

CLAHRC BITE

CLAHRC EoE BITE no 17
July 2017

A bite-sized summary of CLAHRC research: Mid-life approaches to prevent or delay dementia, disability and frailty.



With increased life expectancy it is important people spend their extra years enjoying healthy, independent lives

What?

Researchers in the Dementia Frailty End of Life Care theme conducted three rapid evidence reviews showing what can be done in mid-life to prevent or delay the onset of dementia, disability and frailty later on. These reviews supported the development of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) public health guidance and informed the research agenda.

Who?

People are living longer and want to spend their extra years living independently. There is mounting evidence that damaging lifestyle behaviours in mid-life – such as smoking, alcohol consumption, poor diet, lack of physical activity and being overweight – can lead to poor health in late life.

Why?

Researchers conducted three rapid evidence reviews to provide a comprehensive summary of the link between behaviours in mid-life and health later on, to identify what works for whom, and to underscore what stops or helps people change their behaviours. NICE published their first guidance specifically targeting people in mid-life based on the findings from these reviews.

Background

There is little guidance concerning mid-life - a critical life stage where risky behaviours such as smoking, drinking alcohol, consuming junk food and sedentary behaviour can very easily become entrenched. These reviews were instrumental in closing this evidence gap.

The first review confirmed the link between mid-life risk behaviours and late-life outcomes. The second summarised the effectiveness of interventions to promote healthy behaviours in mid-life. The third identified several issues that prevent or limit the uptake of healthy behaviours during this life stage. The guidance included recommendations to be more active, help stop smoking, reduce alcohol consumption, improve diet and maintain a healthy weight. It also aimed to reduce the incidence of other non-communicable chronic conditions alongside frailty, dementia and disability and increase people's resilience by improving their social and emotional wellbeing.

Shortly after the NICE guidance was published Public Health England (PHE) launched their One You campaign, expressly focused on mid-life interventions

The research team subsequently conducted three further reviews of older populations living in the community. At PHE's request its key findings were developed into an evidence-based resource expressly designed for local authorities and commissioners.

Findings were presented at meetings of the NICE Public Health Advisory Committee, the Faculty of Public Health Conference, PHE Annual Conference and numerous scientific and practice-focused events.

References

Lafortune L, Martin S, Kelly S, Kuhn I, Remes O, Cowan A, Brayne C. (2016) Behavioural risk factors in mid-life associated with successful ageing, disability, dementia and frailty in later life: a rapid systematic review. PLoS One. <http://bit.ly/20Z3uRK>

Kelly S, Martin S, Kuhn I, Cowan A, Brayne C, Lafortune L. (2016) Barriers and facilitators to the uptake and maintenance of healthy behaviours by people at mid-life: a rapid systematic review. PLoS One. <http://bit.ly/1o2dICY>

Lafortune L, Martin, S, Kelly, S. (2017) Midlife approaches to prevention of ill health in later life. JAMA Internal Medicine. DOI:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.8849. <https://goo.gl/0l1iIP>

What is NIHR CLAHRC East of England?

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) East of England is a five year programme of applied health and social care research which focuses on the needs of people with complex problems, often vulnerable, when multiple agencies are involved in their care: young people, frail older people, those with dementia, learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries or mental ill health.

The CLAHRC East of England collaboration encompasses some thirty-six organisations, with research hubs in the Universities of Cambridge, Hertfordshire and East Anglia working closely with individuals and organisations involved in the whole care pathway.

Service users and carers are at the heart of what we do, in parallel with an ambitious public health research programme.

Co-production and collaboration at all stages of the research process are fundamental to making a positive impact through applied health research.

[Useful links and contact](#)

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng16>

Louise Lafortune - ll394@medschl.cam.ac.uk

Disclaimer: The research was funded by the National Institute for Health Research. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR or the Department of Health.

CLAHRC EoE is hosted by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust