

Educator's guide to *An introduction to
the mental health of older people*
e-learning resources



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1. Introduction

In 2003 the Department of Health (DH) allocated resources to the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) 'to assist the social care community to make the best use of ICT for teaching and learning to deliver an improved service to users and carers' (DH E-learning Steering Group 2003).

SCIE carried out an investigation, in collaboration with the Social Policy and Social Work subject centre at Southampton University (SWAP), to identify key topic areas within the social work degree curriculum where interactive e-learning resources could usefully support teaching and learning.

SCIE is now launching the second set of interactive e-learning resources, entitled 'An Introduction to the Mental Health of Older People' which it is hoped will be of great relevance to both students and educators of the Social Work degree, practitioners in the wider social care community and older people themselves. These resources build upon earlier SCIE work in this area, notably the NICE/SCIE practice guide: *Dementia: Supporting people with dementia and their carers in health and social care* and practice guide 2: *Assessing the mental health needs of older people*.

The remainder of this guide provides further details on these resources and is designed principally for educators or trainers who may be thinking about using these resources in their teaching.

2. 'An Introduction to the Mental Health of Older People'

Mental health and emotional well-being are as important in older age as at any other time of life. Most older people have good mental health, but they are more likely to experience events that affect emotional well-being, such as bereavement or disability. Understanding the mental health needs of older people requires an understanding of the complex interaction between specific medical conditions and social circumstances. To be able to offer effective support, practitioners need to keep up to date with the latest research methods and legislation.

To this end, SCIE in partnership with three leading experts in the field, Alisoun Milne, Jo Warner and Brian Gearing have developed 10 interactive e-learning resources on the mental health of older people that aim to make this very challenging and complex area of social care accessible and enjoyable.

SCIE's interactive e-learning resources are freely available to all teaching staff and students of the social work degree and are designed to engage groups and individuals through simulations, quizzes, games and video and audio, which help to bring the topics alive. Moreover, they are supported by evidence based research bringing out key issues and provide full referencing of key research. They can be accessed from any internet enabled PC and are fully accessible to users with disabilities.

The e-learning resources can be used in a whole-class setting, or students can be asked to work through them privately (they are very useful tools for both introducing key concepts and revising).

3. Overview of the 10 e-learning resources

3.1 An introduction to mental health and older people

This resource introduces the key concepts of 'an ageing population', 'old age' and 'mental health'.

An Introduction to Mental Health & Older People
 social care institute for excellence **scie**

HOME **1. The ageing population - UK Population Age Breakdown**

Page 2 of 9 Go to page ...

The population is not just growing but 'ageing'. The average age in the UK has risen, from 34.1 years in 1971 to 38.6 in 2004 with latest forecasts predicting that this will rise again to about 42.1 years in 2031.

Key
 Brown/darker shaded = Your guess
 Coloured = Actual figures

Age Group	Actual Figures (%)	Your Guess (%)
0-14 years	19%	4%
15-29 years	19%	4%
30-44 years	22.5%	4%
45-59 years	19%	4%
60-74 years	13%	4%
75+ years	7.5%	4%

Source: Office of National Statistics (2006)

◀ Back Next ▶

Start page > 1. The ageing population - UK Population Age Breakdown Text only Audio

Teaching/learning aims

An introduction to mental health and older people will enable users to:

- describe the basic characteristics of the 'ageing population' in the UK
- understand the key issues surrounding the various ways in which 'old age' and 'mental health' are defined.

Full description and contents list

In this resource, users will have the chance to explore the nature and characteristics of the ageing population in the UK, what being 'old' means, and some of the complexity surrounding the concept of 'mental health'.

As this resource presents basic facts and concepts surrounding mental health and older people, we recommend that it is used as an introduction.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Ageing population

- 1.1 UK population age breakdown
- 1.2 Diversity in the older population
- 1.3 When does old age start?
- 1.4 Living situations
- 1.5 Living situations – Living alone
- 1.6 Living situations – Care homes
- 1.7 Living situations – Living with a partner
- 1.8 Living situations – 'Other'

2. What is 'old'?

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 What 'old age' means

3. What is mental health?

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Jean's story

3.3 What undermines mental health?

3.4 Problems affecting people in later life

4. Conclusion

5. References

6. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

30–40 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

3.2 Attitudes and images of ageing

This resource is about ways in which people's experiences of ageing and mental health are shaped by society's attitudes to older people and later life.

