

Outcomes of generalist day centres for older people: not just social inclusion and meals



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Day Centre Research Forum

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Day centres: *what we do and don't know!*

- ✗ Not regulated by Care Quality Commission
- ✗ No central register of day centres in England
- Difficult to know many things about day centres!
- Research evidence:
 - *Most English research in different policy context and about people with cognitive impairment*
 - *Very little research on day centres as whole entities*



- ✓ Largest out-of-home service used by 10% of publicly funded older people not arranging their own services
 - 1/2 physically frail/disabled, 1/5 dementia*

(Non evidence-based) perceptions

‘For some social care professionals and service users alike, day centres offer the ideal opportunity to provide targeted services to clients in a safe, stable environment. But others regard them as outdated and patronising, a service firmly stuck in the last century.’

Sale, A. U. 2005. Can a new day centre dawn? *Community Care*, 21 Jan, 30-31.

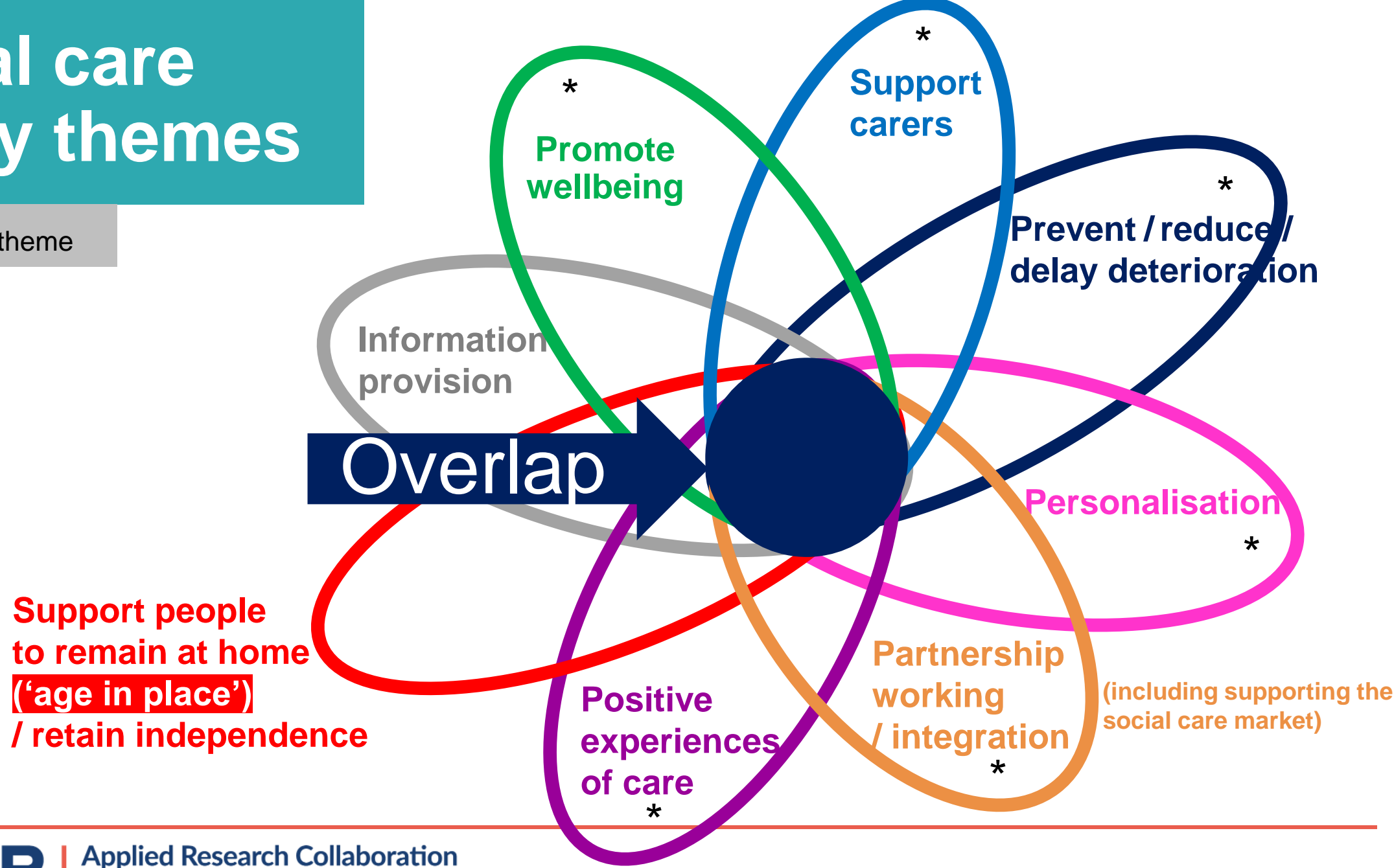


‘The cliched image, I’m sure, of day centres is that you sit there, passively. People bring you things - lukewarm cups of tea and biscuits – and the atmosphere is warm and there might be some nice, undemanding music bubbling away in the background, but, essentially, you are there as a passive pot plant.’

