

Do social workers consider there to be an 'optimal' time for a person with dementia to move to a care home?

Workforce perspectives on the care and support of older people in England

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Outline

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Background



Moving to a care home may be **difficult decision** for some people with dementia and their carers.

For many, it appears that residential care is still “the last resort” with limited options and very low expectations of care (Alzheimer’s Society 2013a).

People with dementia are often **not included in decision**, potentially impacting on longer-term adjustment in the care home.

Background

Determining **when (if any) is an “optimal time”** to make this move may be challenging.

Dementia Priority Setting Partnership - Alzheimer Society and James Lind Alliance (Alzheimer's Society 2013b)

“When is the optimal time to move a person with dementia into a care home setting?”

Aims of the study

3 year, 3 part, multi-methods study which investigates:

1. **Factors** that affect decision to move

2. **Drivers** of this decision

3. What (if any) may be considered an '**optimal**' time to move



Fact sheets to aid decision-making process

Study design

PART 1	PART 2	PART 3
<p>Systematic Review</p> <p>Thorough search in existing evidence to identify gaps in our understanding</p> <p><i>Published: International Psychogeriatrics</i></p>	<p>Qualitative Interviews</p> <p>Retrospective experiences and reviews of a move</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social workers• Care home managers• Family carers• People with dementia	<p>Factorial Survey</p> <p>Discrete factors Series of vignettes Factorial survey Up to 100 dementia care practitioners</p> <p>Multiple regression models will be used to determine factors (or a combination of factors) that impact on a decision</p>

Methods

- Recruitment was through managers and team leaders
- Has experience of supporting a person with dementia to move to a care home.
- Phenomenological qualitative approach
- Face-to-face semi-structured interviews - transcribed
- Analysed thematically
- Short demographic form



Participants

20 social workers from 3 Local Authorities

- 2 men
- diverse ethnicity
- 24-60 year olds

- 1-24 years of experience
- 7 senior social workers, 10 social workers, 3 care managers
- 4 social workers had post graduate degrees, care managers had NVQ Level 3
- 14 community, 5 worked in hospitals, 1 both

Findings

1. Factors considered during decision making
2. Process of the move
3. Is there an “optimal” (or best) time?



1. Factors considered during decision-making

Telecare

Multiple visits

Complete care package?

Day centre

Everything done to respect these

Wishes of person with dementia

“Personally, I think it would be really nice if people were looking into that [care home] option at an earlier stage. [Family relatives] haven't talked about the future, especially not with the person. They've kind of just tried to not really use the dementia word.” (SW02)

“She was so vehement about wanting to stay at home that we had to do all in our power to keep her at home, even if it meant things like . . . she did fall down the stairs, because she refused to put her proper slippers on. We knew that was a risk. But we knew that she actually wanted to stay at home, right the way through. And so, I was very reluctant to [move her].”

(SWo6)