Attitudes and Images of Ageing
HOME 2. Attitudes to older people - Images of ageing

social care institute for excellence scie

Page 1 of 14

Go to page ...

How are ageing and older people portrayed in the media?
Think about the question above. To give you ideas, click on the pictures below to hear a short commentary and view images on each area.

FILMS

TV

GREETINGS CARDS

ADVERTISING

Sean Connery

James Coburn

Show text

Back

Next

Start page > 2. Attitudes to older people - Images of ageing

Text only Audio

Teaching/learning aims

Attitudes and images of ageing will enable users to:

- demonstrate an understanding of some main differences between society's images and beliefs about ageing and later life and the aspirations and attitudes of older people
- discuss the impact of stereotypes of ageing and old age on older people's lives
- evaluate evidence for widely held beliefs about poverty in old age.

Full description and contents list

This resource is about ways in which people's experiences of ageing and mental health are shaped by society's attitudes to older people and later life. Users will consider the way age-related images and ideas, displayed in the media and in everyday language, shape our perceptions; but also what we know about older people's own attitudes and aspirations.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. Attitudes to older people

- 2.1 Images of ageing
- 2.2 Language and ageing
- 2.3 Old age in the past
- 2.4 Stereotypes of old age

3. Older people as a 'burden'

- 3.1 Myth and reality
- 3.2 Poverty, old age and mental health

4. Older people's own attitudes

- 4.1 'Hope I die before I get old'
- 4.2 What do older people want?

5. Conclusion

6. References

7. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

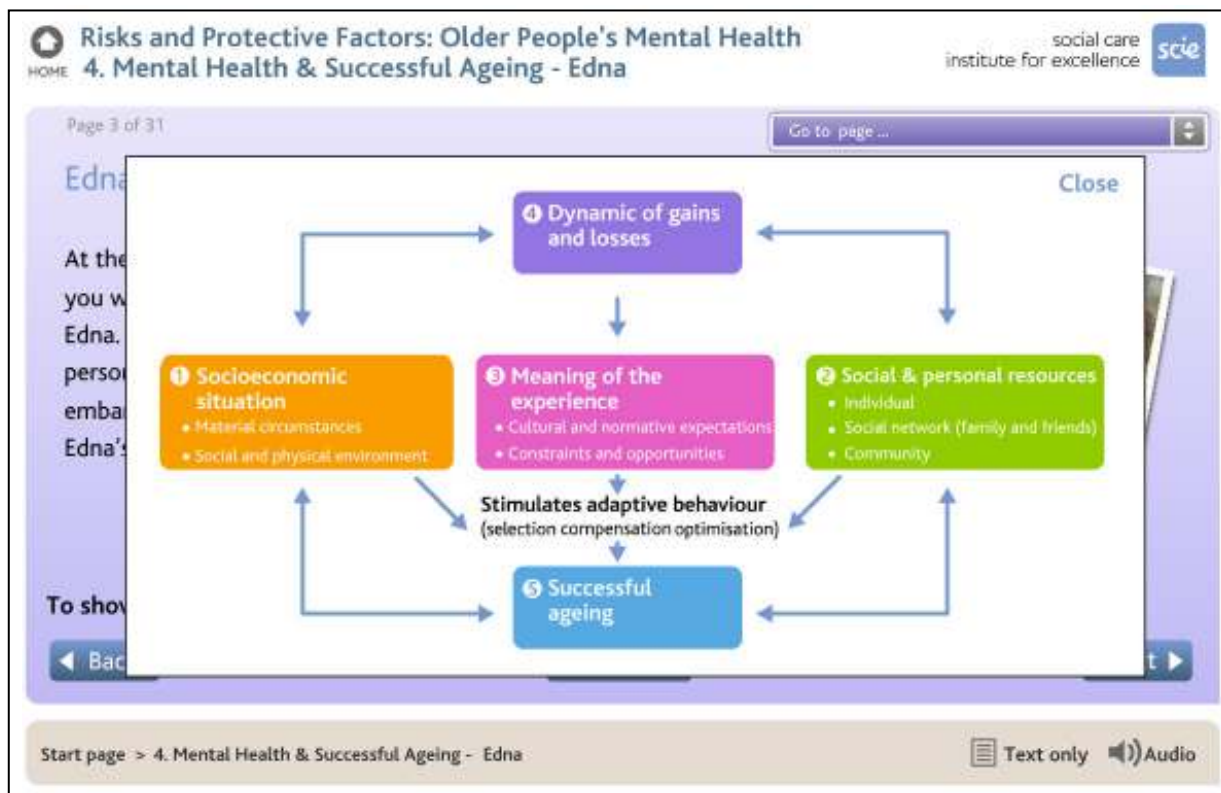
40–60 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

