



British Society of Gerontology Care Homes Research Special Interest Group

Annual General Report 2019-2021

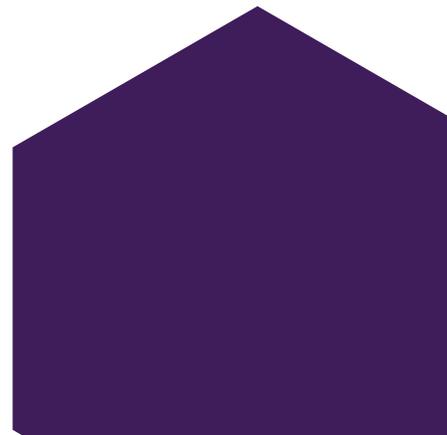
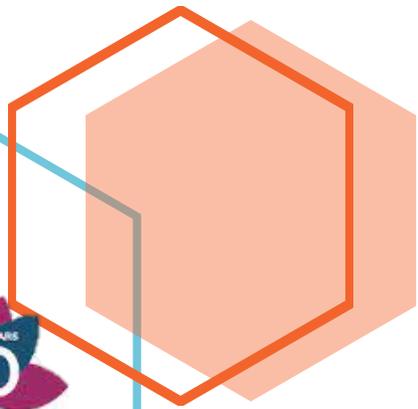
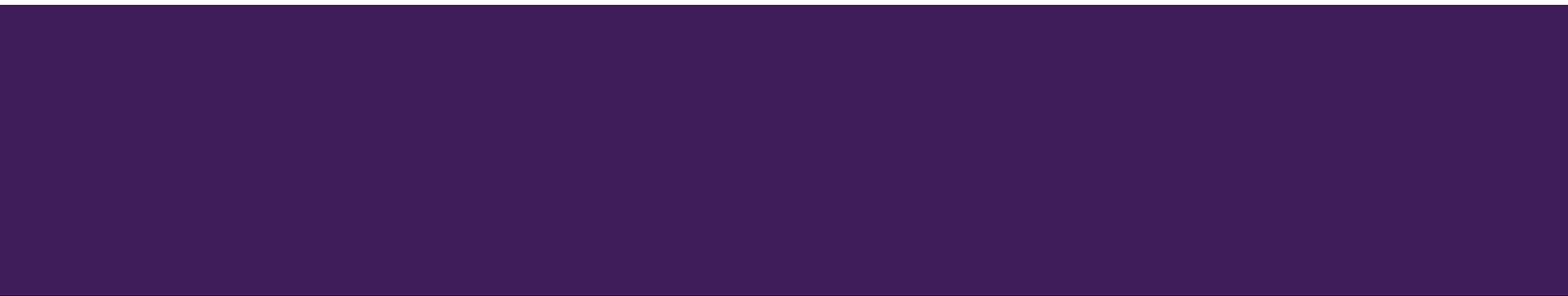




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Annual General Report 2019-2021

Introduction

The BSG Care Homes Research Special Interest Group (SIG) evolved from ideas shared between delegates at the BSG Conference in Liverpool in 2019. Under the leadership of an enthusiastic committee, the SIG took shape during the autumn of 2019 and now brings together academics, practitioners and other stakeholders with a common interest in care home research. The SIG aims to strengthen research, policy, and practice in all areas of care homes research, including those related to staff, residents, family members and carers, as well as the home environment, and its links with external organisations.

The SIG aims to:

- provide platforms for discussion and debate;
- facilitate the development of research collaborations and funding proposals;
- increase research capacity;
- promote methodological development around the novel challenges in care homes research; and
- support the dissemination and application of research findings to improve the lives of residents, carers and other stakeholders.

Since our original meeting in 2019, the SIG has grown to 132 members.