Andrew Marr in conversation with David Slater of Entelechy’s ‘Meet Me at The Albany’ arts project, BBC, 8th April 2019 www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0004019

Social care policy themes

* NHS policy theme



Decommissioning of day centres

Public funding cuts of up to 55% for day centres in 5 years to 2018

(FOI data from >40 councils)

(Green 2018)



Bolder Project - "Ain't Gonna...."

- Video of protest song against closure of charitable day centre, London

The study

AIM: To improve the understanding of day centres' purpose and role, how they are viewed and their use within a changing policy and practice context.

- 14 weekly visits to each day centre
Sep 2015-Oct 2016 (*56 days, 280 hrs*)
- Explored outcomes, experiences, views and perceptions:
 - ✓ qualitatively in interviews
 - ✓ using a validated quality of life measurement tool (ASCOT INT4) - *attenders, carers only* (outcomes)
- Thematic analysis (qualitative data)

Participants (n=69)

4 DAY CENTRES (generalist)

1 local authority (LA)
1 housing
association (HA)
2 vol. sector (V1, V2)

Older attenders, 23

Family carers of
attenders, 10

Day centre staff, 23
(6 managers,
7 volunteers,
10 frontline staff)

Local authority staff, 13
(5 commissioners,
8 signposters/referrers)

Profile of the 4 day centres

Characteristics

Buildings – varied facilities

Days operational: 1 - 5

Operated 4.5 - 6 hours (plus transport)

Referrals only / open (e.g. socially isolated) /mix

Attendance: 6-28 (*observed*)

Funding

Aims

- ✓ 2005-17 literature
- ✓ policy themes & outcome indicators

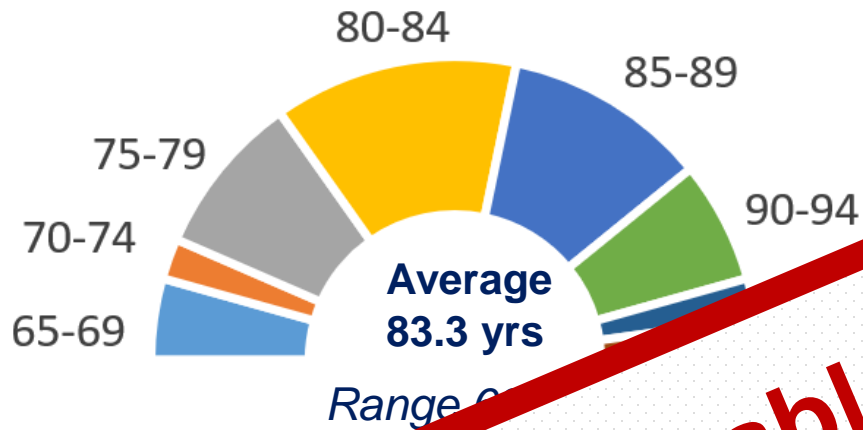
What happens?

