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**Literature search results**

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**Search details**

Use of life story/memory box with patients with dementia

**Resources searched**

NHS Evidence; TRIP Database; Cochrane Library; PsychINFO; Google Scholar

*Database search terms:* Life story; memory box; dementia

*Evidence search string(s):*

*Google search string(s):*

**Summary**

Lots of articles and snippets of information regarding the use of life story and memory box activities in patients with dementia.

**Guidelines**


**Evidence-based reviews**

1. [Psychological and other non-pharmacological interventions in services for people with learning disabilities and dementia.](#)
Author(s): Dodd, Karen

Advances in Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, March 2010, vol./is. 4/1(28-35), 1753-0180;2042-8332 (Mar 2010)

Abstract: Literature review concerning care and support for people with learning difficulties and dementia. Buijssen’s proposed ‘laws’ to understand dementia are outlined and interventions including anxiety reduction, use of life story work, reality orientation and help for friends are described. Practical approaches to problem behaviours and dementia care mapping are considered. 56 refs

2. Life story work in health and social care: systematic literature review.

Author(s): McKeown, J, Clarke, A, Repper, J

Citation: J Advanced Nursing, July 2006, vol./is. 55/2(237-47), 0309-2402 (2006 Jul)

Abstract: Literature review of research on life story work and its use in health and social care practice, identifying the research methods used, the different populations, ethical aspects, and what benefits and limitations had been noted. A definition of life story work is proposed. 24 refs.

Published research

1. Actively involving people with dementia in qualitative research.

Author(s): McKeown, Jane, Clarke, Amanda, Ingleton, Christine, Repper, Julie

Citation: Journal of Clinical Nursing, July 2010, vol./is. 19/13-14(1935-1943), 0962-1067;1365-2702 (Jul 2010)

2. The use of life story work with people with dementia to enhance person-centred care.

Author(s): McKeown, Jane, Clarke, Amanda, Ingleton, Christine, Ryan, Tony, Repper, Julie

Citation: International Journal of Older People Nursing, June 2010, vol./is. 5/2(148-158), 1748-3735;1748-3743 (Jun 2010)


Author(s): Surr, Claire Alice
Abstract: The maintenance of self in dementia is associated with socio-biographical factors. The theoretical literature suggests that interpersonal relationships, the social context, and the generation of stories are important in maintenance of self. Empirical research on self in dementia supports this but has been predominantly conducted with participants living in the community. Living in residential care brings additional threats to self. This paper presents a study examining the relevance of a socio-biographical theory of self to people with dementia living in residential care. Between 3 and 8 tape-recorded and transcribed unstructured interviews were conducted with 14 people with dementia who were living in 4 residential homes throughout England and Wales, over a 6-24-month period. They were analysed using an interpretive biographical methodology. The results provide evidence to support the relevance of a socio-biographical theory of self to this group. Relationships with family, other residents and care home staff were important for maintenance of self. Social roles related to work, being part of a family, caring for others and being cared for, were particularly significant for self in this group. The creation of a life story, stories of selected life events, and the telling of stories with possible metaphorical interpretations were also important for the maintenance of self. The results also suggest that psychological and embodied factors may be relevant to the self in dementia. The study suggests that staff working in residential homes should consider these elements if they are to provide care that supports maintenance of self for people with dementia. Implications for future research are discussed. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2011 APA, all rights reserved) (journal abstract)


Author(s): Williams, Sion, Keady, John

Abstract: In this editorial, we will briefly rehearse some of our experiences in applying narrative to dementia care in a research setting, and its dimensional attributes. Narrative identity presents a construction of self that can be understood separately as occurring in the past but also synthesized into the present into a temporally organized whole. At the heart of life-history research is the relationship between the researcher and the person being researched, and the 'tuning in' of narrative research within dementia requires the deconstruction of a privileged position. We would suggest that traditional narratives have informed the public narratives that present a cultural and institutional framework for people with dementia. Narrative studies in dementia may be described as 'representational' and constitute a particular conceptual narrativity. We would argue that in the advancement of social research methods in dementia care, it is time to engage in reviewing the 'story' of narrative work in dementia as a whole. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)
5. **Life Review: Treating the Dyadic family Unit with Dementia.**