The SIG committee

		
<p>Christine Brown Wilson Co-chair</p>	<p>Maria Horne Co-chair</p>	<p>Laura Brown Secretary and Treasurer</p>
		
<p>Mark Jayes Communication Lead</p>	<p>Kathy Curtis Care home Sector Engagement Co-Lead</p>	<p>Chad Witcher Care home Sector Engagement Co-Lead</p>



Chair persons annual report

On behalf of the Committee are delighted to welcome you to the inaugural annual general report for Care Home Special Interest Group (SIG) of the British Society of Gerontology (BSG). This BSG Special Interest Group is an opportunity to bring together like minded people who wish to improve the care and experience of people residing in care homes through research. This is our inaugural annual report which provides an opportunity to reflect and look back at what has been achieved since our inception.

We established the executive committee of the SIG and allocated committee roles in September, 2019 and received approval from the BSG to form the SIG in December 2019. Special mention here goes to our secretary Laura Brown who has been the driving force behind getting the SIG up and running and keeping the committee on track.

We officially launched the SIG at the BSG 2020 online conference and asked those that attended what they would like from the SIG. On the basis of these discussions, we agreed to run online symposiums 3 or 4 times per year on key topics of interest. An overview of these discussion can be found: <https://www.britishgerontology.org/about-bsg/special-interest-groups/care-homes>.

We also met with Sandra Prew, the new National Coordinator of ENRICH ('Enabling Research in Care Homes': <https://enrich.nihr.ac.uk/>), to agree plans for working together in the future, which included an agreement for bi-directional signposting and an ENRICH presence at our events. We have advertised our SIG on the CHAIN care homes group, resulting in new members. We are now exploring options to facilitate collaboration between members. We also have a very exciting opportunity for another member of the SIG to join our committee and extend our communications team- see the communications report below!

The highlights of our year has been our seasonal symposia via Zoom which have been well attended and a great opportunity for members to meet virtually. We invite SIG members to speak at these symposia along with external speakers. All our meetings have created very productive discussions via the Q&A feature following the speakers. A huge thank you to all our members who have attended these symposia and made them the success they have been.

We are delighted to announce that we have had our symposium abstract for the BSG conference accepted: *'The 2021 Symposium of the Care Homes Research Special Interest Group: Responding to the Impact of Covid-19'* with thanks to all our members who submitted abstracts for this. We look forward to welcoming our members to this conference symposium.

We recognise that the last 12 months in particular have been challenging for all during the Covid-19 pandemic and wish to thank the committee and our membership for their support during these challenging times.

Christine Brown Wilson and Maria Horne, Co-chairs



Key events

BSG Care Homes Research SIG Inaugural Conference Symposium 2nd July, 2020: Promoting wellbeing in care homes

Overview: Members were invited to provide abstracts of their research activity that aligned with the objectives of the SIG. In reviewing the submitted abstracts, a clear focus on wellbeing emerged and the following three abstracts were presented in the symposium.

Volunteer-led Behavioural Activation for treatment of depression in care homes: Associate Professor Christina Bryant, University of Melbourne.

Abstract

Symptoms of depression are highly prevalent and undertreated in residential aged care facilities/care homes. Behavioural activation is a simple, cost-effective psychosocial intervention that might be appropriate to help reduce depression and improve well-being in this setting. The purpose of this study was to investigate the feasibility and efficacy of an eight-week, volunteer-led behavioural activation intervention designed for depressed RACF residents.

This feasibility study employed a single-arm design, where outcomes were measured at baseline, post-intervention and 3-month follow-up. RACF residents with depressive symptoms and healthy volunteers were invited to participate. Intervention feasibility was assessed on six a priori determined domains. Depression, anxiety and flourishing were included as outcomes using intention-to-treat analysis. Seventeen residents with depressive symptoms and 13 volunteers were successfully recruited within the expected six-month timeframe. Both residents and volunteers were satisfied with the intervention (7/8), and there was a high (87%) completion rate. The intervention was associated with a large and statistically significant reduction in resident depressive symptoms, $d = -1.14$, with the effect increasing to $d = 2.82$ when comparing baseline to 3-month follow-up. This 8-week volunteer led behavioural activation intervention was found to be feasible and acceptable to depressed RACF residents. The intervention was effective in ameliorating depression. A larger randomized controlled trial is warranted.



Sativex® for the Treatment of Agitation in Dementia (STAND trial) - a feasibility study: Chris Albertyn, Kings College London.

