Social, Leisure & Everyday Activities that Occupy People Living in Advanced Age

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Overview of the Presentation

• Aim of the Living to Advanced Age study
• The purpose of this paper
• Background to researching elders’ social, leisure & everyday activities
• The outcome measures used
• The findings
• What do they mean?
Aim of the Living to Advanced Age: A feasibility for cohort study

To establish the feasibility for all aspects of a longitudinal study of the long-lived
112 elders were enrolled across 3 North Island, urban and rural locations
  - 33 Maori elders, aged 75-79 years
  - 79 non-Maori elders, 85 years
  - 64 women (57%) and 48 men (43%)

- Comprehensive questionnaire and physical assessment
- 10 participants (5 Maori & 5 non-Maori) completed the Yesterday Interview
The purpose of this paper

• To present the methods used for researching elder’s engagement and participation in social, leisure and everyday activities; and

• An interpretation of what such findings suggest for practice in aged care settings
“The odds of dying within 6 years of the initial interview were reduced for participants with greater activity level” (Menec, p. S78)

“Participating in church related or mass [social group] activities predicted better function 6 years later” (p. S79).
Elders who “engaged in handiwork hobbies, music/art/theatre, or reading and writing were happier after 6 years than those who did not” (p. S79).

“Although activity level declined with age, older age was not correspondingly linked to less happiness, even when function clearly decreased with increasing age” (p. S79).

(Menec, 2003)
“Social and productive activities were observed to confer equivalent survival advantages compared with fitness activities” (p. 480).

“The effect of social and productive activity on mortality was the strongest among the least physically active” (p. 480). (Glass et al., 1999).
“Productive activity may result in a sense of meaning and purpose in life, which has been linked to survival” in other studies (Glass et al., p. 482)
UK study of needs of people with dementia in aged care

• Environmental and physical health needs were usually met. However, residents still had numerous unmet needs, most commonly for stimulating daytime activities or company.

• Unmet needs were associated with psychological problems, such as anxiety and depression, but not with severity of dementia or level of dependency.

(Hancock et al., 2006)
Aged Care Activity Study

- An individualised repetitive activity programme may improve health status for low-level dependency aged care residents at least in the short term (up to 3 months).

- There is a need to increase the functional reserve of older people and activity programmes may be one feasible way to do this (Peri et al., 2008).
Background_Being in the Everyday

Always having something to do, having one treasured activity and having a purpose in the everyday matters
The Outcome Measures

- Adapted for the NZ context through consultation with kuamatua and kuia
- 66 types of social, leisure and everyday activities, clustered under 8 categories
  - Do you do the activity now?
  - How often do you do the activity?
  - How important are these activities for your well being?
Exercise & Sporting Activities

- 17 rated them “Not at all important”
- 31 rated them “Very important”
- 20 rated them as “Extremely important”

Overall 56% participate in walking, jogging, walking the dog
- 58% of men and 54% of the women
- 65% of Maori and 53% of non-Maori

18% played bowls
Social Friendship Activities

✓ Only 1 rated them “Not at all important”
✓ 48 rated them as “Very important”
✓ 25 rated them as “Extremely important”

✓ Overall 92% participate in talking on the phone with family or friends
✓ 90% of men and 95% of women
✓ 97% of Maori and 91% of non-Maori

✓ 84% Family gatherings and celebrations
Social, Cultural & Religious Activities

✓ 9 people rated “Not at all important”
✓ 42 rated them as “Very important”
✓ 10 rated them as “Extremely important”

✓ Overall 63% go on outings & visits, car trips, bus trips
  ✓ 63% of men and 64% of the women
  ✓ 75% of Maori and 58% of non-Maori
✓ 56% go to church or have time in prayer
Problem Solving & Learning Activities

- 9 people rated them “Not at all important”
- 20 rated them as “Very important”
- 12 rated them as “Extremely important”

- Overall 59% do puzzles, crosswords, sudoku, or table games
  - 38% of men and 78%*** of the women
  - 59% of Maori and non-Maori
- 31% play cards, solitaire, or bridge
Solitary Sedentary Activities

- No one rated them as “Not at all important”
- 40 rated them as “Very important”
- 22 rated them “Extremely important”

Overall 93% watch television shows or videos
- 88% of men and 98%* of the women
- 100% of Maori and 91% non-Maori

90% read newspapers or magazines
Creative Activities

- 12 rated them as “Not at all important”
- 23 rated them as “Very important”
- 7 rated them as “Extremely important”

Overall 41% participate in writing memoirs, family history, poems, stories
- 46% of men and 36% of the women
- 63% of Maori and 31%** non-Maori

30% do handicrafts, knitting, sewing, weaving or carving
Restorative & Restive Activities

- 4 rated them “Not at all important”
- 33 rated them as “Very important”
- 8 rated them as “Extremely important”

Overall 83% spend time reminiscing or thinking about the past
- 85% of men and 81% of the women
- 94% of Maori and 78%* non-Maori

77% spend time thinking about life
Productive Activities

✓ 6 rated them “Not at all important”
✓ 33 rated them as “Very important”
✓ 26 rated them as “Extremely important”

✓ Overall 83% do the shopping
  ✓ 77% of men and 88% of the women
  ✓ 94% of Maori and 78% non-Maori

✓ 73% spend time cooking or baking
The Feasibility of the Modified NPS

- Participant and interviewer comments showed it took a long time to administer.
- Some participants experienced a sense of repetition of questions asked elsewhere in the questionnaire, such as the PASE.
- Further adaptation is required for implementation in the cohort study to reduce respondent burden.
The Yesterday Interview

- Moss & Lawton (1982) developed the YI to describe how 535 elders spend their days and explore the constraints of environmental settings.
- A particular interest in time spent in obligatory and discretionary activities.
- Participants recounted their activities in the previous day.
- Berlin Aging Study _Aging from 70 to 100_
The Yesterday Interview

- One pilot interview
- 5 Maori and 5 non-Maori elders
- Recounting the previous 24 hours
- Identify a ‘landmark’ or memorable event in the previous day, and then a later landmark event, and so on
- Secondary activities recorded
- Where they were, who was present, and enjoyment on a 5-point scale
Analysing the Yesterday Interview

- A list of 56 activity descriptions; such as ‘doing housework’, ‘playing cards alone’, and ‘thinking or reflecting.’
- Coded against the 8 categories in the Modified NPS, and the 8 WHO_ICF Activities & Participation categories
- Analysis within the person, looking at the flow of the day, and across participants, for patterns of everyday activity
Texture & Flow of a Day
Where elder’s time was spent

On average participants spent

- 91% inside at home (between 80% - 99%)
- 2% outside at home
- 5% in the community, driving or walking
- 1% at a health or social service
- 4% at a family member’s home
- 1% at a friend’s home
- 6% visiting in a residential setting
Who elders spent their time with

On average participants spent
57% alone (between 1% - 99%)
16% with a partner
9% with whanau or family members
8% with friends
12% with a pet
3% with workers or volunteers
2% with community members in general
On average, participants spent
15 hrs doing something they liked a lot
5 hrs doing something they liked a little
3 hrs they neither liked nor disliked
1.3hrs doing something they disliked a little
10 mins doing something they disliked a lot
The Feasibility of the Yesterday Interview
What does it mean?


Questions & Discussion

What questions do these findings raise for you?

What implications do these findings have for your aged care setting?

How are, or how might, elders in aged care be enabled to engage in their one treasured pursuit?

What features of the aged care environment open up or close down opportunities to engage in preferred and treasured activities?