

Sports and reminiscence:

the rationale and evidence for its use to build
social connections for older people

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The context

- Ageing populations – e.g. documented globally (WHO) & UK (Foresight 2016)
- Other demographic changes e.g. family networks
- Dementia e.g. PMs Dementia Challenge (2015)
- Loneliness and isolation in older people e.g. The Campaign to End Loneliness
- Changing expectations of older people?
- Concerns about the quality of care e.g. enough social contact or activities in care homes?
- Economic and workforce challenges

The need

- Need to find low cost, effective ways of helping people
- They need to be engaging to individuals:
 - We need a variety of them to fit people's interests, abilities and contexts;
 - From pre-programmed activities (e.g. bingo every Thursday) to more flexible and personal activities;
 - Shift thinking from “intervention-itis” to human interactions;
 - Transferable skills for workforces;
 - Activities that enhance the relationships and relational aspects in care.

Sporting memories

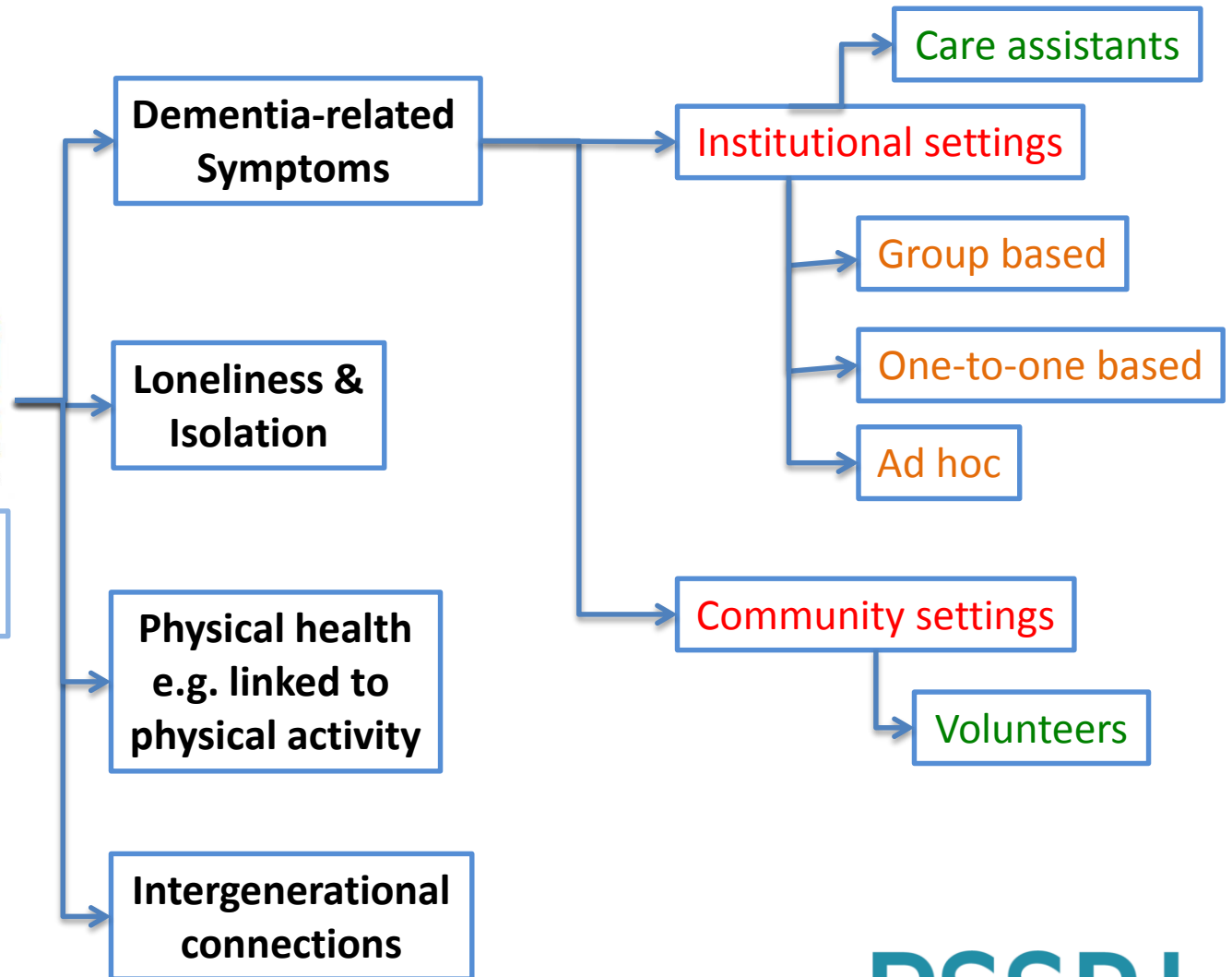
Sporting memories:

- are widespread
- are continually being made and retold
- can be very powerful in terms of identity and emotions
- can be very strong in terms of being deep rooted
- can span eras, social groups and generations
- can be about family and social history
- are multi-sensory
- can form a basis for conversations

The work of the Sporting Memories Network



**Sports-based
reminiscence**



Proof of concept studies

- 2 pilot/proof of concept projects across Leeds:
 - i) across a network of care homes
 - ii) across care homes and community groups
- Each organisation sent at least 2 staff to half-day training
 - typically they were non-professionally qualified staff
 - received a set of resources including a training manual, sporting memories cards and a weekly sporting newspaper (the Pink)
 - on call advice and support from the Sporting Memories Network to get started
- and, In project ii), 3 learning set meetings

Lessons to date (i)

- Care homes seem to be looking out for ideas;
- Community dementia groups seem ready to take on new ideas;
- Non-professionally qualified staff and volunteers can be trained and supported to use sporting memories;
- The skills are probably transferable to other topics;
- Very versatile approach and flexible to fit people's abilities;
- Maintaining activity in a care home can be difficult;
- Community settings seem to be more flexibly able to accommodate regular activity

Lessons to date (ii)

- Staff reported Sporting Memories work:
 - Was easy to engage with, even if they had no interest in sports;
 - Appreciated the flexible way it could be used;
 - Saw service users enjoying it, and some carers engaging in it;
 - Validated their work

Sporting memories

Thank you

Sporting memories:

<http://www.sportingmemoriesnetwork.com/>

Bill's Story <http://football.sportingmemories.org/memory/2622-bills-story/>