- ✓ Informal time at start - arrival, refreshments, chatting
- ✓ Lunch
- ✓ Mid-afternoon refreshments
- ✓ Optional organised group activities (influenced by facilities available)
 - *regular, timetabled activities*
 - *programmes varied*
 - *informal, semi-structured session*
 - *raffles, table sales etc.*

Some activities therapeutic or rehabilitative

Alternative options

Characteristics: attenders



**'vulnerable older people'
= those most at risk of a
decline in independence
& mental wellbeing**

(National Institute for Health and Care Excellence 2015: para 1.5.3)

Hugely varied

→ length of a

→ activities ou

Only 1/3 had help
care workers

Day centre was the

• 91% male
(Widowers, 22% divorced)

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Health conditions or
affecting greatly on

• Higher risk of mental ill-health
because of social support network
type (PANT)

• Only 2 without 'apparent
vulnerability' or 'frailty' (EFS) (9%)

Characteristics: volunteers, staff, family carers

Volunteers

Aged 57-77 years

All but one female

All White British/English

All had at least one type of health condition or disability

Average of 3.7 years in role

- average 6.7 hours weekly

Staff

Aged 22-60 years

All but one female

Ethnicities:

- White 7
- Black 3

6 UK born

Average 8.7 years in job

Family carers

Mainly adult children (n=6)

- 2 spouses, 1 grandchild
1 sibling

Aged 28–82 years

- half aged 55-64

Mostly White British (n=8)

Mainly worked full or part time (n=6)

- 2 retired; 2 homemakers

4 co-resided with attenders

Does involvement with a day centre benefit people?



Qualitative interviews

- attenders, carers, volunteers & staff

Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit

- attenders, carers



“Added value”

People growing up after World War II are said to recognise welfare as a reassuring ‘safety-net’

Lymbery & Postle K. (2015)

Day centres as safety-nets for older people?

Outcomes for frontline volunteers and staff, carers?



“Added value” (1)

They come around. “Are you alright? What's the matter?” (Thomasina)

Sometimes when you are with somebody a lot and you think something is not quite right, but maybe I am just thinking it. Then when you get confirmation from other people, you think, okay, so maybe a trip to the doctor is in order. (Kate - carer)

*If I was working anywhere else like you wouldn't be so involved with the person. You wouldn't get to **know** them. (...) you kind of get to know when they are upset, when they are quiet. You know what I mean? If there is something bothering them. (Staff 3)*

“Added value” (2)

*I could get them [batteries] free from the hospital but I'd have to take a taxi to the hospital to get them. So I used to buy them from Boots. But [manager] said “oh no, don't buy them. We'll give them to you.” ... That's another thing that's been a great help. (...) I can clean part of it but I can't take the things apart and clean it properly.
(Francine)*

*And then eventually heard about the holiday (...) I **made** myself go and it did me the world of good because since then, my **dark** side seems to have lifted. Although I've physically got all these problems, mentally I'm fine now, really. (Ruth)*

When it's working well, it's brilliant, because it means that hopefully, nobody will slip through. There will always be somebody to signpost to.' (Manager 1)

“Added value” (3a)

*The interaction and I suppose it's like having an extended family, which is a lifeline, isn't it, for wellbeing and everything....I've never been in a **job** where there's so much intimacy, closeness. (Volunteer 4)*

My parents have now moved away from the area. So, I haven't got that immediate contact with older people. (Staff 1)

There is oodles of teamwork here. It's just great. (Staff 10)

*It's not only that we are **working** with them where you build a kind of **relationship** with them as well. (Staff 9)*

I get to learn things about UK as I was not born and bred here... Some of their favourite food. The way they do certain things. The Queen's tea party and things like that. (Staff 9)

“Added value” (3b)

*(...) they tell you when you start working here is how much they **value** and how much they look **forward** to it and almost they said like it's like dead days in between' (Staff 5)*

*I've never come into work fed up, saying I don't want to do it. (...) It's looking **forward** to coming to work and **enjoying** it. (Staff 3)*

*... this has helped me gradually bounce back and feel **me** again (Volunteer 5)*

It gives me something to get up and look forward to. I think, as a volunteer if you love what you do you get as much back as you give to them if you can make them smile and feel special (Volunteer 2)

How do people feel about day centres?