Gas / electric appliances

Risks and safety

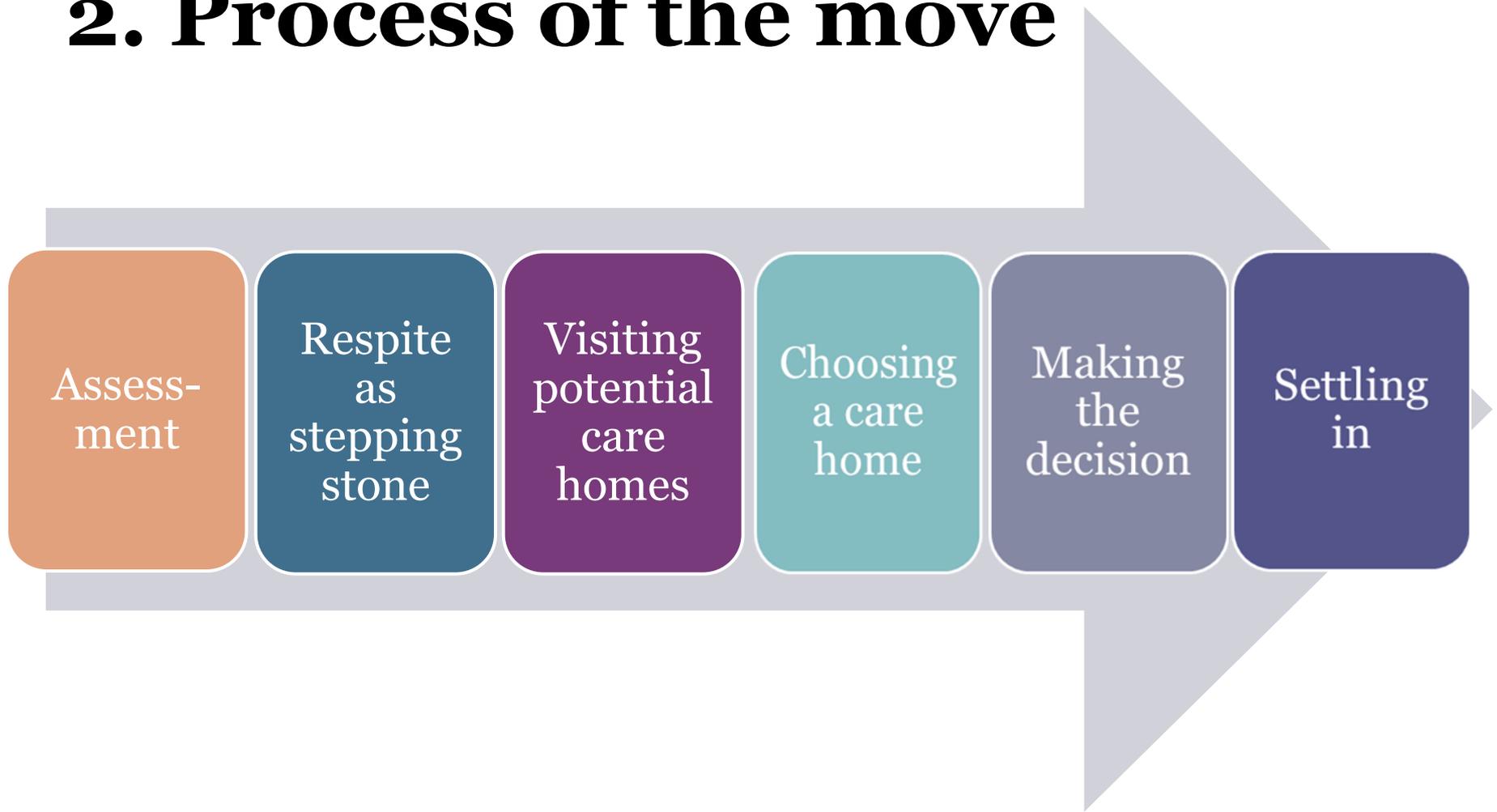
Walking outside at night

Perceived ability

Carer capacity to continue to care

24 hour care

2. Process of the move



Process of the move

Assessment

Generally started with assessment of needs

Including capacity assessments, where relevant

Process of the move

Respite as stepping stone

“[We say to them] “go in for a week, I’ll come in a couple of times during that week, we will talk about it, and I promise you at the end of that week, you’ll go back home and we’ll keep talking about it”. So I think respite is a really really useful way. You can't talk with somebody in their home about going into residential care, because they can't picture it, it fills them with fear, they don't understand it.” (SW06)

Process of the move

Visiting potential care homes

Did not always visit care homes

Rely on family/friends to do this

Sometimes brokerage firm

Sometimes an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) will visit

Would visit if no family or friend around

Process of the move

Choosing a care home

- # CQC ratings and review
- # Location
- # Stability of care team
- # Environment – valued “feel” for the place

“A lot of people are very anxious about what they see on telly and what happens to people. So we just say, “well you can ask questions, the CQC website. Go round and get a feel for the place. Go maybe once or twice.” (SW19)

Process of the move

Making the decision

- # Person with dementia being 'ready'
- # Often via best interest decision meeting: MDT + advance decisions + previous wishes

“Because sometimes you will have family members that will ring up and they want to take the lead with everything and actually is it appropriate for them?... Yes, they're their next of kin and it's important that we keep them involved. But at the end of the day, the person we are discharging should be at the heart of that process.” (SW05)

