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2014

# Measuring the effects of physical activity on individuals living with a dementia in residential accommodation: a systematic review of RCTs

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## Publication Details

Brett, L., Traynor, V. & Stapley, P. (2014). Measuring the effects of physical activity on individuals living with a dementia in residential accommodation: a systematic review of RCTs. *Australian Journal of Dementia Care*, 3 (5), 22-23.

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# Measuring the effects of physical activity on individuals living with a dementia in residential accommodation: a systematic review of RCTs

## **Abstract**

Abstract of presentation from the Dementia Collaborative Research Centres' (DCRC) 2014 National Dementia Research Forum, Sydney, 19 September 2014.

## **Disciplines**

Medicine and Health Sciences | Social and Behavioral Sciences

## **Publication Details**

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**A2 - Measuring the effects of physical activity on individuals living with a dementia in residential accommodation: a systematic review of RCTs**

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**BACKGROUND:**

Physical activity has many benefits for older people but there is limited good quality evidence evaluating the benefits for individuals with a dementia, in particular those living in residential accommodation (Forbes *et al* 2013).

**AIM:**

The aim of this study was to evaluate evidence about the effect of physical activity on health outcomes for individuals living with a dementia in residential accommodation.

**METHODS:**

The studies reviewed were retrieved from searching a range of academic databases and evaluated using Joanna Briggs Institute critical appraisal tools.

**FINDINGS:**

A total of 20 research studies were retrieved and critically reviewed. The quality of studies varied widely, including the

methods, type of intervention and outcome measures used. Many studies were multi-component exercise programs, though the actual activities and parameters of each program varied greatly. Outcome measures most commonly considered were cognition (n=13), physical ability (n=8), functional ability (n=5), and/or mood (n=5). There were positive effects associated with the uptake of physical activity by individuals living with a dementia in residential accommodation, such as improvement in physical ability (6m walking speed: 0.33 to 0.65 m/sec in two studies), functional ability (Barthel Index: 34 to 42 in one study) and cognitive ability (Clock Drawing Test: 3.5 to 4.1 in one study). Limitations of the studies included small sample size, short duration and lack of detail about the study design.

Further research is required to improve the quality of study design and provide evidence to support and enhance the current findings to enable professionals working in this area to implement successful physical activity programs. The results from this literature review are informing the physical activity intervention implemented and evaluated as part of a PhD study undertaken by the first author for individuals with a dementia in residential accommodation.