UPDATE

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The CAPA programme is really making a difference, enabling and inspiring older people and those who support them, to move more and more often - improving health, happiness and reigniting connections with local communities. Our April update highlights just some of the fantastic improvements happening across care services involved in CAPA.

Angus and Agnes’ friendship blossoms

When Rothiemay Playgroup arranged regular visits to Balhousie Care Home in Huntly last year, a special friendship formed and continues to blossom between Angus Johnson (now in primary one) and ninety-one year old resident, Agnes Rae.

Angus visits Agnes at the home regularly and Agnes has also visited him at school. She enjoyed spending time with Angus as he showed her around the classroom and how to use the smart board. This also gave Agnes the opportunity to reminisce and compare how much things have changed since she was a primary teacher at Skene School until she retired.

Agnes said: “Angus is a pretty intelligent kid, with a lot of go about him. Both of our names are quite similar in spelling and this was what encouraged Angus to become close to me. He’s just such a jolly little kid. He’s at a pretty good school and his teacher is just great with her class. Angus seems to take everything in and isn’t shy – just a great kid!”

Angus’ mum, Debbie said: “Angus absolutely loves spending time with the residents and the genuine friendship, love and delight of being in each other’s company shines through. We are delighted that this connection is continuing now he is at school. The care home residents have become important to Angus and he talks so proudly to others about his ‘special friends’ from Balhousie. Spending time with the residents has really brought out Angus’s caring and protective side. It is wonderful to see the two generations playing and working together as equals. We feel very lucky that our son gets to spend such special, quality time with the residents and hope this intergenerational work continues.

“Angus and Agnes have such a strong, loving bond. Angus enjoys Agnes’ company so much and he really gets a lot out of the time they spend together. Angus’ confidence has increased since spending time with Agnes. She genuinely is interested in all he has to say and he loves chatting away to her. Angus missed seeing Agnes during the school holidays so one day asked if he could buy her flowers and give them to her. It is so obvious that they both enrich each other’s lives and give each other much happiness.”

Tanya Smith, activities coordinator at Balhousie said: “The connection between Agnes and Angus is very special and you can really see the joy they both bring to each other. This friendship shows how intergenerational work has numerous positive outcomes for both generations and is something that needs to be pursued more by schools and care homes. I have worked on many intergenerational projects but the partnership that we have linked up with Rothiemay Playgroup is by far one of the most positive and successful ones. This story of Agnes and Angus is just one of the many positive outcomes from the partnership.”
Sustainability in action

Provider forums are one way in which partnership areas are keeping the moving more message on the agenda and giving providers the opportunity to share, learn and generate new ideas for moving more often.

Many build moving breaks to encourage attendees to break up their time spent sitting and feel the benefits themselves. At forums, this leads nicely to discussions around what is working well within services, how challenges are being overcome, good news stories and more ideas to share. Now that our advisers are out supporting additional partnership areas, it is important we share the valuable lived experience of our original providers and continue to learn from their journey.

When improvement adviser, Laura Haggarty, recently attended an East Ayrshire provider forum, the sustainability in action was evident and she took the opportunity to capture some top tips from experienced CAPA partners. Laura asked providers to write on a post it “What do you still do because of CAPA?”, ‘In your service, what changes have stuck?’ and ‘What new ideas are you trying?’

Here’s what people said.

What do you still do?
- I always carry the Super 6 and share where I can (Heather, Scottish Care)
- I stand on one leg when putting my socks on (Val, East Ayrshire)
- I try to have walking meetings when possible (Val, East Ayrshire)

What changes have stuck?
- The importance of movement being part of our induction with all new staff (Denise, Craigie and Grange)
- Residents using the stairs (Michelle, West Coast Care)
- Moving tables after every game of dominos (Rhona, Thorntoun)
- Reconfiguration of our communal spaces has made a huge difference to movement (Jennifer, Howard House)
- Our walking group continues (Susan, Crossgate)
- Our CAPA champion continues to spread the message, promote movement & look for opportunities (Susan, Thorntoun)
- Residents moving through to the table for morning tea (Zoe, Grange)
- Residents being involved in a variety of household chores (Gavin, Graceland)
- Intergenerational sessions with a focus on promoting movement (Eileen, Springhill)

New ideas
- We are starting a daily mile in our office for staff (Lesley, Advocacy).
- We are getting a staff team together to join the ‘kilt walk’ this year (Denise, Grange & Craigie)
- We are going to link up with care homes near us for joint activities & outings (Mary, Howard House)

Laura said: “After this, I asked everyone to fold the post it over and write down their favourite dance move or exercise. No one was surprised when I put on some music, asked them to swap their post it notes and show us their moves! It was a fitting end to a great event.” Watch clip here.
Is it possible to be too caring?

