

The Development of a Podiatry Talking Mat Resource to Support Decision Making



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Background

The ability for individuals to make decisions related to their care is enshrined in law. This is no different for people living with dementia, however, for some this can be more challenging as the disease progresses.

Talking Mats Ltd is a social enterprise which improves the lives of people with communication difficulties by increasing their capacity to think about and express views about things that matter to them. Research shows use of Talking Mats improves both the quality and quantity of information gained.

Common Features of dementia impacting communication:

- Difficulties with comprehension and verbal expression
- Reading and writing
- Retention and memory



Development

•NHS Fife Podiatry service identified a need to support people accessing the service with cognitive impairments be more involved in their decision making.

•With funding from the Fife Charity Trust, NHS Fife commissioned Talking Mats to design a Podiatry specific resource.

Small group of podiatrists worked with Talking Mats to define a structure
They identified the key topics – prevention, impact and treatment options.

Developed the visual images to go with the sets.



Trained staff in the use of Talking Mats
Carried out a 6 week pilot phase within NHS Fife

•Alterations made to sets based on feedback from pilot phase.



Resource in Action

- 60 year old woman with learning disability and dementia, lives independently with one hour daily support.
- Known to podiatry due to repeated ulcerations.
- Specialist footwear in place.
- The woman in response to questions will always say everything is fine – she doesn't like to cause a fuss.
- The Talking Ma t showed that she was struggling with the dressing and she was in pain.

Action

- Change dressing so it took less space in shoe.
- Prescribed regular pain relief.

Outcome

- Improved patient wellbeing and satisfaction.
- Podiatrist able to action appropriate treatment.
- Patient had been fully involved in the decision making by use of Talking Mats.

Next Steps

Following the successful implementation of the resource in NHS Fife, the podiatry team and Talking Mats have collaborated to create a training resource for podiatrists. This will enable the resource to be used out with Fife and allowing others to benefit.



Information on the training can be found by scanning the QR code below.

