‘Do I see what you see?’

May 11, 2018 02:04PM

Do I see what you see? A film about about dementia, disconnection and seeing the world differently

Powerful short film from Created Out of Mind, by director Simon Ball, narrated by people living with dementia and their partners.

‘Do I see what you see?’ recreates the experiences of people living with Posterior Cortical Atrophy (PCA), a rare form of dementia which often affects vision, in a series of striking animations.

New report from Sheffield Dementia Involvement Group

May 10, 2018 01:38PM

Sheffield Dementia Involvement Group (SHINDIG) provides a forum for people with dementia (and their family carers/supporters) in Sheffield to share their views and experiences of living with dementia and of health and social care services. The group has been running for five years, and meets four times a year.

The SHINDIG group have recently produced the following report giving advice for staff about gathering feedback on their experience of services from people living with dementia:

Advice to NHS and Social Care Staff on Gathering Feedback from People with Dementia and their Family Carers/Supporters

Community Engagement Toolkit for Care Homes

May 9, 2018 09:56AM

This How To Guide will give care home managers and staff guidance on how to create a community within care homes. The guide will explain how to bring members of the local community into the home to volunteer, befriend, run activities and form friendship groups | Alzheimer’s Society

I Am Still Me

May 4, 2018 11:13AM

I Am Still Me is a collection of 18 portraits taken by Yorkshire-based photographer Helen Williams. The people in the photographs all have dementia—something you can’t tell by
The individuals photographed came together through their shared love of singing, joining the Harrogate Dementia Forward Singing Group. The group gives them a sense of themselves, a feeling of belonging, and the knowledge that they are still ‘someone’.

Each photograph includes a written caption, penned by the sitter, describing who they are. The free temporary exhibition runs from 30 April – 10 June 2018 at the National Science and Media Museum, Bradford.

Music activates regions of the brain spared by Alzheimer’s disease

May 3, 2018 03:12PM

Researchers are looking to the salience network of the brain to develop music-based treatments to help alleviate anxiety in patients with dementia | University of Utah Health | via ScienceDaily

Previous work has demonstrated the effect of a personalised music program on mood for dementia patients. Researchers at the University of Utah Health set out to examine a mechanism that activates the attentional network in the salience region of the brain. The results offer a new way to approach anxiety, depression and agitation in patients with dementia.

Researchers helped participants select meaningful songs and trained the patient and caregiver on how to use a portable media player loaded with the self-selected collection of music.

Using a functional MRI, the researchers scanned the patients to image the regions of the brain that lit up when they listened to 20-second clips of music versus silence. The researchers played eight clips of music from the patient’s music collection, eight clips of the same music played in reverse and eight blocks of silence. The researchers compared the images from each scan.

The researchers found that music activates the brain, causing whole regions to communicate. By listening to the personal soundtrack, the visual network, the salience network, the executive network and the cerebellar and corticocerebellar network pairs all showed significantly higher functional connectivity.

Full story at ScienceDaily

Join Dementia Research (JDR) NHS toolkit for healthcare professionals

May 3, 2018 02:53PM

Join Dementia Research has produced an online toolkit for healthcare professionals.

The toolkit has been divided into four sections:

- Integrating Research with Care
- Establishing a Research Culture
- Building Research Partnerships
- Working Collaboratively to Raise Awareness

JDR also have a variety of case studies as a resource for healthcare professionals to support implementation of Join Dementia Research into NHS care pathways. They showcase work from across the health and social care environments, sharing stories, ideas, tips and tools to support delivery - putting research with care.

For full details, visit the Join Dementia Research website

Case managers improve outcomes for people with dementia and their carers

May 3, 2018 02:34PM

Review supports the role of professional case managers by showing improvements in patient behaviour and caregiver burden | BMC Health Services Research | via National Institute for Health Research

Using a case manager to coordinate health and social care improves the challenging behaviour of people with dementia and reduces the burden on caregivers. Quality of life of caregivers improves the most when case managers have a professional background in nursing.

This NIHR-funded review compared the effectiveness of standard community treatment and interventions with case managers overseeing the interventions for people living with dementia. It considered evidence from 14 trials in a number of countries, with different health systems and support. Care coordination is variable across the UK, but this is often not provided by a qualified professional, so they are not able to develop and update the care plan.

Though the review did not provide strong evidence of effectiveness regarding hospitalisation or death, it does highlight the benefits of having a care coordinator with a background in nursing for improving quality of life.

Further detail at National Institute for Health Research

Full reference: Backhouse, A et al. | The effectiveness of community-based coordinating interventions in dementia care: a
Interventions to reduce social isolation and loneliness among older people

May 3, 2018 02:10PM

Loneliness and social isolation are major problems for older adults. Interventions and activities aimed at reducing social isolation and loneliness are widely advocated as a solution to this growing problem.

The aim of this study was to conduct an integrative review to identify the range and scope of interventions that target social isolation and loneliness among older people, to gain insight into why interventions are successful and to determine the effectiveness of those interventions.

Six electronic databases were searched from 2003 until January 2016 for literature relating to interventions with a primary or secondary outcome of reducing or preventing social isolation and/or loneliness among older people.

The review identified 38 studies. A range of interventions were described which relied on differing mechanisms for reducing social isolation and loneliness. The majority of interventions reported some success in reducing social isolation and loneliness, but the quality of evidence was generally weak.

Factors which were associated with the most effective interventions included adaptability, a community development approach, and productive engagement.

A wide range of interventions have been developed to tackle social isolation and loneliness among older people. However, the quality of the evidence base is weak and further research is required to provide more robust data on the effectiveness of interventions. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to further develop theoretical understandings of how successful interventions mediate social isolation and loneliness.

Gardiner, C. Geldenhuys, G. Gott, M | Interventions to reduce social isolation and loneliness among older people: an integrative review | Health and Social Care in the Community | Volume 26, Issue 2 | March 2018 | pages 147–157

Longitudinal changes in global and domain specific cognitive function in the very-old

May 3, 2018 01:50PM

Stephan B C M, Muniz-Terrera G (et al) | Longitudinal changes in global and domain specific cognitive function in the very-old: findings from the Newcastle 85+ Study | International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry | 33(2) February 2018

Many older people maintain high levels of cognitive function, or only mild impairment, well into their nineties. Using findings from the Newcastle 85+ study, this article reports that older people, with no or only mild impairment, experience very little cognitive decline between the ages of 85 and 90. This group of successful cognitive agers may provide insight for identifying predictors of cognitive integrity in later life.

What keeps you sharp?

May 3, 2018 01:41PM

The majority of people expect their memory to worsen in their 50s and that there are preventive measures that can maintain or improve cognition. This report outlines the findings of a survey of more than 3,000 people aged between 40 and 98 years old on memory and cognitive skills | Heriot-Watt University | April 2018

The results from the “What Keeps You Sharp?” survey reveals the majority of those asked believe lifestyle and genetics are equally important contributors to the changes they might experience. Almost nine out of 10 people are of the opinion that there are things they can do to maintain or improve their thinking skills; however, when asked if they knew what those things were, less than six in 10 were sure.
More than 3000 people aged between 40 to 98 years-old responded to the study from across the UK. The report is intended to be used by members of the public, older peoples’ groups and charities, and as a reference for GPs and other health professionals. It links some of the beliefs the public have about the topic to what other research in the area suggests, and directs people to resources so they can follow-up to get more information.

Full report: What keeps you sharp? A National survey about what people in the UK think about their thinking skills!