

Building Dementia-Friendly Futures: A Qualitative Exploration of an Immersive Event's Impact on Early- and Mid-Career Professionals

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- ✓ Early- and mid-career professionals (EMCPs) play a **crucial role in shaping dementia research, services, and policy, yet face significant gaps in professional development and meaningful engagement with people living with dementia.**
- ✓ **WTD is an immersive, interdisciplinary global event** that brings together people with lived experience of dementia, researchers, advocates, and clinicians, among others.
- ✓ **This study explored the impact of WTD on EMCPs' knowledge, attitudes, and practices, as well as their perspectives on advancing dementia-friendly research, services, and policy.**



Who was involved and how?

- The Partnering with Research Participants and Health Policy PIAs supported 15 EMCPs to participate in WTD 2025.
- n = 15, 73% female, primarily researchers and healthcare professionals.
- Representing 9 low- and middle-income countries and 3 high-income countries, with ages ranging from mid-20s to late-40s, bringing diverse cultural, geographic, and professional perspectives.
- Two reflective focus groups were held during WTD, using semi-structured questions. Data were analysed through reflexive thematic analysis

Results

Impact of WTD on EMCP's knowledge, attitudes, and practices

- Participation in WTD **enhanced EMCPs' feelings of connection and engagement** with people living with dementia and care partners.
- It also facilitated a **shift in understanding dementia, emphasising the empowerment and value of lived experience**, and highlighted the **benefits of diverse perspectives** in motivating collective action.

Advancing dementia-friendly research services and policy

- EMCPs identified **key strategies for advancing a dementia-friendly future:**
- Meaningful involvement of people with lived experience
 - Culturally sensitive and accessible practices
 - Strengthened capacity-building and interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly in under-resourced settings.

These experiences provide insights that can inform dementia-friendly research, services, and policy, emphasising the importance of inclusion, accessibility, and equity across diverse and multicultural settings.