Process of the move

Settling in

Family most often see to this

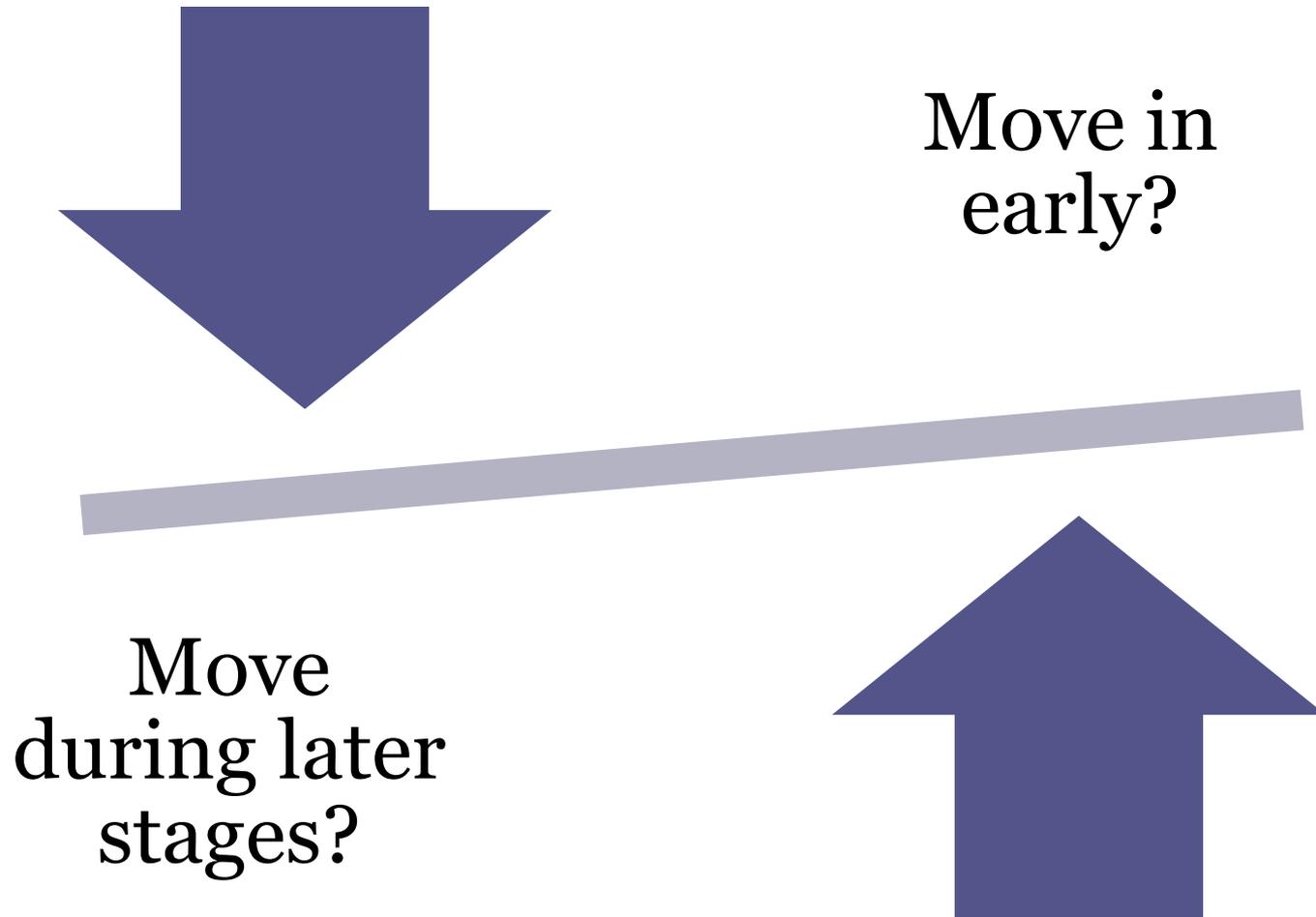
Social worker will help if no family/friends

Personal belongings, photos, furniture eases transition

Feeling well cared-for by compassionate staff

Conduct a 6 week's assessment/review

3. Is there an “optimal” (or best) time?



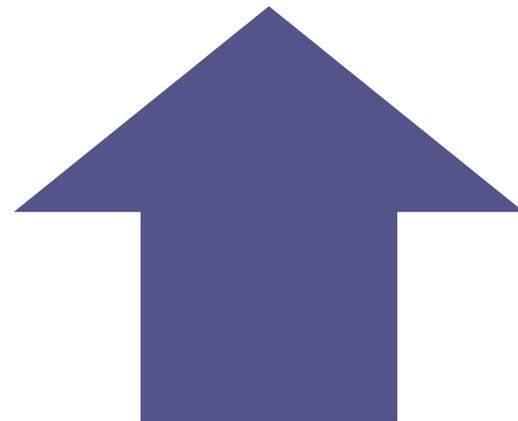
3. Is there an “optimal” (or best) time?

Awareness can help with the decision making

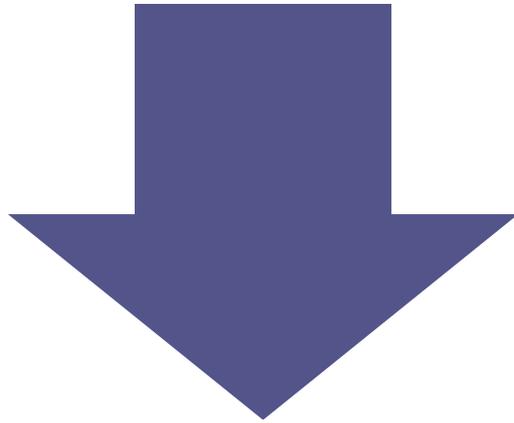
“I think it's better to give them the opportunity to adapt into such an environment and they do, they do sometimes.”
(SW14)

Eligibility for Local Authority funding problematic; might be easier for self-funders

Move in early?



3. Is there an “optimal” (or best) time?



Move
during later
stages?

Limited awareness can be beneficial in minimising distress

Waiting for a trigger, but avoid crisis

“Moving in too early, you are de-skilling someone. A lot of homes, they do things for you. You are in a 24 hour living environment, where they get you up at a certain time, they make tea for you, they make lunch for you. You don't really have that independence.” (SW10)

Concluding comments

Tremendous responsibility weighing up different factors to advise/make decision about moving a person with dementia to a care home

Acting in the best interest of the person with dementia

- Even if over-riding their wishes
- Reports of these having positive outcomes

The timing of the decision is difficult



Next steps

- Interview findings will help us develop real life stories (vignettes)
- Survey will ask people what they would do if faced with a similar story
- We will be able to ‘jiggle’ the stories so we know the most important consideration
- Campbell Killick and KCL statisticians



References

Alzheimer's Society. (2013b). *Outcomes of the James Lind Alliance Dementia Policy Setting Partnership.* London: Alzheimer's Society.

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Thank you!

Any questions/thoughts?

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