Can feedback to care home staff help improve residents’ quality of life?

Margaret Butterworth Care Home Forum
14th May 2014

Ann-Marie Towers, Sinead Rider, Nick Smith and Elizabeth Welch

www.pssru.ac.uk
The study

• Funded by NIHR School for Social Care Research
• Can the Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT) be used to give care homes feedback on residents’ social care-related quality of life?
• Can we measure any changes/improvements in residents’ social care related quality of life 3 months after giving homes the feedback?
What is ASCOT?

- A collection of research instruments designed to measure ‘social care related quality of life’
- Different versions for different settings and client groups
- Measures the domains of quality of life most affected by social care services....
The domains of SCRQoL

- Accommodation cleanliness and comfort
- Personal cleanliness and comfort
- Food and drink
- Personal safety
- Social participation
- Occupation
- Control over daily life
- Dignity
The care homes toolkit (CH3)

• Collects information about residents’ SCRQoL through:
  – Observations
  – Interviews with residents, staff, family members

• Uses this information to rate residents’:
  – Current SCRQoL (what life is like now)
  – Expected SCRQoL (what life would be like without help)

• Also give us rich data about the lived experience of residents
How did we use this information?

• Feedback sessions with staff and managers:
  – The areas in which residents have a good quality of life and why
  – The areas in which residents’ quality of life could be improved
  – The impact of the care and support on residents’ quality of life

• Facilitated discussion about our findings and how residents’ SCRQoL might be improved
Who took part?

• 4 care homes (two registered nursing)

• 60 residents

• Plus a pilot of 2 care homes – 15 residents

• Bulk of the fieldwork carried out by two researchers
Staff perspectives of the research

• Generally positive view of the data collection and feedback process from staff and managers
• Staff comfortable with observation process, especially once they became familiar with the research and the study
• Research interviews sometimes viewed as a strain on their time
Residents’ SCRQoL

• Care and support provided by the homes improved residents’ social care related quality of life.
• Homes were very good at meeting basic needs (food and drink, clean and safe and keeping the environment clean and homely)
• They were not so good at meeting higher order needs (enabling residents to have choice, remain occupied and social engaged)
Was the feedback helpful?

“I completely changed the whole setup of the working day. So I looked at smaller groups of residents, because the staff were coming back to me and saying, ‘We haven’t got time to complete all of our tasks with so many residents.’ .... They now have more time to spend with the residents in terms of social care; the little things, painting nails, and so on and so forth, and the lipstick and it’s all very, very important. So that took the onus off of a task-orientated workload.”

(Care Home Manager Nursing National Chain)
Did the feedback work?

• Despite our feedback being well received and managers telling us they made changes because if it, SCRQoL did not change significantly over the study.

• However, residents’ health and ability to care for themselves declined significantly during the study.
What does this mean?

• Small study, so must be careful when interpreting the results.
• Homes compensated for residents’ decline.
• Changes in practice were made but...
  – 3 months was too soon
• Feedback a the level of the individual resident might be more effective than at the home level.
Future research

• Integrating ASCOT into care planning?
• Provide feedback about individual residents so that staff can use this in their person-centred plans.
• Review SCRQoL after 6 months to allow time for changes in practice to impact on residents’ lives.
• Consider the burden of research on homes and how we might alleviate this/compensate for this
  – Financial compensation for staff time?
Acknowledgements

• We would like to thank Ann Netten, NIHR School for Social Care Research, the members of the project advisory group, the residents, relatives and friends of residents, the staff and management of all the homes that took part in the study
NIHR School for Social Care

This presentation reports on independent research funded by the NIHR School for Social Care Research. The views expressed in this presentation are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR School for Social Care Research or the Department of Health/NIHR.