3.3 Risks and protective factors: older people's mental health

This resource reviews the meaning of mental health, why it is an important part of overall well-being and how it relates to successful ageing.



Teaching/learning aims

Risks and protective factors: older people's mental health will help users to:

- explore the meaning and dimensions of mental health
- appreciate the importance of mental health as an aspect of successful ageing
- consider ways in which mental health can be promoted and mental illness prevented.

Full description and contents list

This resource explores mental health in later life. It reviews the meaning of mental health, why it is an important part of overall well-being and how it relates to successful ageing.

It also offers an overview of the different aspects of an older person's life and situation that impact on their mental health and the role that an individual and their family, the community they live in and wider society can play in promoting, or undermining, mental health. Later on, a model is outlined which draws these different elements together in a pictorial format.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. Why is mental health important?

2.1 Introduction

3. Defining mental health

3.1 What are the features of mental health?

3.2 Defining mental health

4. Mental health and successful ageing

4.1 Edna

4.2 Socioeconomic situation

4.3 Social and personal resources

4.4 Meaning of the experience

4.5 Dynamic of gains and losses

4.6 Successful ageing

5. Promotion of mental health

5.1 Mental health and successful ageing

6. References

7. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

40–60 mins


Media

This resource contains audio.


3.4 Common mental health problems amongst older people

This resource reviews the meaning of mental health, why it is an important part of overall well-being and how it relates to successful ageing.

[HOME](#) **Common Mental Health Problems amongst Older People**
3. Focus on dementia - 'Normal' age-related cognitive changes

social care
institute for excellence 

Page 3 of 9 Go to page ..



pass mouse over image

Dementia is an organic condition, which means that the deterioration associated with it involves distinctive biological changes. This is why the diagnosis of dementia normally entails the use of brain scans.

If you look at the image on the left, you will see the type of physical change associated with dementia. Pass your mouse over the image to see where the brain has been affected.

◀ Back
Next ▶

Start page > 3. Focus on dementia - 'Normal' age-related cognitive changes Text only Audio

Teaching/learning aims

Risks and protective factors: older people's mental health will help users to:

- explore the meaning and dimensions of mental health
- appreciate the importance of mental health as an aspect of successful ageing

- consider ways in which mental health can be promoted and mental illness prevented.

Full description and contents list

This resource introduces users to some of the key facts and statistics about depression, dementia and long-standing mental ill health. It explains who might be at risk of developing a mental illness as they grow older and why. It also includes information about people who have experienced serious mental illness such as schizophrenia throughout their lives and the main issues facing them as they age.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. Focus on depression

- 2.1 What is depression?
- 2.2 Risk factors for depression
- 2.3 Protective factors
- 2.4 Recognising and treating depression

3. Focus on dementia

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 'Normal' age-related cognitive changes
- 3.3 Importance of early recognition
- 3.4 What do older people with dementia want?

4. Long-standing mental ill health

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Mental health needs

4.3 Issues

4.4 Improving support

5. Conclusion

6. References

7. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

40–60 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

3.5 Understanding the early stages of dementia

The main focus of this resource is on the early stages of dementia, symptoms, the diagnosis of dementia and the impact on the person concerned and those around them.

