

My Home Life Admiral Nurses



Evaluating the role of Admiral Nurses in the Orders of St John Care Trust (OSJCT).

Background:

OSJCT was one of the first care home provider organisations to employ an Admiral Nurse to provide in-house dementia specialist consultancy, training, advice and support.

The role was created as part of OSJCT's clinical governance strategy to ensure excellence in care and nursing practice across its services.

Working in collaboration with Dementia UK and My Home Life, the role combined the expertise of dementia specialist nursing with the evidence-base of best practice in improving quality of life for those living, working and dying in care homes.

About the Association for Dementia Studies:

The Association for Dementia Studies is an active research and education centre. Our multi-professional team are experts in the field of person-centred dementia care and support.

Through research, education, consultancy and scholarship, we make a cutting-edge contribution to building evidence-based practical ways of working with people living with dementia and their families that enables them to live well.



Overview of key partners:

OSJCT is a charity that provides care in over 70 care homes as well as a domiciliary care service in seven independent living schemes.

The majority of homes are registered to provide residential care only, and so are without in-house nursing support.

The **Admiral Nurse** specialist dementia role was established by Dementia UK in 1994.

The traditional role of the Admiral Nurse provides support to family carers living in the community and caring for a person with dementia living in their own homes.

The role offers skilled assessment of the needs of family carers and people with dementia, as well as providing information and practical advice on the different aspects of care.

The care home model of Admiral Nursing is less well-established, although it is becoming more common.

My Home Life's vision of best practice is structured around eight themes which identify what evidence-based best practice in care homes for older people looks like in the 21st century.

It draws upon work which proposes that in the best care environments residents, families and staff all need to experience a sense of security, belonging, continuity, purpose, achievement and significance.

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Evaluation:

The evaluation sought to address four main questions:

- What impact has the My Home Life Admiral Nurse (MHLAN) role had on the care homes within OSJCT, their staff and the work they do?
- What impact has the MHLAN had on the individuals who attend dementia cafes, some of whom are living with dementia or caring for someone living with dementia in the community?
- Which competencies and attributes of the role make it most effective and how does this relate to traditional Admiral Nursing competencies and the *My Home Life* philosophy?
- What is the most appropriate case load of the MHLAN role within OSJCT care homes?

Findings:

The MHLAN provides a highly varied and impactful function within OSJCT, with influence extending from individual resident outcomes to organisation-wide change. MHLAN input was universally valued by those who had contact with them.

As a result of the MHLAN's practice there is:

- An improved quality of care and wellbeing provided to people with a dementia;
- Empowerment of staff through increasing knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to dementia;
- Enhanced relationships with families and relatives of people with dementia;
- Residents enabled to stay in the care home in which they are settled if their dementia care needs become more acute;
- Assistance provided to relatives and carers of people living with dementia (both living in care homes and in the community) which enables them to feel more confident and empowered in their support and more confident in care home provision as an option.

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