



South West London
Academic, Health and Social Care
 System

Case Studies- Series 1

Empowering Independence and Physical Activity in Care Homes

Maintaining good physical function is crucial to maximising independence and delaying age-related deterioration in the 750,000 people currently residing in UK care homes. SWLS funded *Access to Wellbeing* to evaluate if their innovative programme could reduce the detrimental sedentary behaviour often prevalent in care home settings.

Access to Wellbeing is a whole systems approach which seeks to create a meaningful and active environment for care home residents. It was first piloted at a single care home in Wandsworth, but the multidisciplinary team were keen to explore the potential benefits and feasibility for wider implementation. SWLS's funding gave them the resources needed to properly assess, evaluate and disseminate their work further.



“Without the Small Grant from SWLS we would have shuddered to a halt. It allowed us to bring someone in to do interviews, finish the paper, put a whole framework together and get it written up over nine months. People are generally reluctant to invest in something small and new, but this was essential.” – Mike Hurley, Professor of rehabilitation sciences, Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, Kingston University and St George's, University of London

‘Making best practice accepted practice’

Encouraging Engagement and Participation

The *Access to Wellbeing* team, comprising an Occupational Therapist and a physiotherapist, worked with the Wandsworth care home staff and residents over a six week period. Through training sessions and structured discussions they sought to change the staff's approach to residents away from fostering dependence and more towards encouraging engagement and participation in social and physical activities.

Although the SWLS funded two year evaluation study is still ongoing, the feedback from qualitative pre and post training interviews has so far been very good. The team are also still working closely

with physiotherapists at the care home to maintain those changes.

"The staff feel more valued and motivated, as if they are working with the residents, and the residents say how much this has meant to them that they're not just sitting around all day. The whole feel of the place has changed and there's now something positive everyone can do." – Mike Hurley, Professor of rehabilitation sciences, Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, Kingston University and St George's, University of London

¹ Hurley MV, Dudzic M, Kennedy B, Anderson L, Koskela S, Jones F. Increasing the Health, Participation and Activity Levels of People Attending Day Centres. *International Journal of Therapy Research*. 21(7): 310 - 317 (Jul 2014).

Small Grants, Lasting Impact

Small Grants is a programme that supports collaborative projects across academic, health and social care sectors. This is a unique programme in south west London, helping to promote innovation that could potentially be of great benefit for the population of the area and even beyond.

Could your idea be one of our next Small Grants beneficiaries?

To find out more about SWLS Small Grants funding click [here](#)

To learn more about *Access to Wellbeing* click [here](#)

South West London Academic, Health and Social Care System

St George's, University London,
Cranmer Terrace
London
SW17 0RE



@SWLSsystem



GCAHSN@sgul.ac.uk



www.swlondonsystem.org