**Author(s):** Haight, Barbara K, Bachman, David L, Hendrix, Shirley, Wagner, Mark T, Meeks, Alison, Johnson, Jolene

**Citation:** Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy, May 2003, vol./is. 10/3(165-174), 1063-3995;1099-0879 (May-Jun 2003)

**Abstract:** A life story is a tangible outcome of the life review process, and is created by the person with dementia, containing pictures and words and other memorabilia selected by the person him/herself. This paper describes early qualitative and quantitative results from a project evaluating life review work carried out jointly with the person with dementia and his caregiver, compared with life review carried out with the caregiver alone, and an untreated control group. 22 dyads have entered the study. The mood of the person with dementia (as rated by the caregiver) was significantly improved for those people with dementia participating actively in the life review, although their cognitive function decreased slightly. Caregivers participating in the life review, alone or with the person with dementia, reported significantly reduced burden and behaviour problems in the person with dementia. Two case studies illustrate how life review, with its emphasis on active listening, may enable the person to 'move on' from being apparently preoccupied with particular memories or concerns. Further evaluative work is required to confirm the usefulness of this promising therapeutic approach with people with dementia. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2010 APA, all rights reserved)

6. **Dementia care: family and significant others.**

**Author(s):** Keady*, John, Swarbrick, Caroline

**Citation:** Nursing & Residential Care, November 2011, vol./is. 13/11(546-548), 1465-9301 (2011 November)

7. **Collected short stories.**

**Author(s):** Caratella, S, Reed, S

**Citation:** Journal of Dementia Care, November 2011, vol./is. 19/6(16-17), 1351-8372 (2011 November)

8. **Revised dementia strategy renews impetus for change.**

**Author(s):** Trueland, J

**Citation:** Nursing Older People, February 2011, vol./is. 23/1(6-7), 1472-0795 (2011 Feb)

**Abstract:** Improving the care of patients with dementia. Plans to reduce the use of antipsychotic drugs are discussed with reference to the revised dementia strategy implementation plan 'Quality Outcomes for People with Dementia: Building on the work of the National Dementia Strategy' (2010).
and the management of agitation using person-centred care and life story work.

9. **Life story work in practice: magic moments.**

**Author(s):** Heathcote, J

**Citation:** J Dementia Care, May 2010, vol./is. 18/3(23-4), 1351-8372 (2010 May/Jun)

**Abstract:** Making and using life story books in dementia care. Reasons for making and using life story books and advice on how to make them, including the format, the approach to use, contents, ownership and the best time to create them, are discussed. 4 refs.

10. **Realising the potential: developing life story work in practice.**

**Author(s):** Thompson, R

**Citation:** Foundation Nursing Studies Dissemination Series, 2010, vol./is. 5/5(1-4), 1478-4106 (2010)

**Abstract:** Evaluation of the use of life story work facilitated by Admiral Nurses in London among in-patients with dementia. The role of Admiral Nurses in training clinical staff, the impact of the intervention on staff understanding and relationship with patients and feedback from relatives and carers are discussed. 5 refs.

11. **Life story work in practice: aiming for enduring change.**

**Author(s):** Gibson, F, Carson, Y

**Citation:** J Dementia Care, May 2010, vol./is. 18/3(20-2), 1351-8372 (2010 May/Jun)

**Abstract:** Training project in Northern Ireland to establish life story work in all residential and day care services for people with dementia in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. 2 experienced staff per unit received training focused on developing practical communication skills and relationship-building, using a life story book template. Outcomes and implications for staff and managers are explored. 9 refs.