The screenshot shows a web-based learning interface. At the top, it says 'HOME' and '2. Recognising and diagnosing dementia - Symptoms'. The 'social care institute for excellence' logo is in the top right. The main content area is titled 'Page 8 of 16' and features a grid of four dementia types with corresponding brain images and descriptions:

Fronto-Temporal Dementia	Dementia with Lewy Bodies	Alzheimer's Disease	Vascular Dementia
Involves tangles and plaques of protein in the brain.	Involves the interruption of blood supply to the brain.	Involves tiny deposits of protein in the brain.	Often leads to problems with language in younger people.

To the right of the grid is a video player showing a man speaking in front of a brain image. Below the video are controls for play, stop, and volume, along with a 'download transcript' link. Navigation buttons for 'Back', 'Instructions', and 'Next' are at the bottom. A breadcrumb trail at the very bottom reads 'Start page > 2. Recognising and diagnosing dementia - Symptoms'. There are also 'Text only' and 'Audio' options.

Teaching/learning aims

Understanding the early stages of dementia will enable users to:

- define the main types of dementia and describe how they are diagnosed
- explore what being diagnosed and living with early stage dementia means to service users and carers
- identify the most important aspects of working with people who are in the early to middle stages of dementia.

Full description and contents list

The main focus of this resource is the early stages of dementia, including the emotional impact of the onset of symptoms, and the diagnosis of dementia on the person concerned and those around them.

The resource also considers the importance of community-based support for people with dementia and how social networks can operate in this context.

Towards the end of the resource, you will look at the values and attitudes associated with person-centred care, particularly in relation to caring for, and working with, people with dementia as their condition progresses.

Wherever possible, we focus on dementia from the perspective of people with dementia and their families and we aim to reflect the diversity of experiences among them.

This resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages

1. Introduction

2. Recognising and diagnosing dementia

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Symptoms

2.3 Causes

2.4 Diagnosis

2.5 Why is diagnosis so important?

2.6 Treatment

3. Living with dementia

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Living with dementia

3.3 Coping and adaptation

4. Community-based support and dementia

4.1 Social networks

5. Values and attitudes in dementia care

5.1 Introduction

5.2 Malignant social psychology

5.3 Brief case study

5.4 Person-centred care

6. Conclusion

7. References

8. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

60–80 mins

Media

This resource contains both audio and video. The learning object makes use of a video produced by the Alzheimer's Society entitled *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: Providing Quality Dementia Care*.

3.6 Understanding later stage dementia

This resource focuses primarily on the later stages of dementia and on managing the more significant challenges/symptoms associated with this level of dementia.

Teaching/learning aims

Understanding later stage dementia will enable users to:

- explore the experience of later stage dementia from the perspective of people with dementia and their carers
- understand the symptoms and behaviours associated with later stage dementia
- identify some of the important aspects of supporting a person with dementia and challenging behaviour.

Full description and contents list

This resource focuses primarily on the later stages of dementia and on managing the more significant or prominent challenges – and symptoms – associated with this level of dementia.

The resource aims to reflect, where possible, the experiences of people with dementia and their family carers.

Many of the examples given are located in a care home setting, although the issues are also very relevant to supporting a person with dementia in the community.

This resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. Symptoms and experience

- 2.1 How many people have dementia?
- 2.2 Symptoms of late stage dementia
- 2.3 Difficult or challenging behaviour
- 2.4 Mood changes
- 2.5 Depression or anxiety
- 2.6 Life expectancy of a person with dementia

3. The importance of communication

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Person-centred care
- 3.3 Tips on effective communication
- 3.4 Barriers to communication
- 3.5 Involving family carers

4. Treatments and interventions

- 4.1 Treatments and interventions

5. Promoting independence

- 5.1 Activities of daily living
- 5.2 Supporting dressing and personal care

5.3 Supporting use of the toilet

5.4 Management of toilet related care

5.5 Missing words quiz

5.6 Management of toilet related care – tips

5.7 Conclusion

6. Carers and families

6.1 Family carers of families with dementia

6.2 Services and support for carers

6.3 Admission to a care home

6.4 Case study

6.5 Maintaining links with carers and relatives

6.6 Wider roles for carers

6.7 Care staff

7. Conclusion

8. References

9. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

60–80 mins

Media

This resource contains both audio and video. The learning object makes use of a video produced by the Alzheimer's Society entitled *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: Providing Quality Dementia Care*.

