

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES ON THE SOCIO- SPATIAL RIGHTS OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA AND CAREGIVERS

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Acknowledgement: This work was supported by a La Trobe University Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship, as part of the Webster Rural and Regional Dementia Care Project.



BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

- Most people living with dementia live in their communities, where they are at risk of socio-spatial exclusion.
- While rights are often discussed within Dementia-Friendly Communities, none specifically address socio-spatial rights.
- To ensure socio-spatial justice for people living with dementia and carers, there is a need for a rights-based approach to planning spaces and social activities.
- Semi-structured interviews (N=15) were conducted with representatives of community stakeholder organisations and groups from a large non-metropolitan region in Victoria, Australia.
- Participants were from local government, health organisations, neighbourhood houses, and community groups.
- Lefebvre's 'right to the city' was used as a conceptual framework, which reflects the right to be included in the urban form and in urban life.



FINDINGS

- Socio-spatial rights are facilitated when the personhood of people living with dementia is recognised.
- Societal stigma impacts the inclusion, and the participation of people living with dementia and their caregivers in decision-making processes.
- A lack of dementia awareness results in the neglect of their socio-spatial needs.
- When people living with dementia are absent from decision-making processes about public space and social activities, their socio-spatial rights are overlooked.
- The prioritisation of local government budgets and timeframes over dementia-inclusive design also contributes to the socio-spatial exclusion of people living with dementia and caregivers.
- The absence of dementia-inclusive legislation/policy and recognition of dementia as a disability mean that socio-spatial justice is not achieved.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- People living with dementia and caregivers must participate in decision-making processes around the planning and design of public spaces and social activities.
- Recognising dementia as a disability and prioritising socio-spatial rights in planning practices can contribute to establishing genuine rights-based DFCs.
- Dementia awareness education and dementia-inclusive legislation and policies are critical to achieving socio-spatial justice for people living with dementia and caregivers.