12. **Life story work and nursing home residents with dementia.**

**Author(s):** Russell, C, Timmons, S

**Citation:** Nursing Older People, May 2009, vol./is. 21/4(28-32), 1472-0795 (2009 May)

**Abstract:** Narrative research in a Nottingham nursing home to gain an understanding of the life stories of older adults with dementia. Topics discussed by patients are described and the importance of listening to and
understanding people with dementia in order to offer dignified, person-centred care is highlighted. 27 refs.

13. **Life story project lives on.**

**Author(s):** Burgess, R

**Citation:** J Dementia Care, November 2008, vol./is. 16/6(16-8), 1351-8372 (2008 Nov/Dec)

**Abstract:** Life story work with members of a day care centre run by the North Tyneside branch of the Alzheimer’s Society. The planning and implementation of the project is described, including the use of reminiscence sessions to help produce life story books for members, who all had a diagnosis of dementia. The benefits of the project are discussed. 1 ref.

14. **A biographical approach.**

**Author(s):** Day, M, Wills, T

**Citation:** Nursing Older People, July 2008, vol./is. 20/6(22-4), 1472-0795 (2008 Jul)

**Abstract:** Life story work with older people as a way of developing patient-centred care. The development and use of reminiscence and recall to develop story books is discussed. Ways to use the books and other life history material both on a one-to-one basis and in groups is included. 36 refs.

15. **Time geography: a model for psychiatric life charting?**

**Author(s):** Sunnqvist, C, Persson, U, Lenntorp, B

**Citation:** J Psychiatric & Mental Health Nursing, May 2007, vol./is. 14/3(250-7), 1351-0126 (2007 May)

**Abstract:** Research in Sweden to evaluate the use of time geographic life charts as a tool in clinical psychiatric practice. Patients' perceptions of geographic life charting and its benefits are presented as an extension of life story work. 18 refs.

16. **Life story work and bereavement: shared reflections on its usefulness.**

**Author(s):** Read, S, Bowler, C

**Citation:** Learning Disability Practice, May 2007, vol./is. 10/4(10-4), 1465-8712 (2007 May)

**Abstract:** The use of autobiography in helping people with learning disabilities come to terms with loss and bereavement. Disenfranchised grief
is discussed and the effectiveness of life story work as a therapeutic tool is examined. A personal account of the use of a life story book is presented. 25 refs

17. **Emancipatory practice development through life-story work: changing care in a memory clinic in North Wales.**

**Author(s):** Keady, J, Williams, S, Hughes-Roberts, J

**Citation:** Practice Development in Health Care, 2005, vol./is. 4/4(203-12), 1475-9861 (2005)

**Abstract:** Qualitative longitudinal research in north Wales into the use of emancipatory practice development by sharing dementia patients' narratives, a constructivist approach leading to new methods of assessment and diagnosis by a specialist memory clinic nurse. The 3 phases of practice, reflection, modification and transformation are highlighted. 33 refs.

18. **Narrative ethics in nursing for persons with intellectual disabilities.**

**Author(s):** Meininger, H

**Citation:** Nursing Philosophy, April 2005, vol./is. 6/2(106-18), 1466-7681 (2005 Apr)

**Abstract:** Life story work, in which the past, preferences, significant others and experiences of people with learning disabilities are recorded. The ways in which this narrative framework can help nurses or carers to understand the client, who cannot describe his own experiences, and the ethics involved in this, are explained. 73 refs.

19. **Life story work sees the person beyond the dementia.**

**Author(s):** Batson, P, Thorne, K, Peak, J

**Citation:** J Dementia Care, May 2002, vol./is. 10/3(15-7), 1351-8372 (2002 May-Jun)

**Abstract:** Project gathering personal knowledge about dementia patients to provide patient centred care in Avon and Wiltshire. 11 refs.

