



Individual Development Award (IDA) Springboard Award

Aimed at individuals employed by a health or social care organisation who are an [ARC KSS member organisation](#) to undertake activities aimed at developing research skills.

Dementia, Sexuality and the Law

Is the Law striking the right balance?

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What did you achieve through this award? Refer to your original objectives in your application.

This award afforded me the opportunity to further my objective of being an “Academic Clinician” by providing me with resources to deepen my understanding of, and skills in, Clinical research (Qualitative). I built on my previous work with international colleagues advocating for improvements in the welfare of older adults and their enjoyment of human rights re-sexual relations. The award, enabled me to give a voice to different stakeholders in dementia and dementia care, on the topic of sexuality and dementia and ways to improve the welfare of people living with dementia (PLWD), their partner(s), their relatives, such that PLWD can exercise their human rights to enjoy sexuality in a safe and lawful manner.

The award provided me with the opportunity to further understand the art of budgeting for research projects, conducting patient and public involvement (PPI) exercise, conducting focus groups and qualitative interviews and to purchase Nvivo, used for transcription of the interviews and for parts of the qualitative data analysis thereby deepening my understanding of qualitative research methodology.

The project findings have helped me to advance my research career and contribute to improving the welfare and quality of life of PLWD and their partners, and open up new areas for dementia-related research.

I intend to carry out further research in the area of sexuality in dementia and in other areas of dementia care; research that would drive initiatives to “do better things” in the care of PLWD. Significantly the project has enabled me to identify public/professional collaborators for future research.



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What has this award meant for you? What has it enabled you to do?

The £5,000 award, as kindly granted by ARC KSS Spring Board program, afforded me the opportunity to acquire knowledge on all stages involved in the research process, starting from learning how to apply for project funds, to working with the funders and sponsors on necessary steps required to actualise a research project (qualitative research in particular) and this invariably afforded me the opportunity to “cut my teeth” as a researcher. The grant, directly, boosted my applications to the ethics committee for ethics approval of the research project and in my view, increased my chances of receiving ethics approval as was the outcome of my application to the ethics committee.

The grant was put to judicious use and this enabled me to (i) buy NViVO (ii). send a “thank you for participating token” to the study participants as well as (iii) buy refreshments for some of the study groups. Significantly, the remaining monies, data gathering phase, will be used towards paying for open access to the publication of the research findings in a peer reviewed journal. I am grateful for the opportunities afforded me by this award and thankful to the ARC KSS Springboard program.

What's next?

I intend to again join up with the public as well as multidisciplinary experts in psychiatry and the legal profession, to pursue further research that would improve the welfare of older adults especially PLWD i.e. to improve the knowledge base available on how to do better things for people living with dementia as proposed below:

Study on *“what people think about a “Hybrid Model,” which combines Advance Decision on Intimacy with explicit safeguarding provisions”*.

“Can we do better in the care of PLWD?” – This study would explore public and professional opinion on what would improve dementia care. The study would, specifically, include people with diverse sexual orientations i.e. coupled and single, heterosexuals as well as LGBTQ and professionals with expertise in dementia care, to explore what they consider as amounting to acceptable person-centred care for PLWD.

What is your experience of receiving mentorship as part of this award?

I had a very positive and fruitful experience of being mentored, as I was lucky to have seasoned mentors from the field of psychiatry, seasoned researchers and a mentor from the legal profession, who is a Kings Counsel, and their guidance helped me through all the research stages up to the writing up of my research findings for publication. The knowledge I acquired from these mentors has put me in good stead to pursue further research to contribute to the knowledge base available in the care of older adults, especially individuals living with dementia.