

CLAHRC BITE

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A bite-sized summary of CLAHRC research: DemCom - National Evaluation of Dementia Friendly Communities



What?

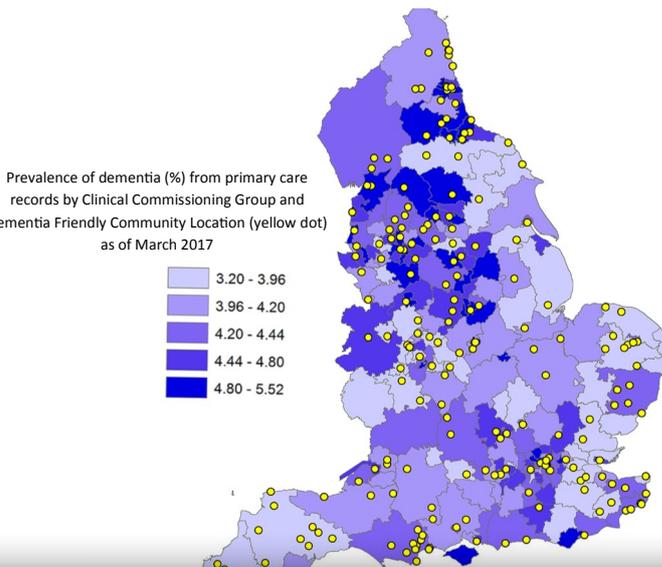
DEMCOM is a 30-month study to evaluate Dementia Friendly Communities (DFCs) across England.

Who?

The DFC initiative aims to enable people living with dementia to be recognised as contributing members of their local community. This can involve activities that support community engagement with what it is like to live with dementia, reduce stigma and address what needs to be in place to enable people to live well without restriction (e.g. accessible shopping and transport, a community alert to the needs of people with dementia).

Why?

The study is developing an evidence-based evaluation framework to inform how current and future DFCs initiatives are developed and funded.



Prevalence of dementia (%) from primary care records by Clinical Commissioning Group and Dementia Friendly Community Location (yellow dot) as of March 2017

3.20 - 3.96
3.96 - 4.20
4.20 - 4.44
4.44 - 4.80
4.80 - 5.52

"...you never become a complete dementia-friendly community. It's a journey that people are on, and we should constantly be looking at what's happening, and never think that once you get a badge...that that's it...we're talking about making a difference to people's lives."

Background

A Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) can involve a wide range of people, organisations and geographical areas. There are more than 270 communities across England that are recognised as working towards being dementia friendly.

DemCom so far

As a mixed method study, DemCom has so far linked population data on dementia prevalence with DFC activities¹, and conducted an online review of 100 DFCs to determine the range of achievements and resources used to implement and sustain DFCs.

By linking the provision of DFCs with epidemiological-based need we found that DFCs are located in areas where they can have a greater impact to the lives of people affected by dementia.

The online review found that most communities are defined by geographical location, while some are structured around businesses and organisations. The majority of DFCs came into being following 2012, the year in which DFCs were endorsed by policy through the Prime Ministers Challenge on Dementia². The primary focus of DFCs is on promoting awareness and reducing stigma. The work undertaken by DFCs relies largely on a voluntary workforce, with some evidence of investment from local authority and charitable agencies. Less clear was how DFCs were helping to normalise the experience of living with dementia and how they evaluated the impact of their activities.

Current work with 6 DFCs in geographically scattered areas of England is evaluating how the organisation and funding of a DFC, the involvement of people with dementia, and its focus affect how people with dementia at different stages of the disease are understood by others, live, and participate in their local communities. This in depth work is also testing an adapted evaluation tool that was originally designed to evaluate age friendly cities. People living with and affected by dementia have been involved in all stages of the study as both participants and members of the research team.

The DemCom study is expected to finish June 2019.

References

1. Woodward, M., Arthur, A., Darlington, N., Buckner, S., Killeit, A., Thurman, J., ... & Goodman, C. (2019). The place for dementia-friendly communities in England and its relationship with epidemiological need. *International journal of geriatric psychiatry*, 34(1), 67-71.
2. Department of Health. Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia: delivering major improvements in dementia care and research by 2015. London: Department of Health; 2012.

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.

For more information about the study

Web: <https://www.dahrc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/about-us/people/dementia-frailty-and-end-of-life-care/demcom-national-evaluation-dementia-friendly-communities-2/>

Blog: <https://www.dahrc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/2018/10/measuring-dementia-friendliness-getting-the-balance-right-blog/>

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