

Evaluation of House of Memories Northern Model – Summary of findings using Realistic Evaluation framework

Contexts

Participant expectations

Pre-training interviews with participating dementia care workers from a range of services consistently revealed :

a desire to **improve the 'culture of care'** in relation to knowledge and awareness of dementia and its implications; support for families and carers; the quality of direct, interpersonal one-to-one care.

An interest in **creative, alternative approaches** to dementia care training that can be easily adapted and cascaded back in the workplace.

The museum offer

Specific objectives held by participating museums and galleries included:

to build upon established experiences of and reputations in reminiscence work with the elderly within the context of dementia care;

to develop new networks and partnerships with health care and voluntary sectors;

to share learning and expertise with NML and other museum services to develop complementary, bespoke reminiscence resources;

to promote the benefits of cultural engagement to dementia care.

Policy agendas

In a national context, relevant key policy agendas include the Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia and associated strategy; Patients First and Foremost (Department of Health); preventive health agenda; localism and the Big Society.

Mechanisms

Content

The interpersonal and highly empathic skills of AFTA Thought team and museum staff.

The level of informed, authoritative content on dementia and its direct and indirect implications.

Use of a combination of highly creative, complementary methods and approaches including dramatic presentation, interactive discussion, reminiscence therapy techniques using museum collections and arts and crafts activities.

Delivery

Effective incorporation of in-house reminiscence tools, projects and staff expertise into House of Memories model.

Successful engagement of a range of regional stakeholders from health and social care services.

Development of bespoke House of Memories training resources that have reinforced the programme's unique value, and identifiable qualities, across the regions.

Effective promotion of the unique value of museums and galleries in dementia care under strong leadership and stewardship of NML.

Strategy

Strong policy awareness and lobbying from NML leadership team.

Relevance and timeliness of House of Memories intelligent, focused content, mission and values.

Effective cross-sector partnership working.

Outcomes

The culture of care

Significantly improved levels of understanding of dementia, including complexities in how dementia is presented and implications for those directly affected along with families and carers alike.

Enhanced capacity for considered, empathic, interpersonal care that is responsive to individual circumstance.

Improved professional conscientiousness on individual and collective bases.

Openness to creative, inclusive, alternative approaches to care that are responsive to individual needs.

Cultural engagement

Improved awareness and understanding of the value of museums and galleries to dementia care practice.

Increased visits to museums and galleries in a professional context.

Evidence of use of House of Memories resources in work [dementia care] settings.

Enhanced appreciation and respect for cultural and creative practice in dementia care.

Professional practice

Evidence of ongoing discussion and knowledge exchange on value of House of Memories within and across a range of health and social care services.

A willingness to improve and align professional practice at grassroots level with national policy and strategy.