3.7 Understanding depression in later life

The main focus of this resource is depression amongst older people.

The screenshot shows a web page with the following elements:

- Page Header:** "Understanding Depression in Later Life" with a home icon and "HOME". Below it, "6. Understanding the risk of suicide - Effective measures". On the right, "social care institute for excellence" and the "scie" logo.
- Page Navigation:** "Page 6 of 6" and a "Go to page ..." dropdown menu.
- Main Content:** A text prompt: "What steps do you think could be taken to improve the situation? Then read our commentary." Below this is a large text input box with the placeholder "Type here". To the right of the input box is a photograph of an older man with glasses, resting his chin on his hand.
- Navigation Buttons:** "Back", "Read our commentary", and "Return to Start page".
- Footer:** "Start page > 6. Understanding the risk of suicide - Effective measures" and accessibility options for "Text only" and "Audio".

Teaching/learning aims

Understanding depression in later life will enable users to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the main signs and symptoms of depression and how it is diagnosed
- understand who experiences depression and why
- appreciate the diversity of experiences of depression amongst older people.

Full description and contents list

The main focus of this resource is depression amongst older people. The resource begins by highlighting some of the problems with defining and diagnosing 'depression' and then goes on to discuss the estimated numbers of older people that are thought to suffer from the condition.

Next, users consider what makes people more or less vulnerable to developing depression in later life. Finally, users look at effective treatments for depression and explanations for why it so often remains unrecognised in older people.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. What is depression and how is it diagnosed?

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Classification systems

2.3 Difficulties

3. Who gets depressed?

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Residential homes

3.3 Group differences

4. Factors that can increase the risk of depression

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Loss and bereavement

4.3 Loneliness

4.4 Illness

4.5 Poverty

4.6 Depression

5. Protective factors and effective responses

5.1 Protective factors

5.2 Resilience

5.3 Building social networks

5.4 The 'invisibility' of depression

5.5 Treatment and responses

6. Understanding the risk of suicide

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Men vs women

6.3 Depression and suicide

6.4 Preventative action

6.5 Effective measures

7. Conclusion

8. References

9. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

50–60 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

3.8 Ageism, age discrimination and social exclusion

The main focus of this resource is 'ageism', 'age discrimination' and 'social exclusion' – issues which are central to understanding the experience of ageing and older age in contemporary society.

Ageism, Age Discrimination and Social Exclusion
social care institute for excellence scie

HOME Ageism in health and social care - Direct and indirect discrimination

Page 9 of 14

Go to page ...

Direct discrimination

1. A liaison psychiatry service which has a policy of only catering for under 65s.
2. Age-related criteria for specific services such as stroke, rehabilitation, etc.
3. Age-related criteria for access to day surgery (rather than assessing individual need and ability to)
4. Care packages for older people with a lower cost ceiling across the board than those for younger
5. Transitions between services triggered by chronological age rather than changing individual
6. A policy of spending less on training for staff to transfer to the care of the psychogeriatric service, or
7. Lower referral rates for investigations or treatments for older people with similar health problems to younger people.

Indirect discrimination

8. Palliative care services if they only accept people with cancer, thus excluding older people who may
9. Early discharge without appropriate support services (many older people live alone).
10. Eligibility criteria that effectively exclude many older poorly sighted people, for example, help with
11. Restricted access to specialist neurological support which in some areas is funded for under 65s
12. Providing a limited range of services to older people in a routine and inflexible way which contrasts
13. Institutionalised regimes in hospital wards and homes for older people which contrast with smaller
14. Lack of privacy and denial of dignity in care homes and hospitals where it would be afforded to younger residents and patients.