Sounds impossible, doesn’t it? Being compassionate and kind are positive human qualities that are particularly important for health and social care professionals. And yet, what if some actions associated with being kind and helpful impacted negatively on people’s wellbeing? Health and social care professionals have thought about this as part of the Care about Physical Activity Programme and gave us some insights into this dilemma.

“We always welcomed people to the day care centre by helping them out of their coats at the front door and hanging these up in a different room. Then we wondered whether this caring approach could be actually limiting people’s movements and possibilities. Now people help each other out of their coats, find their pegs, walk to a different room and chat as they hang them up and so on. And people we thought would never be able to find their own coat at going home time, have learned a new skill.”

“We served breakfast at people’s tables. This included pouring tea and juice, buttering toast and bringing bowls full of yoghurt and fruit. We always rushed to make sure that the residents didn’t have to do anything for themselves. We then changed our approach so that now most folk help themselves at a breakfast buffet. People have started eating more, trying out different types of food, moving more and being more independent. One 94 year old woman makes sure to help another woman who has difficulty moving to the buffet herself and is delighted with being able to help others.”

Some recent research carried out in care homes in both Glasgow and Barcelona tells us that participants in the study “…spoke of their wish for autonomy and being independent, willingness to be useful and to feel busy, as well as not wanting to bother anybody:

“I don’t want to see myself sitting in a wheelchair and being totally dependent on others.” (Female, 83 years old, Barcelona.)

Residents identified the benefits of moving more and sitting less for overall health:

“I think it is just better mobility, (...) exercise is really good, it keeps you going.” (Female, 79 years old, Glasgow.)

The residents felt they had the capacity to get involved with household chores and tasks within the care home:

“I would like to help out with different tasks, I want to feel useful, help out. (...)"

There are a lot of tasks that can be done, and some of us could help and that would keep us moving more often.” (Female, 103 years old, Glasgow.)

Residents agreed in the importance of having frequent reminders and encouragement to move more:

“It helps me when I’m told to stand up and walk (...), they do not let me sit for a long time.” (Female, 87 years old, Barcelona.)

“When it is nice out, they tell us to stand up and go for a walk in the garden, I like that.” (Female, 79 years old, Glasgow.)

Staff and family members could identify ways to increase movement within daily routines, with regular reminders, as well as suggest activities that residents like to do and are capable of doing.

(Excerpts from International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health Article A Novel Approach to Reduce Sedentary Behaviour in Care Home Residents: The GET READY Study Utilising Service-Learning and Co-Creation Giné-Garriga, Sandlun, Dall, Chastin, Pérez and Skelton.)

Louise Kelly CAPA Programme Lead said: “This research is a helpful reminder to us all that older people want more opportunities to be mobile and to do as much as they can, to be independent and be reminded to keep moving. Perhaps care professionals and family members can start by asking, what people can do instead of what someone can’t do. We can also try to increase the opportunities for people to do things for themselves or others. When we step back a little bit, it might be possible for someone to step forward, similar to the experiences in the day care centre and care home we heard from earlier in this article.”
Moving matters

Perth and Kinross were one of the Health and Social Care Partnerships involved in the first round of the CAPA project from summer 2017 until November 2018.

Carolyn Wilson, local lead shared a report which highlights the progress and improvements that happened and continue to happen across the 13 care homes who took part. From improving indoor and outdoor spaces, intergenerational work, staff training and activities and classes – the report shows how they encouraged and supported people to move more each day and contains great stories about people who now have a much better quality of life.

Download the document here.

Did you know?

Elderly people who spend most of their time sitting down, age significantly quicker than more active contemporaries.

“Our study found cells age faster with a sedentary lifestyle,” said Dr Aladdin Shadyab, University of California (lead author of a study with the Department of Family Medicine and Public Health at UC San Diego School of Medicine.)

Connecting to Health and Social Care Standards

Here is an example of how a care at home service promotes the principle of Wellbeing 1.25: “I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors.”

“Although I am in my 90s with poor eyes and bad hearing I wanted to return to playing golf so when the staff started to help me practise walking a bit further and getting in and out of the car I was delighted. I am now back at the golf club where I was given a very warm welcome. I am the oldest member there! I had a shot on the putting green yesterday.”

Download the Health and Social Care Standards.

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