Widening options for older people with high support needs

Not A One Way Street

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Widening options for older people with high support needs

- What's the issue?
- What we set out to do
- Defining our terms – models based on reciprocal and mutual support
- Some examples
- How we approached the work
- What we found
- Workshop session and feedback
- Next steps

The funder and research team

- Carried out by National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) and Community Catalysts

- Funded by Joseph Rowntree Foundation

- Part of 5 year A Better Life programme – looking at alternative approaches to long term care

What's the issue?

- Negative attitudes to older people with high support needs are still pervasive
- The range of support options remains limited
- Older people's contributions are seldom recognised
- Older people and professionals have low awareness of alternative models
- There are some signs of positive change in attitudes to older people and ageing
- There is a push for new models of public services
- Mutuality in an age of austerity

What we set out to do

- develop a vision for and definition of **mutual and reciprocal support** by assessing what is needed for these models to work well for older people with high support needs

- improve understanding of how to establish and sustain mutual support systems

- examine how to scale up and replicate effective models and approaches based on mutual support and reciprocity

Defining our terms

- **Mutual/mutuality**: a term used to describe a reciprocal relationship between two or more people or things
  - Free online dictionary

- **Reciprocity**: the practice of exchanging things with others for mutual benefit
  - Oxford Dictionaries online

Models based on reciprocity and mutuality – a typology

- mutually supportive relationships
- mutually supportive communities (including KeyRing Networks)
- cohousing
- Homeshare
- Shared Lives
- Time Banking
- Circles of Support;
- face-to-face and virtual volunteering schemes
- self-help and peer support networks

Some examples

Age UK Bromley and Greenwich TimeBank

- Membership is open to individuals and organisations

- Individual members' ages range between 24 and 98 (majority are over 60)

- Some people donate their 'hours' to the 'Big Pot' – provides time-limited support to older people with extra needs

Some examples

Shared Lives in Leeds

- Shared Lives carer ('Mary') supports an older person with learning disabilities ('Jane') in their own home

- Mary and Jane both say how important they are to each other. They share hobbies (embroidery) and enjoy spending time together.

- Mary says she would be very lonely without Jane. Jane says she has never been happier.

How we approached the work

- Four fieldwork sites – Oxford, Leeds, Dorset, Swansea & Gower

- 70 older people shared experiences in sites

- Six case studies focused on specific models (eg Time Banks, senior co-housing), involving a further 50 older people

- Open call for examples

- Literature search

What we found – overarching headlines

- a diversity of people, possibilities and approaches exists
- mutual and reciprocal support makes a positive difference
- successful models are clear about their purpose and outcomes
- knowledge, innovators and networks help to make this happen
- nurturing relationships and trust are central to all models

What we found – overarching headlines

- mutuality and reciprocity mean different things

- asset-based *and* community-led approaches matter

- resources and resourcefulness are important

- problem solving is a central, sustaining feature

- there are challenges of scale - how are these models to be replicated?

What we found – benefits to older people

- Companionship and positive long-term relationships
- Practical and emotional support through crises
- Avoiding isolation
- Feeling valued
- Avoiding admission to hospital/residential care
- Increased income, as part of a formal arrangement

What we found –key messages about what needs to change

- negative attitudes about and narrow perceptions of older age
- public interest and professional scepticism
- create a diverse picture of support based on mutuality and reciprocity
- achieve clear outcomes that can be achieved from mutual support
- the need to integrate mutual support into local options for older people with high support needs
- celebrate and support successful innovators and ambassadors of mutual support.

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What we found – common features of successful developments

- Recognising both needs and assets
- Problem solving to overcome 'life's obstacles'
- Codesign, coproduction and collaboration at the heart
- Relationship based delivery/exchange of support
- Helping people to 'age in place'

What Next? Workshop session

Each table has been allocated a theme by number: on your tables, think about ways in which we can:

1. communicate and demonstrate the benefits
2. raise public awareness and engagement
3. tackle interfaces with other services
4. replicate and scale out
5. mobilise resources

Workshop Session

Feedback and Discussion

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Next steps

- Published in January 2013

- Phased dissemination programme
  - With commissioners and leaders in study sites
  - National/regional workshops and events (post publication)

- What else should we be doing, and how would you like to be involved?

Thank you!

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