



# Supporting older adults with speech or swallowing difficulties: the experiences of homecare staff

Helen Moores-Poole  
February 2024

BE THE DIFFERENCE

Why speech  
and  
swallowing?

Personal experience – Clinical  
Doctorate – small local study

Why care at  
home?

Key support in a person's life

[Scotland - Support provided or funded  
by health and social care partnerships in  
Scotland 2019/20 - 2020/21 - Insights in  
social care: statistics for Scotland -  
Publications - Public Health Scotland](#)

Paucity of evidence, paucity of  
structures, growing demand: 68k  
in Scotland

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# Home care in England

Views from commissioners and providers

Editor: Simon Bottery  
Authors: Laura Jefferson, Laura Bennett, Patrick Hall, Julia Cream, Veronica Dale, Matthew Honeyman, Yvonne Birks, Karen Bloor, Richard Murray



Health and Social Care Standards  
My support, my life



A quality framework for support services (care at home, including supported living models of support)

For use in self-evaluation, scrutiny and improvement support  
November 2020



BRINGING HOME CARE  
A VISION FOR REFORMING HOME CARE IN SCOTLAND

# Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation of Social Care in Scotland

NICE National Institute for Health and Care Excellence



# Home care: delivering personal care and practical support to older people living in their own homes

NICE guideline  
Published: 17 September 2015

[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng21](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng21)

## Policy Drivers

**In Scotland:** Mental Health, Dementia, Palliative Care, Chronic Pain, Neurological Conditions strategies & SIGN; Focus on: Health Inequalities, Hospital at Home, Right to Speak, Frailty, Ageing Well, National Care Service & Integration  
**AHPs:** Public Health Implementation Plan, Rehabilitation Plan  
**RCSLT:** Position papers on thickened fluids, Care homes, Dementia, Eating, Drinking, Swallowing competencies, IDDSI, mouthcare

# Evidence Base



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What did I do?

What matters  
to you?

What did I  
find?

Quiz: How  
many folk a  
week? 1 → ?

Becoming

Managing

Letting Go

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# Aphasia

## What did I find?

People with Dementia, Stroke, Parkinson's, end of life, MND, Multiple Sclerosis

Anxiety around 'chatting and banter', the little things, rephrasing, visual cues and prompts, improv and the so what, mask wearing, the value of information

Getting to know the person

Continuity of care

Supporting with therapy

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# Alternative and Augmentative Communication

## What did I find?

Most commonly low tech, written word e.g. whiteboards, notepads, notes section on tablet or memory aids e.g. calendars

Challenges around understanding

Frustration & Feeling guilty

Working together “the longer I supported them the easier I find it to understand”

Lack of awareness of possibilities

Problem solving, reinventing the wheel, applying existing knowledge

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# Dysphagia

## What did I find?

Thoughts around technical process of assisting to eat, time, anxiety, thickened fluids, consent

Appears less common than care home population

Poor knowledge around IDDSI

Poor understanding of 'why'

Lack of awareness of possibilities

Good awareness around medication, alternative formats, preference for F2F training

Person centred, problem solving, turning to Team



# What can we learn?

Desire for information, collaboration and to provide person centred care

*“if speech and language come in they wouldn't explain to us, right they would just leave us dos and don'ts.”*

*“it was the lady before me whose job role that I took over she explained everything to me so I got everything from her, OK, and I'm assuming she's got it from either the lady before her, so it it's just the sharing information within the service.”*

Continuity of care, values based recruitment, the value of Teams

Complexity of role, Variation in experience

Quiz: Numbers of visits per wk ranged from 1 to ?

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## What's next?



Thoughts... what works in your area?  
How can we work more closely  
together?

For me: writing up, submission after  
summer, continue to challenge



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