Back Reset Instructions Next

Start page > 4. Ageism in health and social care - Direct and indirect discrimination

Text only Audio

Teaching/learning aims

Ageism, age discrimination and social exclusion will enable users to:

- discuss what is meant by the terms 'ageism', 'age discrimination' and 'social exclusion'
- recognise ways in which ageism, age discrimination and social exclusion impact on older people in health and social care settings and wider society
- suggest ways in which ageism, age discrimination and social exclusion can be challenged.

Full description and contents list

In this resource you are asked to consider issues which are central to understanding the experience of ageing and older age in contemporary society.

Ageism, age discrimination and social exclusion diminish the quality of life which older people may enjoy. They also threaten their mental health.

In spite of their negative effect on the daily lives of older people, however, ageism and age discrimination are often unrecognised, ignored, or even compounded in health and social care settings. And social exclusion has only recently been officially acknowledged as affecting older people as well as children and families.

As you work through this resource you will be able to read the views of older people talking about their experience of age discrimination. We hope that by the time you complete this resource you will be sensitised to ageism and its impact on those older people you encounter in your life.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. Age differentiation and discrimination

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Age norms

2.3 Recognising discrimination

2.4 Discrimination in employment

3. Understanding ageism

3.1 Defining ageism

3.2 The extent of discrimination

3.3 Multiple discrimination

3.4 Perpetuating discrimination: stereotypes

3.5 Benevolent prejudice

3.6 The new ageism

4. Ageism in health and social care

4.1 Attitudes

4.2 Direct and indirect discrimination

4.3 Principles of anti-ageist practice

4.4 Anti-ageist practice

5. Social exclusion

5.1 Context and definition

5.2 Case study of social exclusion

5.3 Tackling social exclusion

6. Conclusion

7. References

8. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

90 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

3.9 Services for older people with mental health problems

The main focus of this resource is on the principal services available for older people at the primary, mainstream, secondary/specialist and tertiary levels.

Services for Older People with Mental Health Problems
social care institute for excellence scie

HOME 2 The care pathway - The care pathway

Go to page ...

A care pathway is a route through services from primary to mainstream to specialist services. It is only illustrative and not prescriptive.

6. Tertiary Care

5. Carers

4. Secondary Care/ Specialist Services

3. Mainstream Care

2. Assessment

1. Primary Care

Stop audio

Show audio: text

Back

Return to Start page

Start page > 2. The care pathway - The care pathway

Text only Audio

Teaching/learning aims

Services for older people with mental health problems aims to:

- provide an outline of the key services for older people with mental health problems and their family carers
- introduce the types of needs that mainstream and specialist services meet
- introduce a number of issues linked to service usage including assessment of need and payment issues.

Full description and contents list

In this resource you will have an opportunity to learn about the principal services available for older people at the primary, mainstream, secondary/specialist and tertiary levels by travelling down a virtual 'care pathway'. Along the way users will have the chance to test their knowledge of relevant statistics and will examine cross-cutting issues and assessment.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Quiz

1.3 Policy context

2. The care pathway

2.1 The care pathway

2.2 Primary care

2.3 Mainstream care

2.4 Secondary care/specialist services

2.5 Carers

2.6 Tertiary care

3. Cross-cutting issues

3.1 Challenges

3.2 Financing arrangements

3.3 Quality assurance

4. Conclusion

5. References

6. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

40–50 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

3.10 The life course approach

The main focus of this resource is the life course approach, which suggests that in order to understand and work effectively with older people we need to see them in the context of their past lives, taking a life story or biographical approach, or through reminiscence.

The screenshot shows the 'The Life Course Approach' e-learning interface. At the top, it says 'HOME The Life Course Approach' and 'social care institute for excellence scie'. Below that, it indicates 'Page 2 of 3' and '4. Applications in practice'. There is a 'Go to page' dropdown menu. The main content area is divided into two sections: 'BIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH' and 'REMINISCENCE'. Each section features a stack of four books with the following titles: 'INTRODUCTION', 'AN EXAMPLE FROM PRACTICE', 'BENEFITS FOR OLDER PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS', and 'FIND OUT MORE'. At the bottom, there are navigation buttons for 'Back', 'Next', and 'Write Notes'. The footer shows 'Start page > 4. Applications in practice' and options for 'Text only' and 'Audio'.

