

Taking a patient centred approach to information delivery of risk factor management in Vascular Dementia

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- ▶ Co-design provides an effective way to tailor patient information to its target audience
- ▶ Dementia patients prefer positive, simple messages with graphics that represent their communities
- ▶ Patient information resources should encourage active participation



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▶ Introduction

Dementia affects memory, language comprehension, orientation, and judgement. Prevention is crucial, and in 2017, The Lancet identified 12 modifiable risk factors for developing dementia. These risk factors are of particular importance in vascular dementia (VD).

Healthcare services must communicate information about these risk factors effectively to patients and carers.

This study used co-design principles to develop a dementia-friendly, accessible information resource for patients and carers.

▶ Methods

Rapid literature reviews were undertaken to identify best practices in easy-read information and design for patients with cognitive impairment.

Working with clinicians and a design researcher, prototype brain health information resources were created for review and iterative co-design in focus groups. Semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis were used in successive workshops.

Workshops were held in different community settings and included predominantly White British participants, Somali community groups, and one South Asian community group. Health professionals were surveyed on the final brain health information resource.

▶ Results

The literature reviews showed that patients with VD found images and information in the red–orange colour spectrum easier to identify. Simple sentences and clear photographs were identified as the most important design features.

Patients and carers preferred information resources that encouraged active participation and interaction, focused on positive behaviour change rather than negative messaging, and included images representing diverse communities.

A co-designed brain health information resource was produced and shared with healthcare professionals, alongside a Google survey. Nine respondents from a wide range of professions provided feedback, all of which was very positive.

▶ Conclusions

Optimising brain health is a vital aspect of vascular dementia care that requires effective communication.

Involving a diverse group of patients and carers enabled us to develop an information resource specifically tailored to the needs of patients with dementia and their carers.

▶ References

- Shin JH. Dementia Epidemiology Fact Sheet 2022. Ann Rehabil Med. 2022;46(2):53–59. doi: 10.5535/arm.22027
- Livingston G, Huntley J, Sommerlad A et al. Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2020 report of the Lancet Commission. The Lancet, 2020; 396, 413
- www.designedwithcare.co.uk/brain-health

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Images from royalty free sources: Age-positive image library by the Centre for Ageing Better and Freepik.



