

Connecting People, Connecting Support

Transforming the allied health professionals contribution to supporting people living with dementia in Scotland.



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Background

This poster shares the key elements of the policy document "Connecting People, Connecting Support" sharing the visual executive summary. This policy fulfils a specific commitment in Scotland's National Dementia Strategies (2013, 2017), the Active Independent Living Programme (2017) and other ongoing dementia-focused policy initiatives in Scotland.

What is Connecting People, Connecting Support?

Connecting People, Connecting Support is about how allied health professionals (AHPs) in Scotland can improve their support for people with dementia, their families and carers (people living with dementia) to enable them to have positive, fulfilling and independent lives for as long as possible.

Who is Connecting People, Connecting Support for?

Connecting People, Connecting Support will be of interest not only to people living with dementia and practising AHPs, but also integration joint boards, health boards, health and social care managers and practitioners, AHP leaders, social services and the third and independent sector.

Evidence for action

As well as evidence developed through research, Connecting People, Connecting Support draws heavily on evidence collected by Alzheimer Scotland from people living with dementia, a scoping exercise on post-diagnostic support and research on AHP consultants. The evidence for action therefore reflects three sources:

- conversations with people living with dementia using appreciative inquiry approaches to support participants to effect self-determined change by identifying what works best for them
- collaboration with health and social care practitioners, higher education institutions and AHP professional bodies through engagement events and publications
- evidence from research, literature reviews and scoping evaluations.

all the evidence is available at www.alzscot.org/ahp

The vision

Connecting People, Connecting Support will ensure the rehabilitation skills and expertise of the workforce have an even greater positive impact on the lives, experiences and outcomes of people living with dementia than is currently the case. The aspiration is that people living with dementia have better access to a range of AHPs regardless of age or place of residence, early in their diagnosis and throughout their illness.

What will Connecting People, Connecting Support deliver?

The aim is to ensure that AHP practice and AHP-led interventions for people living with dementia is underpinned by four principles.

- A human rights-based approach will be at the forefront of each and every AHP interaction, with an emphasis on participation and empowerment, and recognition of personhood, identity and value.
- AHPs will deliver services to people living with dementia using the biopsychosocial approach to rehabilitation, integrating the five key elements of the AHP approach, best clinical practice and what people say is important to them.
- Dementia is every AHP's business, offering services in dementia-aware environments, with people living with dementia being active contributors to the AHP rehabilitation process.
- AHPs will adapt and tailor their rehabilitation interventions, taking into account the individual and at times changing needs of people living with dementia.

The AHP approach

The approach aims to maximise the AHP contribution to high-quality, cost-effective dementia services that are tailored to the needs of individuals, reflect the best available evidence and are delivered by a skilled AHP workforce.

The AHP approach focuses primarily, but not exclusively, on five key elements.



The elements are presented separately, but must be considered collectively within the overall AHP assessment and rehabilitation approach for individuals.

What will Connecting People, Connecting Support achieve?

Local implementation of the AHP approach will result in:

1. enhanced access for people living with dementia to AHP-led information, supported self-management and targeted interventions to tackle the symptoms of dementia
2. partnership and integration, contributing to a personal-outcomes approach, multiagency pathways and integrated models of care
3. skilled AHP workforce in dementia care, with a commitment to leadership for transforming AHP practice
4. innovation, improvement and research, utilising and generating research and integrating improvement science within everyday AHP practice.

Conclusion

Connecting People, Connecting Support is the first policy of its kind for Scotland however the key messages will be of interest to other countries that are transforming dementia services. No service, profession or group of professions can transform dementia services alone. Services are much more effective when they are coordinated, integrated and working in tandem with people living with dementia and this policy calls for a multidisciplinary, multisectoral approach in which AHPs play a unique part.

For further information about the AHP policy document Connecting People, Connecting Support please contact Elaine at ehunter@alzscot.org or follow on Twitter @AHPDementia or @elaineahpmh

References

Scottish Government (2013) Scotlands National Dementia Strategy. Scottish Government (2017a) Scotlands National Dementia Strategy
Scottish Government (2017b) Allied Health Professions Co-creating Wellbeing with the people of Scotland. The Active and Independent Living Programme in Scotland.