

RADIQL

a guide

Empowering people with dementia
through Reminiscence Arts.



RADIQL

Reminiscence Arts and Dementia: Impact on Quality of Life



Acknowledgements

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Guy's and St Thomas' Charity is a grant-making charitable foundation whose mission is to work as a catalyst for innovation in healthcare. Working across all aspects of health, the charity supports projects that innovate, push boundaries and question accepted ways of working – all in pursuit of better health and healthcare for those who live, work and are treated in the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark.

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A guide to Age Exchange's dementia intervention model

What is RADIQL?

Reminiscence Arts and Dementia: Impact on Quality of Life (RADIQL) is a method of working with people with dementia that uses Reminiscence Arts (the creative exploration of memories) to achieve measurable quality of life and well-being. In its most common form, it consists of a programme of group sessions, complemented by workforce training and support.

Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL) is currently evaluating RADIQL in twelve care home settings.

The interim findings provide promising evidence that RADIQL can contribute to participants' quality of life.

Key findings

Dementia may include loss of recall and access to memories. Although the arts and some forms of reminiscence have long been believed to be helpful, interventions have often been adhoc and viewed as a mere add-on to clinical practice.

The key findings of RHUL's academic assessment of RADIQL note:

- Group Reminiscence Arts sessions significantly improve the quality of life of participants within their first 50 minutes.
- Attending a series of group Reminiscence Arts sessions steadily and significantly improves the quality of life for participants over a 24-week period.

In addition, all staff who feedback to Age Exchange responded positively to the project.

Executive Summary

RADIQL is a method of working with people with dementia that uses Reminiscence Arts. It comprises two key elements:

- A structured Reminiscence Arts intervention, which is run on a weekly basis and measurably improves wellbeing in older people with dementia.
- A workforce training programme for care staff in Reminiscence Arts practice and relationship-centred care, which supports care staff and helps them to develop new skills, as well as to enhance their professional practice.

The RADIQL method has been developed by Age Exchange over a period of five years and is currently part of a three-year pilot project funded by GSTTC and academically evaluated by RHUL.

The interim findings of RHUL's assessment are positive and suggest that the pilot programme is succeeding in improving the wellbeing of older people with dementia.

RADIQL is far more than a series of sessions or a method for training staff. It is a fluid, adaptable practice which can be applied in a range of other situations, currently end of life care, within community settings and, in the future, domiciliary care.

Background

There is an increasing demand for meaningful engagement and support for the growing number of older adults living with dementia – over 850,000 in the United Kingdom by 2015 according to the Alzheimer's Society.

A range of practitioners are now using the arts in dementia care, with strong anecdotal evidence suggesting that this can be highly effective. Age Exchange has worked in this area for 32 years – indeed it was the current artistic director who coined the phrase 'Reminiscence Arts' 15 years ago.

How does RADIQL work?

RADIQL uses Reminiscence Arts delivered by trained Reminiscence Arts Practitioners to engage people with dementia. It is designed to enable care homes to deliver meaningful engagement to support the wellbeing of people affected by dementia. For practitioners and those measuring outcomes this includes:

- increased social interactions;
and
- improvement in mood.

The RADIQL method uses Reminiscence Arts in group sessions to reduce depression, anxiety, behavioural and psychological disturbance.

The weekly sessions

Sessions are co-facilitated by two trained Reminiscence Arts practitioners, supported by one or two care staff.

Sessions may follow a general theme or be themed week by week around each member's personal history or interest. Sometimes one theme might run throughout the whole programme (e.g., an event, a type of music or a hobby), although practitioners are flexible about the choice of activities and the theme.

Usually there is a warm up and warm down, specialist materials are used and sometimes there is an output such as a play, film, work of visual art or piece of music. The art forms used include music, visual art, drama, dance and movement.

The skills and experience of Reminiscence Arts Practitioners are key to the effective running of sessions. Due to the practitioners' art-based backgrounds they are able to adapt to a range of participants abilities and to make connections.

Reminiscence Arts

Person-centred care

Reminiscence Arts draws on the best practice of person-centred care by valuing the experiences and memories of people with dementia.