Fig 1. Consultant Neurologist exploring imagery with Age UK group

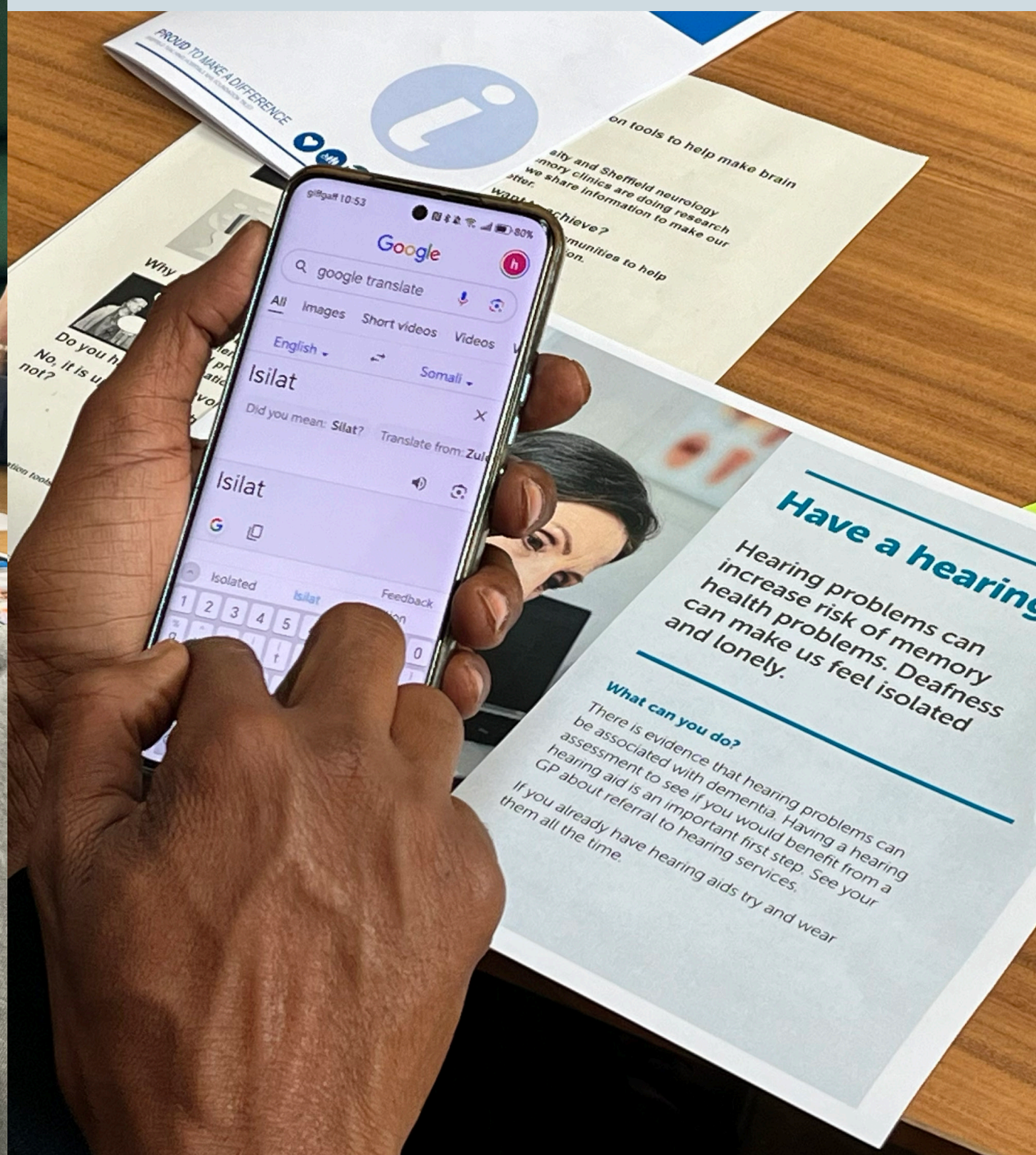


Fig 2. Workshop participant using Google Translate

Role	Easy to Engage with?	How does the information quality compare to the current leaflet?	Would you share the resource with patients?	Would it benefit from being shared through other modes (eg. Whatsapp)?	How would you improve the resource? (edited for length and clarity)	How would you rate the resource? (1 being poor, 5 being excellent)
Consultant	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	If it was available in more languages	5
Consultant	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	Translate into more languages	5
Consultant	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	Possibly advise those wearing hearing aids to at least wear them when in social situations if they can't wear them all the time	5
Consultant	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	N/A	5
Consultant	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	More visual	5
Consultant	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	N/A	5
Occupational Therapist	Yes	Better - more interactive	Yes	Yes	Consider the wording on the 'if you feel sad - get help' section	4
Research Nurse	Yes	Better	Yes	Maybe	N/A	5
Research Nurse	Yes	Better	Yes	Yes	N/A	5

Table 1: Results from the survey sent out to health professionals with the new information resource

Fig 3. Results from survey with health professionals

Taking steps towards a healthier lifestyle will reduce your risk of developing dementia.

About this book

In this book, you'll find 10 things you can do to keep your brain healthy. Under each theme, we've suggested small changes you can make – changes that can have a big impact. Go at your own pace; you don't need to do everything at once!

If you're in regular contact with the memory clinic, your GP, social prescribers, or community support workers, for example, share your progress with them. They may be able to offer additional support for each theme.

10 themes

Explore the 10 themes below. Where do you feel you need to focus your attention? Label these themes as 'high importance'. Some themes may be less relevant which you can label 'medium' or 'low'.

	Theme	Importance
1	Keep active and move regularly	
2	Eat a healthy diet	
3	Keep your mind active	
4	Get help if you feel sad	
5	Keep a healthy weight	
6	Reduce your sugar	
7	Reduce your blood pressure	
8	Cut down or quit smoking	
9	Drink less alcohol	
10	Have a hearing test	

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Keep active and move regularly

A lack of movement is associated with many health conditions, including poor brain health.

What can you do?

10 minutes of activity per day, or 30 minutes 3 times a week, is enough to get the blood pumping. Anything that's a bit harder than walking is especially good. Why don't you try:

- Dancing
- Gardening
- Outdoor games
- Keeping up with household jobs

There's a calendar on the next page to help you →

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Reduce your sugar intake

Too much sugar can cause diabetes. Diabetes increases risk of heart attack, stroke and memory problems.

What can you do?

- Try switching to lower-sugar breakfast cereals
- Check the traffic light labels on packaging. Ready meals can be higher in sugar than you think
- Try healthier snacks such as fresh fruit, unsalted mixed nuts, plain popcorn or rice cakes
- Gradually reduce the amount of sugar in tea and coffee or try swapping to sweeteners

Diabetes support: Diabetes UK 0345 123 2399 | diabetes.org.uk

Start your week

Small changes can make a big difference. At the start of each week decide on a small change you're going to make to your diet. Stick to it as best as you can!

Date	Small change to diet
Week 1:	I will.....
Week 2:	I will.....
Week 3:	I will.....
Week 4:	I will.....

Tip: Share your weekly goal with someone else so they can help keep you on track!

End your week

Reflect at the end of the week on what you've been able to achieve. Can you continue with this change? Can you improve on the change you've made?

What I achieved	What I'll do next
	I will.....
	I will.....
	I will.....
	I will.....

Question: How do you feel after four weeks of small changes?

Smoking

If you smoke, cutting down or quitting is one of the best lifestyle changes you can make to help with memory problems. Track how many cigarettes you smoke in a week and try to reduce it in Week 2 & 3.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Total			

Further support: **Smoke Free Sheffield** 0330 6601166 | sheffield.yorkshiremccfree.nhs.uk

Alcohol

Units can be hard to understand, so it's hard to track how much we're drinking. Make a note of what you drink each day and calculate the units at the end of the week. Try to reduce to less than 14 units/week.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			
Total Units			

Further support: **Project 6** 0114 2587553 | sheffieldalcohol.supportservice.org.uk

How to Keep Your Brain Healthy

Positive changes you can make for a healthy brain.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

designedwithcare.
co.uk/brain-health

Fig 4. Interactive pages from the new information resource ensuring imagery represent diverse communities