Abstract

People living with dementia often experience a myriad of behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD). Anxiety and agitation are highly common within BPSD, negatively impacting their health, accelerating dementia progression, and are distressing both to patients and those caring for them. They also cost society a great deal, with increased hospitalisations, cost of care and earlier institutionalisation. Unfortunately, current treatments for these symptoms do not work very well and have a lot of unwanted side-effects. Recently, cannabis-based medicinal products have emerged as potentially safer alternative candidates for agitation as they display effective anti-nausea, anti-anxiety and analgesic properties. However, there is little systematic and robust evidence support these encouraging early reports. Moreover, we specifically hope to investigate Sativex®, administered as an oral-spray, containing 50% delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and 50% cannabidiol (CBD) for agitation in dementia. This combination is particularly pertinent as THC reduces pain, anxiety and sleep disturbances; and CBD reduces delusions and hallucinations.

We will be conducting a mixed-methods, randomised, double-blind, parallel group, placebo-controlled phase II clinical trial, recruiting 60 people with dementia displaying behavioural symptoms from nursing homes, with the aim to assess the safety, feasibility & acceptability within a nursing home context, and estimate the effectiveness of Sativex® for agitation in dementia.

How can we best support the care home community through research: Developing a research network for care homes in Wales: Stephanie Green, Swansea University.

Abstract

The pan-Wales Enabling Research in Care Homes (ENRICH Cymru) network is affiliated with the regional ENRICH networks in England and Scotland, in development since 2012. ENRICH Cymru was developed in 2018 in response to a growing momentum to better support and involve the care home community in Wales to be part of the research agenda, and ultimately to benefit from more research opportunities. The network in Wales promotes the exchange of research ideas and knowledge, and fosters the co-creation of research relevant to the current issues in the Care Home sector. Above all, ENRICH Cymru considers Care home managers and staff as the experts in research. This presentation comes at a critical point in time for the care home community and would welcome discussions around how care homes can be better supported to be part of research. This presentation provided an overview of the ENRICH network in the Welsh context, with a particular focus on empowering the care home community to be part of research during a pandemic. Some of the opportunities, challenges and impact of the current pandemic for supporting research in care homes were highlighted, followed by an interesting discussion.



Autumn Symposium 24th November, 2020: Promoting independence and wellbeing among those living with dementia in long-term care/care homes

Overview: The prevalence of dementia is predicted to increase as our population ages. As the dementia progresses, many older adults with dementia will require advanced care – typically offered from within a residential care setting. Given this is the case for millions of people worldwide, it is important to explore ways in which these settings can support residents' independence and wellbeing for as long as possible. In this symposium, supporting independence and wellbeing was explored from two distinct, but related, perspectives and attended by over 60 people.

Material Citizenship: Functional objects for meaningful lives (Dr Kellyn Lee).

Dr Kellyn Lee is a Chartered Psychologist and Research Fellow in Ageing and Dementia, and Co-Director of the Alzheimer's Society funded Doctoral Training Centre for Dementia Care – University of Southampton, UK. Kellyn is responsible for the development and management of the Enabling Research in Care Homes (ENRICH) toolkit website and has experience of working on many ageing and dementia research projects. She currently leads on an impact project working with a care organisation to develop Material Citizenship as an online training programme for care home staff.

Abstract

Materiality has become an increasingly important topic in sociological studies of healthcare. How objects support the identity of people with a dementia in care homes is an emerging area. Whilst previous research had tended to focus on sentimental or cherished items (such as photographs and keepsakes) often considered for their comforting and 'homely' affordances, less attention has been given to functional objects (such as a pair of curling tongs or a vacuum cleaner) as a mechanism to maintain identity and encourage activity.

It is widely believed that older people moving into a care home are encouraged to bring items in from home however, only certain items are encouraged and these often carry caveats. Once in a care home people may often find themselves having to adjust their day-to-day activities to fit the task-orientated routine of care home life. The lack of personal possessions and access to functional objects can amplify barriers for residents to reach their optimal performance, reduce agency and increase dependency on care home staff.



