



sense
for deafblind people

OLDER PEOPLE WITH DUAL SENSORY LOSS: MEETING THEIR NEEDS.

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OLDER PEOPLE WITH DUAL SENSORY LOSS AWARENESS RAISING PROGRAM



- Funded by the Department of Health's Innovation, Excellence and Strategic Development (ISED) grant.

MAIN OBJECTIVES:

- Raise awareness about signs of hearing and sight loss in older people to individuals, their families, and care providers.
- Promote Sense's screening tool and training package on the early recognition of sight and hearing loss in older people to residential care home providers across England.
- Encourage health and care providers, commissioners and regulators to consider the long-term health and care options provided for people with age-related hearing and sight loss.



THE FACTS



Despite the many challenges that poor sight and hearing bring, older people can continue to live independently and enjoy life – provided people understand their needs and they get the right help.



The identification and assessment of the needs of older people with combined hearing and sight loss in residential homes



- Research carried out by Sense and the University of Birmingham
- Three phased project:
 - **Phase 1-** Researchers adapted an existing screening tool (originally used in Norway) which was then used with older people in residential homes in Birmingham
 - **Phase 2-** Residents in the care homes who were identified from the screening tool as having combined hearing and sight loss were interviewed along with the staff
 - **Phase 3-** Deafblind awareness training delivered to care workers from the residential homes that participated in the project.



KEY FINDINGS OF RESEARCH



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- None of the staff interviewed (including managers) were aware of the duties of the local authority under the Deafblind Guidance
- Staff from only two homes were aware of local services for people with combined hearing and sight loss
- Most staff said they had not met many people with combined hearing/sight loss (but they had)
- 5 of the 9 staff had had some type of single sensory loss training, though very generic
- Combined hearing and sight loss was broadly unfamiliar to staff and residents although half of the residents reported hearing difficulties
- None of the *residents* reported that they had a dual sensory loss or were deafblind, they spoke about hearing and sight loss separately
- Reading for pleasure was the activity that the residents missed most
- Most residents were pragmatic about their deteriorating hearing and sight.
- Family and friends were considered a key component to the residents' lives



KEY FINDINGS OF RESEARCH



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- Staff reported having little training in hearing and sight loss and said they were often too busy to spend time talking to residents
- Staff reported that it was difficult to include some residents in the community life of the home because of communication difficulties
- Both staff and residents enjoyed the contact afforded by completing the screening tool and said the information should be in the care plan
- Staff recognized possible implications for reducing falls and challenging behaviour.
- Staff said this was not covered in care plans
- Staff welcomed training in awareness of dual sensory loss and specific support strategies
- Use of simple strategies e.g. loop systems, coloured plates, large print books and playing cards were all new to the staff



SENSE SENSORY IMPAIRMENT MONITORING TOOL



- Part A – Carers’ assessment of residents hearing and vision
- Part B - Residents’ assessment of their own hearing and vision status
- Part C - Residents’ assessment of their own hearing and vision function in relation to preferred activities



NICE GUIDELINES – Mental Wellbeing of older people in care homes



Standard 4 makes recommendations for:

- Organisations providing care ensure that staff are trained to be alert to specific needs arising from sensory impairment in older people in care homes and to record them in a care plan.
- Social care, health and public health practitioners are alert to and recognize specific needs arising from sensory impairment in older people in care homes and record them in their care plan.
- Local authorities and other commissioning services commission services from providers that can produce evidence of protocols for training staff to be alert to specific needs arising from sensory impairment in older people in care homes and to record them in a care plan.



SSIMS Training Package



- One day training package designed for care staff.
- Book online at <http://www.sense.org.uk/content/information-social-care-professionals>
- Learning outcomes:
 - » Build the skills and confidence of staff so that they can identify the signs or symptoms of dual sensory loss
 - » Help staff to learn about good practice in supporting older people with sight and hearing difficulties so that they can provide sensitive, appropriate care
 - » Provide the chance for staff to talk through situations they have experienced
 - » Understanding the legal responsibilities relating to older people with hearing and sight loss
 - » When to make a referral for a specialist assessment and/or additional support.



OTHER ACTIVITIES



- Promoting information:
 - » Enjoy Life
 - » Seeing Me
 - » It All Adds Up
- Engaging with older people and their families (esp. BME communities) as to accessibility of information.
- Health
 - » Quality standards
 - » Sensory Champions
 - » Local activities
- Social Care
 - » Commissioning
 - » Quality Assurance



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