

Beyond cognition: physical mobility shaped independence and autonomy in dementia and caring – a longitudinal qualitative analysis

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Introduction

- Dementia progressively affects physical mobility, such as gait & balance [1].
- Mobility challenges contribute to falls, injuries, disability & institutionalisation.
- Mobility challenges are under-recognised in dementia; as such there is limited mobility support provided in post-diagnostic care [2]
- We need to understand how important it is to maintain & support mobility when living with dementia or caring for someone living with dementia, so that we can develop appropriate interventions & services.

Objective

To unpack the **experience of mobility challenges over time when living with dementia or caring for someone living with dementia** to explore if this is a meaningful aspect of health.

Methods

Secondary analysis of a longitudinal qualitative study involving 46 community-dwelling adults aged 80+ in North East England [3].



4 people living with dementia & 5 carers completed 3 semi-structured interviews each over 28 months



Longitudinal case summaries developed & reflexive thematic analysis conducted

Results

Four core themes were constructed, depicted in Figure 1.

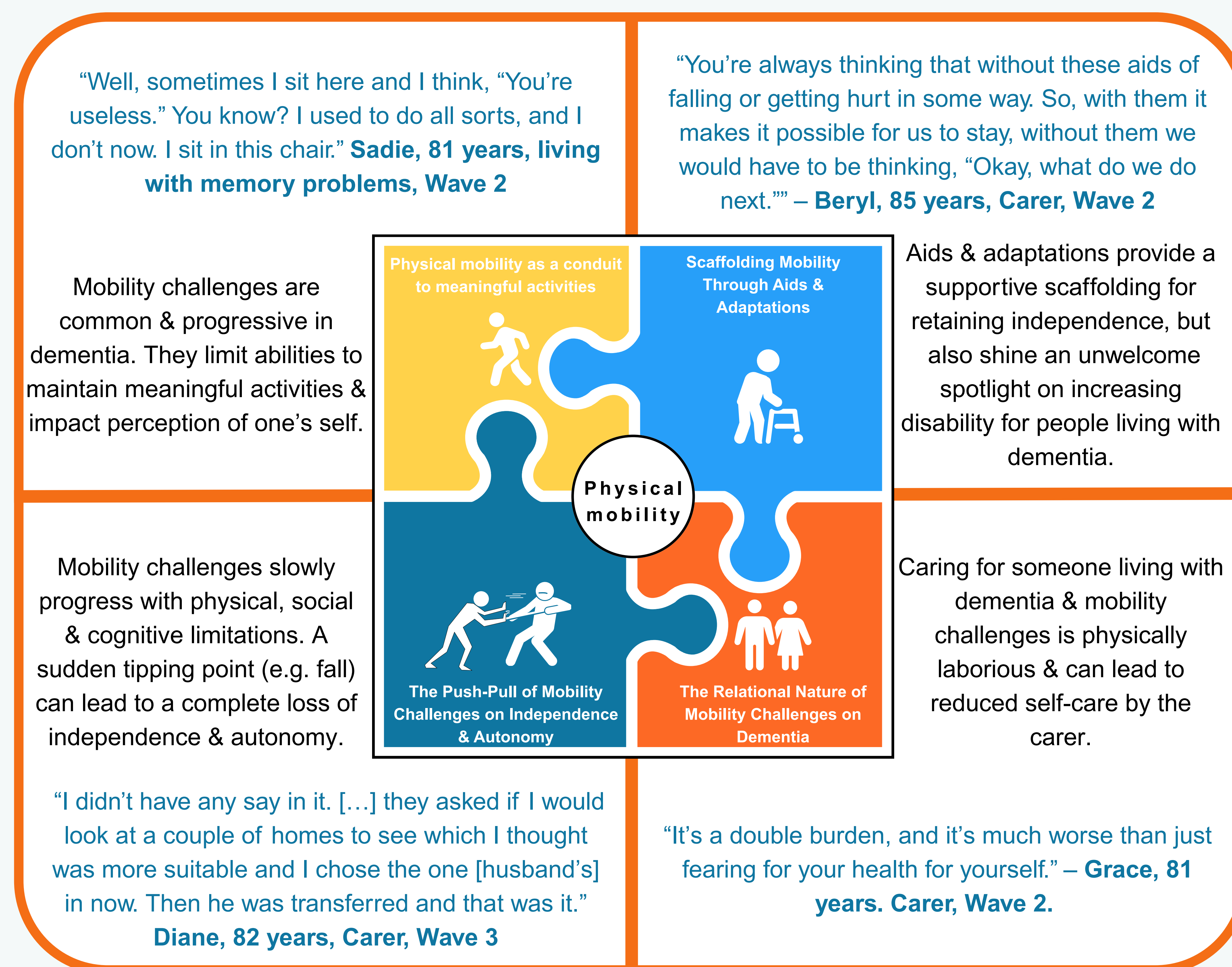


Figure 1: Overview of key results

Conclusion

- Maintaining simple aspects of mobility is important & meaningful for people living with dementia & their carers.
- Supporting mobility is likely complex & requires consideration of both the disease, the individual & their support network.