*Oh, I **love** going. Oh yes. Yes. (Kenneth)*

*I love it, I really do like working here. It's just done so much for **me** you see, in general. (Volunteer 5)*

I look forward to it all the time. (Linda - carer)

*I am here to help, but there's a thin line as to where I'm a user or a helper. (...) It's a lifeline for **me**. (...) I think I'd miss it if I didn't have this. It's the best voluntary work I've done and I've tried different voluntary sectors. (...) I would use it as a place to come to not be at home isolated. (Volunteer 4)*

I am proud of what I do. (Staff 8)

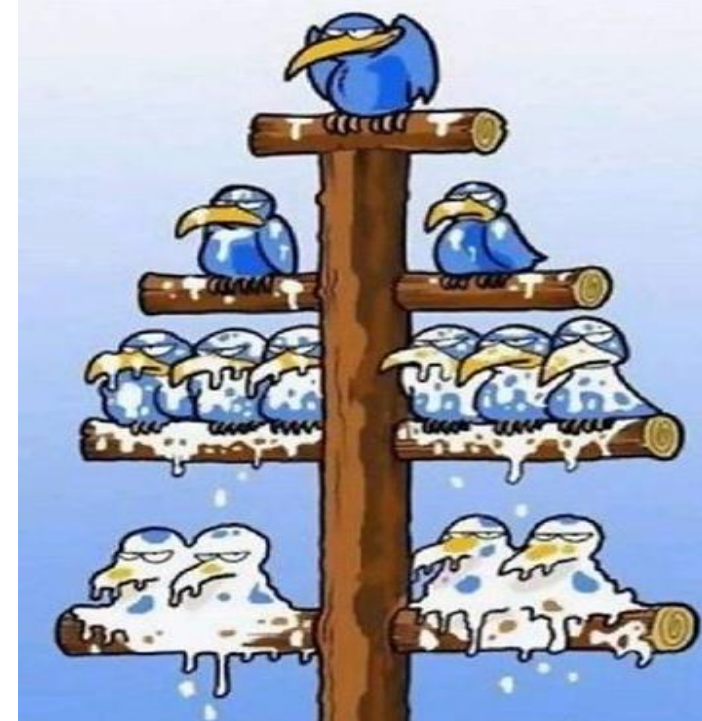
Conclusions and implications?

Highly policy-relevant outcomes

Role of the environment

Demonstrating impact important

- What evidence is acceptable to whom?
- Will it be used?



Broader potential & role obscured by non-evidence based assumptions?

Read all about it!

Ageing & Society (2020), 40, 73-104
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REVIEW ARTICLE

Day centres for older people: a systematically conducted scoping review of literature about their benefits, purposes and how they are perceived

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Evidence briefing for commissioners: day centres for older people

February 2018

A research study undertaken in 2014-17 investigated the role and purpose of generalist day centres for older people. It shows the benefits gained by attendees, their family carers and centre volunteers are precisely the outcomes targeted by policy. It also identified the potential for centres' development and optimisation to improve older people's health and wellbeing, support carers and maximise the impact of health and social care services. This briefing summarises the study's findings, their relevance and implications for commissioners.

Day centres are a life-enriching gateway

- to companionship, activities, the outside world
- to practical support, information, other services
- to the community and to enjoyment
- for socially isolated people unable to go out without support.

Day centre attendees and family carers attribute quality of life improvements directly to their own or a relative's day centre attendance. Attendance makes a unique contribution to attendees' lives.