The role of exercise in preventing falls and fractures for long-term care residents with dementia

Dr Caitlin McArthur is Assistant Professor in the School of Physiotherapy at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Dr McArthur's research focuses on improving the effectiveness of and access to rehabilitation for people living with chronic health conditions across the continuum of care, particularly home and long-term care. She is interested in fall and fracture prevention and improving functional mobility.

Abstract

Current evidence for the effectiveness and role of exercise in fall and fracture prevention is mixed. Recent systematic reviews have identified that exercise as a single intervention does not prevent falls in long-term care, but exercise as part of a multifactorial intervention (e.g., medication review, environmental assessment) does. The evidence for exercise as a fracture prevention strategy in long-term care is limited. Most studies to date do not include residents with significant cognitive impairment making the generalizability of the evidence limited to residents with good cognition. Further, few studies have examined the ethical decisions around encouraging independent mobility which may increase the risk for falls and fractures.



Winter Symposium 26th Jan 2021: Developing Solutions to Support Care Homes during the COVID pandemic.

Overview: Care homes have been at the forefront of managing the COVID-19 pandemic with limited resources in managing challenging situations presented by the pandemic. For example, since April 2020, the death rates of residents have exceeded death rates in hospitals and where deaths in hospitals are now declining, deaths in care homes continue to rise. It has been clear from media reports that many care homes have worked tirelessly to support vulnerable older people and their families through the most challenging of times. This symposium considered how digital solutions and providing enhanced health care support has supported care homes in the pandemic. This symposium was again attended by over 60 people.

Evaluation of the Enhanced Universal Support Offer to Care Homes across the NEY Region

Dr Sally Fowler Davis is Associate Professor and Research Portfolio Lead in the Organisation in Health & Care Advanced Wellbeing Research Centre (AWRC), Sheffield Hallam University. Sally works across the health, care sector and the university to develop and lead collaborative research proposals and anchor research activity within the health and care system. Recent work across North East and Yorkshire Region includes an evaluation of the community services offer to the care home sector during Covid19 that has re-confirmed the important role of integrated care teams and rehabilitation. In the Sheffield City Region, Sally has undertaken an analysis of the communities and people affected by Covid19 admissions and is now co-designing the rehabilitation hub and associated digital data architecture.

Abstract

There are over 2300 care homes in the North East and Yorkshire Region (NE&Y), caring for some of the most vulnerable people in their communities. With rising rates of COVID-19 infection in April 2020 and 90% of care homes predicted to be affected, a set of universal principles were developed by NHS England and Improvement (North East and Yorkshire Region, NE&Y) to provide proactive and co-ordinated support to underpin the delivery of safe care to all residents, in response to the challenges of the pandemic. The Enhanced Universal Support Offer (EUSO) was built on strategic plans to deliver the NHS Long Term Plan, to improve support to care homes. Appreciative enquiry was selected with representative stakeholders, from across the region contributing to the study. Qualitative data analysis was undertaken using NVivo to develop a thematic analysis followed by a consensus exercise and charting of the data into a framework. Appreciative enquiry was a helpful method to enable open and transparent discussion about the impact of the EUSO delivered at pace and in response to a pandemic. The evaluation demonstrates an increased appreciation of the policy and principles within the enhanced offer and value of the investment and focus on care home residents and workforce. Enablers to implementation are important to identify and embed within the ongoing learning and develop a consistent and sustained approach to the care home sector. The evaluation also reflected a need to appreciate the care homes' knowledge and experience of resident wellbeing, and more fully involve them in the design of the support.



Exploiting digital care for older people during a pandemic

Professor Martin J Vernon qualified as a doctor in 1988 in Manchester. He trained as a Geriatrician and General Internal Physician in the North West of England and London before becoming an NHS Consultant in Manchester in 1999 where he practices medicine. He has a MA in Medical Ethics and Law from King's College London, teaches these subjects at Salford University and was appointed Visiting Professor at the University of Chester in 2016.

Between 2016 and 2019 he was the National Clinical Director for Older People at NHS England. He has led multiple national workstreams including development of the 2019 NHS Long Term Plan Ageing Well Programme and now advises the NHS Improvement same day emergency care for frailty programme.