RADIQL as a model recognises that the care home is a community, which includes care staff, family, friends, residents and visitors. Reminiscence Arts practitioners encourage improvisation, creativity and engagement in the community of care and invite people with advanced dementia not to live in the past, but instead to develop meaningful relationships in the present.

RHUL's own research shows the minimum of 12 group sessions are required to have an impact on wellbeing – the longer the intervention, the more likely the impact will be maintained.

One-to-one sessions are available for those too frail to leave their bedrooms or who are more socially isolated, again on a weekly basis. However, due to the intensity of the sessions Age Exchange would recommend a slightly shorter intervention – of seven weekly sessions of one hour each.



Workforce training

RADIQL has built in sustainability, which is why Age Exchange recommends that staff are involved in delivering the intervention and also receive training to improve their skills and knowledge. We want to transform the type of care that people with dementia receive.

RADIQL's workforce training programme meets key care standards in the Care Certificate Framework (CCF). The training focuses in depth on:

- working in a person-centred way – providing staff with the practical skills to identify an individual's needs using a tool kit of skills from the arts sector; and
- communication using a range of tools and devices, as well as disseminating best practice.

Our training includes a new way to engage the social care workforce in positive and compassionate care

We support care employers to motivate and value their staff by helping them to understand and apply Reminiscence Arts throughout their work and take ownership of self assessment against the CCF.

Staff taking part in the workforce training will:

- Learn to understand a person's individual context – that behaviour has meaning and that something that might initially be regarded as inappropriate, alarming or an exaggerated response may simply be an understandable expression of emotion, thought and remembered action.
- Develop their existing skills and knowledge to care for individuals living with dementia and their families.
- Cascade learning when the project ends, to support RADIQL method outcomes for longer than the life of the project.

There are four elements to the workforce-training programme:

- Introduction to the RADIQL method – a one-day course for up to 15 participants – 'Reminiscence, Arts and Dementia – Understanding Behaviour in Dementia Care';
- Hands-on experience;
- Mentoring support; and
- Follow up half-day action planning workshop



Participant A had about 10 one-to-one sessions with a drama-based Reminiscence Arts practitioner, who worked with her reading plays. Participant A had been a former school teacher and enjoyed teaching the practitioner. Over the course of sessions they devised an outing to the theatre. The home supported this by enabling Participant A to get out of bed and sit in a wheelchair for three hours daily – for one year she had been bedridden, until motivated by the trip. She went out supported by staff, her daughter and the Reminiscence Arts practitioner and had a great time. Her daughter is now taking her on short trips alone, something she had not done before as felt scared to do so.

Reminiscence Arts & Dementia

Understanding Behaviour in Dementia Care

This one-day interactive workshop is designed to increase participants' knowledge, skills and confidence in supporting people to live well with dementia. It is suitable for staff who regularly come into contact with people with dementia. It will help them to:

- Develop a greater understanding of dementia and how this may affect individuals and their family/care givers.
- Understand how Reminiscence Arts can be used to develop person/relationship-centred creative approaches to positively support people with dementia.

Hands-on experience

Trainees will participate in both group and one-to-one sessions in order to learn the practice of Reminiscence Arts. Immersion such as this allows trainees not only to experience the intervention themselves but also to support their residents within the group. By attending sessions staff can experience first-hand how the different skills and activities are used in both person and relationship-centred approaches, and develop their own tool kit for future use.

Mentoring

Designated staff are provided with two on-site mentoring sessions. Following the group sessions they will have an opportunity to plan and deliver their own sessions, with support from the Reminiscence Arts practitioners. This will enable staff to put into practice what they will have learnt from the one-day workshop and their experiential practice.

Half-day action planning workshop

This bespoke session enables care homes to focus on how the RADIQL intervention will change their day-to-day practice and to identify what actions will help them embed a person-centred approach to caring. The workshop will be co-designed with the care home to ensure that it meets their specific needs and set-up.

“It was a different way of working with clients rather than cleaning, dressing etc. It was such a lovely support having people come every week – able to inspire me to engage with patients in a different way.”

