across the city to ensure all are accessible and welcoming for people with dementia, their carers and families.

Alzheimer Scotland and dementia

There are approximately 90,000 people living with dementia in Scotland. As Scotland's leading dementia organisation, Alzheimer Scotland aims to influence change for the benefit of people living with dementia, their families and carers.

The experience of the illness is subjective and unique to each individual. Effectively tackling the symptoms of dementia requires a coordinated range of health and social care interventions. Alzheimer Scotland aims to ensure that the development and delivery of public policies are done so in a person-centred way which respects the rights of people living with dementia, their families and carers.

Glasgow Life

The aims of the Alzheimer Scotland Active Programme are entirely consistent with the Strategic Objectives of Glasgow Life, which are to encourage participation, involvement and engagement in culture and sport for all.

Good Move is a programme bringing together Active Health's six existing programmes, helping raise the profile of the programmes and increasing awareness amongst people who often find it hardest to increase their levels of physical activity. There is a team of trained specialists who can help people to take the next move to access the programmes that are right for them.



Health Walk Leaders with Clyde during the Commonwealth Games

Acknowledgements

The following people had direct input into making the project such a success

From Alzheimer Scotland - Linda Tod, Dementia Training and Activity Coordinator, and Kevin Black, Dementia Advisor.

From Glasgow Life - Frances McSorley, Cultural Services Officer South Area Team, Glasgow Life/Communities; Gemma Wood, Assistant Cluster Manager; Heather MacLeod, Health Walk Development Officer, Glasgow Life Coaches; Encore Catering staff.

Thank you to all the walkers, bowlers and exercisers who took part in the programme. Special thanks to Ian and Nancy, Eunice and Bill, Mary and Bob, and Valerie Kennedy for their time and input; and to Alison Stroak who compiled this report.



2014

A purple banner with a pink bar at the top. The pink bar contains the text "24 HOUR" in white. Below the pink bar, the text "Dementia" is in white, and "Helpline" is in a large, white, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is the Alzheimer Scotland logo. Below the banner, a pink bar contains the text "Freephone 0808 808 3000" and "Email helpline@alzscot.org" in white.

Alzheimer Scotland - Action on Dementia is a company limited by guarantee, registered in Scotland 149069. Recognised as a charity by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, no. SC022315 22 Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh, EH3 7RN 0131 243 1453