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The utility of Action Research to support the development of Dementia Friendly Communities

Abstract

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Topic: Developing Dementia Friendly Communities

THE UTILITY OF ACTION RESEARCH TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

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on behalf of Kiama Municipal Council and UOW Global Challenges Grant Team

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Objectives: This paper explores the utility of an Action-Research program to inform the development of Dementia Friendly Communities. The 'location-based' research, undertaken in a single geographical community in NSW (Australia) engaged people with dementia and their carers in a series of interviews which included a walk-around their home environments and the mapping of friendly and unfriendly places in their local community. Other research activities included the surveying of business and community members by mail, online and intercept methods. Together, this research was utilised to build an evidence-base to guide the actions of a local dementia alliance to support the development of an action plan to create a more 'Dementia Friendly' community. The features of this model, the challenges and the lessons learned through the adoption of an Action-Research approach are detailed within this paper. The implications for policies and practices to support the development of Dementia Friendly Communities are also discussed.

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