

Perceptions and Perspectives of People with Dementia and their Care Partners regarding Physical Activity and Exercise: A Systematic Review of Qualitative Evidence

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Introduction

- Physical activity (PA) and exercise (EX) have known benefits across the lifespan
- Engaging in PA and EX is recommended for people living with dementia (PLWD)¹
- PLWD ... less physically active than adults with no cognitive impairments²
- Shifts in PA preferences ... >92% PLWD do not participate in organized PA³
- RRMC - 43% of PLWD and care partners reported no PA participation; 16% reported no regular EX⁴

¹email 2020; ²Zanko 2016; ³Watts 2013; ⁴O'Connell 2015

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METHODS

PICos What are the **perceptions and perspectives of persons with dementia and their care partners** about **exercise and physical activity**?

Protocol Qualitative studies, English language
No restriction – publication year, setting, country

Search Screen OVID MEDLINE, EMBASE, psychINFO, CINAHL
Hand searching of included articles

Data Extraction Articles → Population → Methods → Phenomena of interest

Quality

Analysis Analyze Data → Synthesize → Interpretation → Confidence in Findings

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“it just sort of lifts, I'm not happy that I have Alzheimer's disease, but there's nothing I can do about it. But it [being active] just, you know, sort of lifts me up. I feel good, about life in general” (PLWD)

“I feel I want to move my legs. I feel I want to go for a walk or a bike ride ... My whole body feels better then...I think maybe you just imagine you've done something really good...But going for a walk makes me bright and cheery as a lark” (PLWD)

“I think it's kept my mum continue to be mobile... she can still go upstairs... she gets dressed and undressed. So she's still got muscle strength. So perhaps that would have deteriorated if she hadn't been coming to the classes” (CP)


“I think it is more important for me to get out and be involved with other people and y'know have exercise as much as you can, y'know and be involved with other carers as well” (CP)

“it keeps you fit, it keeps you in touch with people” (PLWD)

“It makes me feel that occasionally I feel normal” (PLWD)

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"I don't think you (indicating toward spouse) would go swimming. [it would] be too difficult, changing and everything, using lockers" (CP)


"Erm, there are times when I ... not quite sure what I should be doing, and then I think 'oh Christ that's the dementia coming in'" (PLWD)

"time really you know, finding... fitting it in with everything else you do" (CP)

"People from outside, from the neighborhood, might think the old lady is jumping around—in a nursing home! ... That is why I do my exercises when nobody can see me. They all would think, such a fool when I am exercising on my own" (PLWD)

"What she's trying to say, we have to remind her how to do them. She couldn't do them on her own without me showing her how to do them. Then she'll do it. And that's just the short term memory" (CP)


"I want to do more than they do ... one girl is so good so ...I'm heartbroken that I cannot do as she ..." (PLWD)



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Discussion and Implications

- Needs, experiences, reactions and preferences impacts acceptability of and engagement in PA and EX.
- Themes elucidated regarding PA and EX will have practical implications for health and wellness promotion and management for PLWD and their care partners.



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