Day centres act as communities that 'enable' and offset isolation at home or loss, as well as promoting wellbeing in volunteers and giving job satisfaction to staff. The continuity provided by a group environment is fundamental to this.

Day centres offer added value

- beyond the purposes for which they are commissioned or funded
- beyond what may be assumed to be covered by an aim of improving quality of life or supporting people to remain at home
- beyond what attendees may have expected, given their reasons for attending.

Day centres also make a unique wellbeing contribution to the lives of their volunteers and staff.

They provide practical support and information in a supportive environment and facilitate attendees' access to other services, either at centres or elsewhere.

Health and wellbeing monitoring at day centres benefits attendees, carers and professionals who supported or referred to them. Trusting relationships with staff and their background knowledge of attendees facilitate monitoring of attendees.

Location in a shared community building may offer additional advantages: perceived easier access to and greater acceptability of centres, availability of services or facilities that are likely not to take place or be made available at standalone centres, and more opportunities for community integration.

The underlying nature of day centres is for long-term maintenance and monitoring rather than being services that deliver specified improvements from which people get discharged. However, fixed-term improvement interventions might also take place at some day centres.

Under-used resources with development potential

- Local authority participants' creative ideas for the future of day centres included potential partnership working with other parts of social care and the NHS to further develop day centres' role as a community resource.
- In maximising the use of centre buildings, centres are likely to become more visible and 'accessible' to people's eyes.
- There is very low awareness of day centres before attending one.
- Mainly, day centres are not stigmatised or perceived as outdated services.

I don't think I'd rather be anywhere else but here. I really do enjoy being here... I am glad to come (Attendee)

All I can say is that, anyone who doesn't go there is missing out on something (Volunteer)

I've enriched my life... I don't give me something other to look about and to think about (Attendee)

I get conversation instead of talking to myself (Attendee)

Well, it gets me out once a week, which I wouldn't do otherwise (Volunteer)

I'd certainly miss it if anything happened to it, and I think the others would (Attendee)

I enjoy when she gets the engine in (Family carer)

She gets a laugh and she gets a social engagement. It gets her out of her flat and... (That's) money well spent... It's a good value for her because it does all those things about keeping her mentally and socially active (Family carer)

I give me freedom, a bit of space, a bit of freedom. I can sit in my living room on my own. It's one thing, really, the thing... It releases me. Otherwise I'm just highly stressed. I'm like, you know when you're highly stressed, you're ready to burst... I don't go to sleep in my own house it's just the best feeling (Family carer)

I'd miss it if it didn't have this, it's the best relationship work I've done and I've tried different voluntary sections (Volunteer)

She never come into work but she's saying I don't want to do it... it's thinking forward to coming to work and enjoying it (Staff)

 Jobs and Careers ▼ Inform Ever

The heart of your social care career

Day centres are important to older people – lack of money shouldn't jeopardise this

New research shows that day centres deliver valued outcomes, such as promoting wellbeing and supporting people to retain independence

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ALL PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE:

kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/katharine.orellana.html OR

[kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/projects/the-future-of-day-centres-for-older-people-in-search-of-the-evidence-on-their-role-outcomes-and-commissioning\(32644664-e9ca-4681-8124-6e26ea439b05\).html](http://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/en/projects/the-future-of-day-centres-for-older-people-in-search-of-the-evidence-on-their-role-outcomes-and-commissioning(32644664-e9ca-4681-8124-6e26ea439b05).html)

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Image credits

Land that time forgot

<https://i.jeded.com/i/the-land-that-time-forgot-1975.25926.jpg>

Marmite

www.marmite.co.uk/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwwLHLBRDEARIsAN1A1Q68WbsW4UZH5fivyqSjQJjynWY8ztsl8c4P-4tbtlx0U2dPZMgT4P8aAihhEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

Safety net

<https://elastisys.com/2015/08/28/over-capacity-is-not-a-safety-net/safety-net-modified/>

Thank you
for listening.

Questions?
Comments?