



# Mental Health and Dementia: developing equitable and rights based provision and practice

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# Dementia and Mental Health: Evidence Review

- Terminology: mild cognitive impairment, mental health problems, dementia
- Co-morbidity: depression, anxiety, psychosis
- Policy Context: Mental Health Task Force, Prime Minister's Challenge, NICE Guidance, Legislation: human rights, equality, capacity and care
- Evidence base
- Economic and social costs
- Care and service provision: at home, informal care; hospitals and nursing homes, by VCSE

# Review Findings

- Evidence is weak:
  - limited data on co-morbidities of mental health and dementia;
  - prevalence and experience are under-researched, poorly understood
  - diagnostic challenges
- Policy and guidance do not address co-morbidities
- Specialised services are limited
- People with early onset dementia are often not considered
- Provision and practice need to address under-served communities and groups
- Mental health of carers needs to be supported
- Opportunities for prevention (of occurrence, deterioration) are missed



# Mental Health and Dementia

- People living with mental health problems who develop dementia
- People living with dementia who develop mental health problems

*opportunities for prevention, support and care*



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# Mental Health and Dementia

## **Depression**

40% people with dementia experiencing depression

Depression in earlier life increases risk of dementia in later life two fold

Rate of dementia increases by 13% with every episode of depression leading to hospitalisation

## **Anxiety**

5% to 21% people with dementia experience anxiety

Higher in vascular dementia, decreases in severe stage of dementia

## **Psychosis**

41.1% people with Alzheimer's disease experience psychotic symptoms



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# Re-orienting Provision & Practice

Promote prevention by:

- addressing risk factors & wider determinants
- improving access to information and support

Provide appropriate & timely treatment:

- Pharmaceutical: research into effective medication
- Psychological: improving access to range of interventions (music, recreation, reminiscence, animal assisted therapies)
- Social: multisensory stimulation, exercise, peer support
- Liaison: increase access to specialist mental health liaison services in hospital

Support people to find their way around health and social care:

- Service navigators



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# Recommendations

- **Reorient provision and practice:** towards rights based approaches in order to:
  - value people living with dementia and mental health problems as equal citizens;
  - co-produce community based and collective solutions (including social inclusion interventions); and
  - promote engaged and active later life.
- **Alliances:** build relationships between representative mental health & dementia organisations, wider disability movement.
- **Data:** improve data collection and sharing.
- **Research:** find out what works in prevention, support and care; improve measures to include determinants as well as diagnosis.
- **Screening:** enhance co-morbid detection.
- **Training:** help staff to identify, support & care.
- **Guidance:** develop co-morbid guidance.
- **Carers:** assess and support independently.

