

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration
Kent, Surrey and Sussex



POSITIVELY IMPACTING SOCIAL CARE THROUGH RESEARCH

A journey into improving social care services through evidence-based research, examining the impact of the Hatha Helper role on older adults' wellbeing and quality of life.

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My Research Journey



Nursing Background

First research experience during my degree. Worked at University College Hospital in London for 15 years.



Costa Rica Interlude

Took a year out with my husband and baby son before returning to the UK.



Home Counties Carers

Set up a homecare company - Home Counties Carers. Identified the lack of research in the social care sector.



Research Opportunities

We looked out for opportunities and became involved with Surrey University's RIPE project, the KSS Research Network, and the Applied Research Collaboration both part of the National Institute for Health and Social Care Research (NIHR).

The Springboard Award

To develop research skills, experience and knowledge through training and local service evaluation using standardised measures and quantitative research methods.



The Hatha Helper Role

A trusted personal assistant managing daily activities for older adults.



Scheduling

Manages appointments and daily planning.



Household

Handles chores and household management.



Support

Provides reliable, friendly assistance and peace of mind.

Research Methodology

A local service evaluation using research methods

Participant Selection

10 clients identified. 7 participated. All used service for 3+ months and could consent.

Assessment Tools

Use of validated ASCOT- INT4 measure and Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS).

Research Process

Possible participants identified.

Personal letters sent.

Follow up phone calls to confirm participation and schedule interviews.

A choice of venues was offered for the in-person interviews - all were conducted within participants home.

All participants gave a verbal consent at the beginning of the interview.

Data Collection

ASCOT-INT4 interview - most clients preferred researcher to read questions out to them.

WEMWBS score taken, half did it themselves and half had it read aloud to them.

Concluded with qualitative interview.

Data Analysis

ASCOT-INT4 data was entered into the ASCOT Data Analysis spreadsheet and the results were determined and reviewed.

The WEMWBS scores were reviewed in line with the tools scoring benchmarks.

The qualitative interview responses were collated.

Key ASCOT Results

Quality of Life Impact



Dignity

23.81% improvement in how clients feel about themselves with help.



Control

19.05% improvement in control over daily life with Hatha Helper support.



Occupation

19.05% improvement in ability to spend time on valued activities.

Comparing current quality of life with expected quality of life without Hatha Helper services.

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Score (WEMWBS)

The WEMWBS showed current wellbeing but couldn't measure impact without baseline data.

Client Feedback

- Extremely positive feedback - clients consistently expressed high satisfaction with Hatha Helper services
- Valuable personal insights - comments revealed how services improved clients daily experiences
- Quality of life improvements - feedback aligned with measurable improvements in ASCOT domains

Research Impact & Next Steps

Research Capacity

Taking part in research and becoming more embedded in the research networks has increased the research capacity for both myself, my business and therefore in turn the social care sector.

Future Research

Potential collaboration on further research projects within social care.

Continue to build relationships with those working in research.

Signpost and encourage others to take part in research.

Continue to network with other sectors carrying out research.



Value Evidence

Research demonstrates the effectiveness of the Hatha Helper model and could influence service delivery across a broader region.

Improve the outcomes for our clients in understanding what has impacted them the most and what has been most important to them.

Service Planning

Understanding from the data collected where the service has the greatest impact.

Reviewing the use of a validated score such as ASCOT-INT4 in regular client reviews. And a well being score prior to the start of the service and at intervals thereafter to track the impact on wellbeing

Acknowledgements

I have been very lucky to be supported throughout this project and would like to say thank you to my mentor Stacey Rand, my ASCOT trainer Nick Smith and the ARC community who have been interested and supportive throughout.

Finally, thank you for listening. By sharing my project and experiences, I hope to encourage more people not only to take part in research, but also to lead their own projects in social care — helping to create real impact and positive change in the services we provide and how they evolve.

Thank you