Research study

The RADIQL pilot programme has taken place in 12 care homes and two community hubs, both NHS and privately run, over the last two years. The pilot has included and is measuring;

- 300 group and 165 one-to-one (often bedside) one-hour sessions in 12 continuing NHS or private social care homes, and 48 sessions in community settings;
- Around 100 people will have experienced the group intervention, a further 22 the one-to-one sessions, and 30 people the community hubs;
- Around 140 staff will have been engaged through a workforce development programme, which included one-day training, experiential practice, mentoring, and bespoke workshops;
- A carer support group within a community hub is working with around 10 carers and it is hoped that it will work with another 20 in year 3;
- 22 Reminiscence Arts practitioners have experienced a training programme;
and
- 15 Reminiscence Arts practitioners have been actively employed on the programme.

The research study is being run by RHUL (funded by GSTTC) and has two distinct aims:

- To define, develop and model Reminiscence Arts;
and
- To provide quantitative evidence for the effectiveness of Reminiscence Arts on the impact of well-being for people living with dementia.



Reminiscence Arts & Dementia

Reminiscence Arts and dementia practice has been developed over the last five years by Age Exchange. For it to translate to a method of working and a recognised teaching practice then Age Exchange's work needs to be measured and analysed against agreed goals.

The ultimate aim is for this to then form the basis of a teaching framework, which can be used to develop practice and enable training.

Further, while there is much anecdotal evidence that Reminiscence Arts has a strong positive effect on people with dementia, this needs to be backed up with hard evidence.

We look forward to sharing the full findings and data of RHUL's evaluation in December 2015 - **Reminiscence Arts and Dementia Care: Impact on Quality of Life, 2012 - 2015.**

Conclusion

The interim evaluation has enabled Age Exchange to demonstrate that the innovative use of Reminiscence Arts and creative activities is personally and socially beneficial.

In addition, it has helped Age Exchange to identify the methodologies and professional and artistic bodies of knowledge required to develop the relatively new form of Reminiscence Arts practice.

RADIQL is primarily designed to increase the wellbeing of older people participating in the project, particularly those with dementia, by increasing their social interaction and engagement, as well as improving their mood and reducing depression, anxiety and behavioural and psychological disturbance.

RHUL's assessment clearly demonstrates that there is real evidence that group Reminiscence Arts sessions significantly improve the quality of life of people living with dementia in the first 50 minutes, and that attending a group Reminiscence Arts session steadily and significantly improves the quality of life of people living with dementia over a 24-week period.

This evaluation will enable Age Exchange to create a model from the practice and evaluation of the work to serve as a model of excellence in the provision of care through Reminiscence Arts with dementia.

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The future of RADIQL

Building on this study and these results, Age Exchange now plans the following:

- To extend the reach of this unique intervention so that Reminiscence Arts practitioners work not merely as drop-in practitioners in a few locations, but rather in-house in care settings across the United Kingdom, where every day they can use their skills to empower older people in their daily life – enhancing wellbeing, creativity, communication and positive interaction with their careers.
- RADIQL workforce training and accreditation to support the delivery of care training, such as a new Care Certificate.
- To collaborate with delivering aspects of national policy documents, such as NICE Quality Standards, Care Certificate and EU directives.



Appendix

Definitions

Dementia describes a set of symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving or language.

Quality of life can be considered as including, but not exclusive to, a person's overall health and wellbeing, social relationships and awareness of ones self.

Reminiscence Arts is Age Exchange's unique approach to working creatively with older people with dementia. Simply put, it is the creative exploration of memories.

Reminiscence Arts and Dementia: Impact on Quality of Life (RADIQL) is a model of dementia intervention which includes patient support and workforce training.

Reminiscence Arts Practitioners are individuals who are trained by Age Exchange to co-facilitate Reminiscence Arts sessions.

Wellbeing is a personal subjective analysis of one's own sense of worth, happiness and satisfaction.

RHUL definitions of terms may differ when used as independent clinical measures, for a full definition and to find out more about Reminiscence Arts.

Reminiscence Arts and Dementia Care: Impact on Quality of Life, 2012-2015. An Interim Report of the Evaluation, December 2014.





Age Exchange is recognised as the leading UK charity working in the field of reminiscence.

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