20. **Inspired by life story work.**

**Citation:** Nursing Standard, 21 March 2012, vol./is. 26/29(68-68), 00296570

Available in fulltext at [EBSCOhost](https://www.ebscohost.com)

21. **Reminiscence and Life Story Work.**

**Author(s):** Chatterton, Claire
22. **Reminiscence and life story work: a practice guide.**

Author(s): Heathcote, Julie

Citation: Journal of Dementia Care, 01 November 2011, vol./is. 19/6(32-33), 13518372

Available in fulltext at EBSCOhost

23. **How to collaborate on producing a life story.**

Author(s): Chapman, Melanie, Docherty, Daniel

Citation: Learning Disability Practice, 01 June 2011, vol./is. 14/5(24-28), 14658712

Available in fulltext at EBSCOhost

24. **Life story work in practice: aiming for enduring change.**

Author(s): Gibson F, Carson Y

Citation: Journal of Dementia Care, 01 May 2010, vol./is. 18/3(20-22), 13518372

25. **Transformational reminiscence: life story work by John Kunz and F.G. Soltys.**

Author(s): Birren J

Citation: Educational Gerontology, 01 March 2009, vol./is. 35/3(278-279), 03601277

26. **Narrating, writing, reading: life story work as an aid to (self) advocacy.**

Citation: British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 01 September 2006, vol./is. 34/3(181-188), 13544187

Author(s): Meininger HP

Available in fulltext at EBSCOhost

27. **Emancipatory practice development through life-story work: changing care in a memory clinic in North Wales.**

Citation: Practice Development in Health Care, 01 December 2005, vol./is. 4/4(203-212), 14759861

Author(s): Keady J, Williams S, Hughes-Roberts J

Abstract:
This paper outlines an approach to understanding and informing
emancipatory practice development through the integration of constructivist approaches to its basic design, in this case biographical life-story work. Based on an on-going constructivist grounded theory study conducted by a specialist memory clinical nurse in North Wales, and using practitioner-research principles (Reed and Procter, 1995), the exchange of each participant's narrative account of their diagnostic experience (N = 6) led to the establishment of new assessment and diagnostic sharing practices in the participating memory clinic. Through a reflexive process, three phases were identified that captured this journey, namely practice reflection, practice modification and practice transformation, and these phases were underpinned by time and personal influence factors. We suggest that the integration of constructivist research into emancipatory practice development could be an important development of the approach and lead to practice change based on the experience of service users.

28. Reminiscence therapy for dementia.

Author(s): Woods B, Spector AE, Jones CA, Orrell M, Davies SP

Citation: Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, 01 June 2005, vol./is. /2(0-), 1469493X  Available in fulltext at Wiley

29. Seeing the person behind the patient: enhancing the care of older people using a biographical approach.

Citation: Journal of Clinical Nursing, 01 September 2003, vol./is. 12/5(697-706), 09621067

Author(s): Clarke A,Hanson EJ,Ross H

Abstract: Recent policy statements have stressed the need for fundamental changes to the NHS, especially to the hospital care of older people. Person-centred care underpins such changes. If practitioners are to deliver person-centred care, then they need to learn more about the patient as an individual. One way that this might be achieved is through biographical approaches. This paper describes the findings of a developmental study undertaken over a 6-month period to investigate the introduction of a biographical approach to care on a unit in a NHS hospital. It concentrates on the views of the practitioners who used the approach. The study aimed to explore whether a biographical approach - in the form of storytelling - might be used to encourage person-centred practice. Using a practice development approach, the study explored the views of older people, their family carers and practitioners regarding their participation in life story work. Initial data were collected by focus groups with staff from a nursing home who regularly used life stories as a basis for care planning. Further data were collected through focus groups, semistructured interviews and observation - undertaken before and after the introduction of life story work - with older people, family carers and practitioners. Findings revealed that life stories helped practitioners to see patients as people, to understand individuals more fully and to form closer relationships with their families. Support workers also said how much they enjoyed using the approach to inform their care. Further longitudinal research is required to investigate biographical approaches more fully and to work more closely with practitioners to explore how biographical approaches can be undertaken as part of standard
practice and be integrated into the culture and management of care. Available in full text at EBSCOhost.