

# Improving Physical Health Care in Older People in Mental Health Settings: The ImPreSs-Care Qualitative Study

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## Background

- Many older people are living with co-occurring physical and mental health disorders.
- Few service models are available providing comprehensive physical health input to older adults in secondary mental healthcare settings.
- Little information is available regarding specific physical healthcare needs facing older people receiving specialist mental healthcare.

## Aim

To determine the facilitators and barriers to delivering physical healthcare for older adult patients, their carers, and staff within specialist mental health settings (inpatients and community).

## Methods



54 semi-structured interviews



Conducted in two hospital trusts (Leicestershire Partnership Trust and Nottingham Healthcare Foundation Trust)



28 staff, 19 carers, 7 patients



Interviews explored facilitators and barriers to delivering physical healthcare to older people (aged >65 years) receiving secondary mental health care with combined physical needs



Figure 1. Key themes and representative quotes

## Results

- Figure 1 summarises the key themes and representative quotes from the study with additional sub-themes summarised below:
- **MDT working:** Staff valued a multidisciplinary approach to integrated care, particularly for screening and identifying patients.
- **Training and skills:** There was felt to be a loss of physical health training and skills over-time, particularly amongst nursing staff leading to difficulties managing fluids and catheters.
- **Support and availability of physical health expertise:** There were felt to be avoidable admissions to the acute trust due to a focus on acute decompensation rather than optimising stable disease.
- **Advanced care planning, end of life care and polypharmacy** were felt to be challenging, particularly from a physical health perspective.

## Discussion

- Integrated care should use a multi-disciplinary approach, particularly to help identify and screen patients for physical health review.
- Education and training should be incorporated to allow sharing of physical health knowledge and skills.
- Senior leadership and oversight should be incorporated, both Geriatrician and GP involvement were valued contributions.
- Services should support advanced care planning and end of life care from physical causes in mental health settings where possible.