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An analysis of 75 English language online articles on the 'G8 dementia summit'

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Abstract

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Topic: Awareness and Stigma

AN ANALYSIS OF 75 ENGLISH LANGUAGE ONLINE ARTICLES ON THE 'G8 DEMENTIA SUMMIT'

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Objectives: The G8 dementia summit (“#G8summit”) had the potential to allow many of these recurrent motifs to resurface unchallenged in the media. Did this happen?

Methods: A search for the search term “G8 dementia”, on the UK Google search engine. It only came up with languages in English article, and only the ‘top’ 75 search results were included. After identification of suitable articles, an automated online textual analysis of the frequency of the most commonly used words was completed.

Results: The relative frequencies of common words formed a consistent pattern: “research” (372), “wellbeing” (6), “data” (34), “collaboration” (31), “international” (116), “carers” (43), and “health and social care” (16). There was overall a clear bias in words reflecting the medical approach: such as “diseases” (219), “treatment” or “treatments” (81), or “cure” or “cures” (70). There clearly was also a bias towards Alzheimer’s disease: “Alzheimer” was used 12 times, with the word “vascular” used only 6 times. Usual ‘dramatic’ cultural metaphors were, rather surprisingly, infrequent: “timebomb” was only twice, and the terms “bomb” or “bombs” were only used four times.

Conclusion: Reports of #G8dementia avoided common dramatic cultural metaphors and were generally positive, but gave little emphasis on care or living well approaches.

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