Teaching/learning aims

The life course approach aims to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the life course approach to ageing and its relevance to mental health in later life
- understand the significance to mental health in later life of approaches which give primacy to meaning and identity: life stories, the biographical approach, and reminiscence.

Full description and contents list

In this learning object users are introduced to the importance of seeing later life as one phase of an entire course of life from birth to death, shaped by earlier life stages and experiences.

Meaning and identity are important to mental health in later life and require that we can connect past, present and future in our lives. A highly influential theory of the life course which embodies these themes is the psychosocial theory of Erik Erikson, which users consider in Section 2.

A life course approach suggests that in order to understand and work effectively with older people we need to see them in the context of their past lives, taking a life story or biographical approach, or through reminiscence. Users consider these approaches in Section 4.

Please note that this resource also contains a self-assessment section where users can test how far they have assimilated the key messages.

1. Introduction

2. The life course

2.1 Ages and stages

2.2 Erik Erikson

2.3 Generativity

2.4 Integrity and older people

3. Life stories

3.1 Meaning and identity

3.2 Life stories and memory

4. Applications in practice

4.1 The biographical approach

4.2 Reminiscence

5. Conclusion

6. References

7. Self-assessment

Time required for self-study

40–50 mins

Media

This resource contains audio.

4. About the authors

Alisoun Milne is a senior lecturer at the Tizard Centre in the University of Kent's School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research. Prior to this, she was a research fellow at the Personal Social Services Research Unit, and has an extensive background in social work. Her key research interests are: mental health in later life, older carers, carers of people with dementia and early diagnosis of dementia. Recent research projects include: a review of the needs and roles of older carers; GP attitudes to early diagnosis of dementia; an evaluation of the support needs of older Asians; and a review of dementia screening instruments. Alisoun contributed to the 2006 Social Care Institute for Excellence Guide to 'Assessing the Mental Health Needs of Older People' and is regularly involved in training health and social care staff working with this group of users. She is a member of the SE Dementia Collaborative Oversight Group and the National Patient Safety Agency, External

Mental Health Reference Group. She has published widely and presented papers at national and international conferences.

Following a decade of social work practice, **Brian Gearing** worked for twenty years at the Open University where he was Senior Lecturer in Gerontology, developing a wide range of courses on ageing and the care of older people for health and social work professionals and carers. He has also carried out and published a number of biographical research studies which focus on older age and age care, and (as series editor) developed the successful Open University Press series, *Rethinking Ageing*.

Joanne Warner, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research, University of Kent took up her post in 2005. Prior to this she held posts as lecturer in health and social care at the Open University – where her main responsibility was writing course materials on mental health – and lecturer in applied social studies at Oxford. She has a background as a practitioner in community development and social work and continues to act as a Mental Health Act manager in an NHS Trust. Joanne’s main research interests are in mental health and risk, in particular the role of inquiries in shaping professional practice. She serves on the editorial board of the international journal *Health, Risk and Society*.

5. Acknowledgements

SCIE would like to thank all who helped contribute to the development of these learning materials and in particular:

- the four peer reviewers of the materials, Rachel Fitton, Robert Johns, Jo Moriarty and Nasreen Hammond
- the Alzheimer’s Society for kindly allowing us to use video footage in two of the learning objects – *Understanding the early stages of dementia* and *Understanding later stage dementia* – from their training package entitled *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: Providing quality dementia care*.

6. How to access SCIE’s e-learning resources

The 10 resources on Law and Social Work can be downloaded directly to the classroom by teaching staff who wish to conduct whole-class work using a data projector or interactive whiteboard. Alternatively, students can be instructed to visit

the resources themselves on SCIE's web site. Institutions may also download the resources and include them in their own virtual learning environment (VLE).

To access or download SCIE's e-learning resources in one of the three ways above, visit: www.scie.org.uk/publications/elearning/index.asp

7. Forthcoming SCIE e-learning publications

Please note that SCIE will be launching a further 10 interactive e-learning resources on the topic of 'Poverty and Social Exclusion' in early 2008 and two further series on 'Inter-professional working skills' and 'Communication skills' in the second half of 2008.