Abstract

Between 2 March and 12 June 2020, following the first wave of the pandemic, 18,562 residents of care homes in England died with Covid-19 most of these aged 65 and over. This represented almost 40% of all deaths involving Covid-19 in England during this period. Of these deaths, 13,844 (76%) happened in care homes themselves while nearly all of the remainder occurred in a hospital. During the same period, 28,186 'excess deaths' were recorded in care homes in England, representing a 46% increase compared with the same period in previous years.

In 2019 NHS England published a Long Term Plan which was funded for 5 years and set out plans to make substantial new investment in primary and community health care for older people, including the establishment of primary care networks to support provide multidisciplinary support for older people with frailty and a national deployment of enhanced health support to care homes. Implementing these plans during a pandemic has presented additional substantial challenges. But it has also created new opportunities to exploit existing and develop new digital technologies to provide safe and effective care to all care home residents and avoid repetition of experiences in the first wave.

In Greater Manchester new digital technology has been developed and implemented during the pandemic to support care homes using a collaborative co-design approach between clinicians, the academic health science network and a technology company. The approach deployed has used simple carer observational data which can be entered quickly and configured for multiple professional user audiences to improve proactive and reactive care, including identifying and responding quickly to new outbreaks and rolling out the vaccination programme.



Communications report

The SIG has a dedicated webpage on the BSG website: <https://www.britishgerontology.org/about-bsg/special-interest-groups/care-homes>

This webpage contains updated information about the SIG aims and objectives, committee members and our contact details. We also post information about SIG activities (e.g., our regular symposia) on this page.

Current social media activity focuses on use of the SIG Twitter account, managed by Mark Jayes. We now have 414 followers from a range of disciplines and settings. This number is growing monthly. We tend to attract most new followers during / after our online symposia. We have sent 115 tweets from the account. We generally tweet to advertise our own events and any important news items relating to care homes research. Our tweets about our symposia have created over 4500 impressions (this means the total number of times the tweet has been seen). The SIG handle is often tagged by researchers to publicise research study recruitment and professional development opportunities. Our twitter handle is: @BSGcarehomes

Activity development objectives:

- To generate more tweets about care homes research news and opportunities;
- To continue to grow our number of Twitter followers;
- To consider developing a SIG Blog, using a platform such as WordPress.com. The blog would be used to enable SIG members to share more detailed information about research opportunities, learning and development events, useful sources of evidence, etc. A new committee member role would be created to manage the blog. The new member role would have responsibility for: developing and maintaining the blogsite; eliciting content from SIG members to populate the blog; publicising the blog (with the support of the SIG's communications lead).

Mark Jayes

Communications Lead

SIG Membership

We have continued to increase the membership of our SIG. Our current membership stands at 132 people.



Annual financial statement

In the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 financial years, we had an annual budget of up to £500 (received from the BSG from sponsorship by Ageing and Society). We hope to have a similar budget for future years, although are currently awaiting formal confirmation from the BSG of this. Our spends to date have been:

(a) Financial year 2019-2020

- **Nov 2019:** £42.80 to cover standard class return train travel from Manchester to Birmingham for member of SIG committee (LB) to attend meeting with members of ENRICH
- **Nov 2019:** £34.99 to cover one night's hotel accommodation in Birmingham for member of SIG committee (LB) to attend meeting with members of ENRICH
- **March 2020:** £50 payment to design student at University of Portsmouth to cover design of SIG logo.

Total claim for 2019-2020 year: £127.79

(b) Financial year 2020-2021

- No spends to report

Laura Brown

Secretary and Treasurer



Future plans

While we have had success with social media presence via twitter we are now looking at opportunities for members to communicate with other members.

We wish to extend the board to include someone who would like to manage the Blog as a mechanism for members of the SIG to talk about their activities/contributions

Moving forward. Further activities will include seasonal meetings – save the date for the Ethics and Governance – Sept 2021

If you would like to get involved contact the committee via email: bsgcarehomes@gmail.com

Thank you for all your support.