Improving environments for people with dementia
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What is dementia?

- Dementia is a syndrome in which there is deterioration in memory, thinking, behaviour and the ability to perform everyday activities.
- There are many forms of dementia & affects each individual differently.
- WHO recognizes dementia as a public health priority.

(World Health Organisation, 2012)
Impact of the environment for people with dementia

• Hospital environments can have a detrimental effect on people with dementia, leading to additional distress & confusion (Alzheimers Society, 2009)

• Research into the impact on clinical outcomes of the environment on the care of people with dementia is still sparse (Davis et al 2009, Fleming et al 2007)
Policy context

• National Dementia Strategy (DoH, 2009)
• Kings Fund Enhancing the Healing Environment (Kings Fund, 2009)
• Reports highlighting need to improve care environments for people with dementia (NHS Confederation, 2010; Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2011; Royal College of Nursing, 2011)
• Prime Minister’s challenge on Dementia (DoH, 2012)
• £50million investment announced to support development of dementia friendly environments in NHS & social care (October 2012)
Someone with dementia may…

• Be confused & agitated in unfamiliar environments
• Become restless & distracted in over-stimulating environments
• Have difficulty seeing handrails, toilet seats or doors, or the food on their plate, if these are the same colour as the background
• Avoid stepping on coloured strips on flooring, because they may look like a change in level
Someone with dementia may...

- Resist walking on shiny flooring because it looks wet or slippery
- Misinterpret reflections in mirrors, windows & shiny surfaces
- Have difficulty hearing or understanding conversations if there is competing noise e.g. from a TV
- Feel curious & want to walk around

Kings Fund (2013)
Common problems in hospital environments

• Poor signage & lack of wayfinding cues
• Poor use of colour & contrast
• Lighting causing glare & pools of light and shadow
• Shiny floors
• Clutter and distractions
• Stark, unwelcoming spaces off long, featureless corridors
• No personalisation of space
• Under-use of gardens and outside spaces

Kings Fund (2013)
Improving environments for people with dementia can…

• Reduce incidence of agitation & challenging behaviour
• Reduce need for anti-psychotic medication
• Reduce falls
• Promote independence
• Improve nutrition and hydration
• Increase engagement in meaningful activities
• Encourage greater carer involvement
• Improve staff morale, recruitment & retention

Kings Fund (2013)
Links between social environment & well-being

• Person’s sense of identity & being can be retained by those around them as dementia progresses (Kitwood, 1997; Perrin, 2000)

• Social circumstances & biography of the individual need to be considered so care is tailored to meet the needs of the person (Kitwood, 1997; British Psychological Society & The Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2011)
  - Life story work within MMHSCT
Links between social environment & well-being

• Nursing home residents with dementia dependent on staff to initiate social engagement (Morgan-Brown et al, 2011)
  - MMHST inpatient later life support workers completing dementia training

• Discussion of past experiences with others can foster well-being & affirmation of the self (Moyes, 2012)
  - Reminiscence groups running on later life wards
Environmental changes that make a difference

• Transform corridors by providing handrails, appropriate artwork, thoughtful use of colour & lighting, & regular resting points
• Maximise views of nature &, where possible, provide safe access to gardens
• Sub-divide large spaces such as day rooms & dining rooms to make them domestic sized so that they feel more homely
• Use bold accent colours & signage that includes pictures as well as text
Environmental changes that make a difference

- Make sure patients have independent access to drinks & finger-food snacks all day long
- Make sure there are nice things to touch & hold and books, pictures, local photos, memorabilia to encourage conversation
- Install sanitary ware of a recognisable style, with contrasting colours for toilet seats & grab-rails
- Use numbers, colours & memory boards or boxes to aid orientation

Kings Fund (2013)
Examples of transformations of environment – Kings Fund EHE programme 2009-2013

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust - before
Examples of transformations of environment – Kings Fund EHE programme 2009-2013

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust - after
Examples of transformations of environment – Kings Fund EHE programme 2009-2013

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - before
Examples of transformations of environment – Kings Fund EHE programme 2009-2013

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - after
Examples of transformations of environment –
Kings Fund EHE programme 2009-2013

Leicester Partnership
NHS Trust - before
Examples of transformations of environment – Kings Fund EHE programme 2009-2013

Leicester Partnership
NHS Trust - after
Environmental changes on Maple Ward

Installation of orientation board in ward lounge
Environmental changes on Maple Ward

• Changes in signage
Environmental changes on Maple Ward

• Changes in signage
Environmental changes on Maple Ward

- Contrasting colours for toilet seats & grab rails
MMHSCT & DoH Capital Grant Programme 2012-2013

• Aims to improve the service user experience through enhancing the design of the care environment

• Needs of service users & carers are paramount to the redesign

• Expected outcomes are; improved service user & staff satisfaction, reduction in falls & challenging behaviour, complaints reduced, compliments increased, improved staff morale & reduction in staff sickness, & less use of agency staff
The Later Life Therapeutic Internal Space & Garden Development Project

• We are one of 116 organisations accepted onto the Dementia Friendly Environments National Pilot Programme

• Awarded £523,575 capital funding

• Incorporates Victoria Park Day Centre (garden area), & Cedar & Maple Wards (gardens & internal area adjoining ward)

• Completion date: 31st March 2014
The story so far…

• We defined the spaces & who uses them, & identified what needed to improve using the Kings Fund Assessment Toolkit
• We consulted with service users, carers & teams
• We carried out an equality impact assessment & considered a range of other monitoring & evaluation requirements
• We designed a brief & brought in an architect to draw up plans & costings for the 3 sites
• We tendered, tweaked & made arrangements for work to start in January 2014 & end in March 2014
Some “before” pictures:
The garden in Park House
The lobby area in Park House
Victoria Park Garden
Design features of Park House garden

- Activity/ reminiscence area – garden shed & raised planters - to promote engagement in activity & previously valued roles
- Sensory features – wind chimes, scented flowers, lavender beds – to promote relaxation
- Clear orientation points – distinctive coloured paths, handrails & signage – to promote exploration of garden space & independence
- Grouped seating to promote social interaction
Expected uses of the new dementia gardens

• Shared social space for service users, carers, and staff

• Offers opportunities for engagement in meaningful activity on a 1:1 & group basis

• Space for relaxation & exploration to reduce distress & agitation
Next Steps…

• We cannot overspend & the project is time limited

• We are required to monitor the use of improved facilities against the core outcomes of the DoH Capital Grants Programme. Examples are: improved privacy, independence, reducing stress & improved nutrition

• We are one of 30 sites that has been selected by DoH & IFF Research as a Detail Case Study (DCS) to develop an evidence base. This will inform future policy & outcomes will be reported to Parliament
References

- Fleming, R., Crookes, P., & Shima, S. (2007), *A review of the empirical literature on the design of physical environments for people with dementia. Translating research into practice*, University of Stirling, Stirling