

The development and evaluation of an online dementia resource for primary care based health professionals

Aisling A. Jennings*, Siobhán Boyle, Tony Foley

Dept. of General Practice, University College Cork, Ireland



ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Dementia
Primary care
General practitioners
Education
Social supports
Service directory

ABSTRACT

Background: Primary care based health professionals struggle with many aspects of dementia care. General practitioners (GPs) find providing post-diagnosis information on services and supports particularly challenging. Likewise, people with dementia and their family caregivers feel they need more support from their GPs in this post-diagnosis period.

Objective: This study aimed to develop and evaluate an online educational resource for primary care health professionals that included a dementia specific services and supports directory.

Method: A previously conducted educational needs analysis informed the content of the resource. This content was further developed by a review of the literature and through consultation with an expert reference group and a stakeholder group. A mixed method approach was taken to the evaluation of the online resource which included analysis of the website traffic, qualitative feedback from stakeholders and evaluation by general practitioners.

Results: The online resource www.dementiaphways.ie was developed. Initial qualitative feedback obtained from potential end-users was positive. Data analysis was performed on over 4000 people who accessed the site. Finally, the online resource was demonstrated to 190 general practitioners in 36 workshops. All of the general practitioners surveyed felt that [dementiaphways.ie](http://www.dementiaphways.ie) would be a useful resource for them. Several potential barriers to the successful development and implementation of a services and supports directory were identified.

Conclusion: This study provides a prototype for the development of an online dementia educational resource and demonstrates the value of a dementia-specific services and supports directory for primary care based health professionals.

1. Introduction

General practitioners (GPs) and community-based healthcare professionals play a pivotal role in the care of people with dementia (Downs 1996), however, they find dementia care challenging (Cahill et al. 2006; Travers et al. 2013; Jennings et al. 2017). A recent triangulated educational needs analysis of GPs' educational needs (Foley et al. 2017) explored multiple perspectives on what GPs' educational needs are in dementia care. In addition to GPs' perspectives on their educational needs, people with dementia and their carers were asked what they believed GPs should know in order to deliver optimal dementia care. The educational needs analysis established that GPs wanted access to up-to-date, GP-relevant, clinical information that would help them to manage a patient with dementia and offer optimal post diagnosis care to people dementia and their families. GPs were aware of the importance of social supports but they were often unaware of how to access them (Foley et al. 2017). Accessing these services and

supports is very important to people living with dementia and their caregivers (Joling et al. 2015), however, in the educational needs analysis (Foley et al. 2017) the participating family carers and people with dementia reported that their GPs were often unable to suggest appropriate community based supports. These findings support previous research with people with dementia and their families that has shown that they value the role of the GP in this post-diagnostic period (Bridges-Webb et al. 2006), however, they would like more help and support from their GP (Innes et al. 2014).

Research has consistently identified that GPs find providing advice on local dementia services and supports to be a particularly challenging aspect of dementia care (Turner et al. 2004; Fox et al. 2014; Tang et al. 2016; Downs et al. 2000). Furthermore, research on the post-diagnosis care gap in dementia has highlighted the importance of mapping local post-diagnostic support services in order to enable GPs to sign-post patients and their families to appropriate services post-diagnosis (Fox et al. 2014). However, such information resources are limited and when

* Corresponding author at: Department of General Practice, Room 2.41 Western Gateway Building, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland.
E-mail address: aisling.jennings@ucc.ie (A.A. Jennings).

they do exist health professionals are often unaware of them.

There are existing online dementia educational resources (e.g. www.scie.org.uk), however, as most of the dementia educational resources are designed primarily for the public they do not fully address health care professionals' educational needs. E-learning modules on dementia also exist and have been shown to be effective (Hattink et al. 2015). In the Irish context the research team was involved in developing e-learning dementia modules for the Irish College of General Practitioners. However, from our initial qualitative work with GPs (Foley et al. 2017) we found that GPs want quick access to clinical information on dementia within a consultation setting or during the course of a busy working day. Upon reviewing existing online sites we could find no such educational dementia resource developed specifically to address the educational needs of health care professionals working in the Irish healthcare system.

This study forms part of a wider research project named PREPARED (PRimary care Education, Pathways And Research in Dementia). PREPARED is part of the overall implementation of the Irish National Dementia Strategy and is tasked with developing education interventions for GPs (Foley et al. 2017) and primary care team members. This study aimed to develop an online resource which would address the educational needs of primary care based health professionals and provide them with access to information on local dementia specific services and supports. The objective of the online resource was to provide up-to-date, easily-accessible educational information and to develop a dementia-specific national services & supports directory.

2. Methods

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Social Research Ethics Committee in University College Cork [2015–006].

2.1. Development of the online resource

There were two discrete aspects to the development of the online resource; the development of the educational content and the development of the services and supports directory (see Fig. 1).

2.1.1. Development of the educational resources

The development of the educational resources was informed by the aforementioned educational needs analysis (Foley et al. 2017),

literature review and an expert reference group. The results of educational needs analysis (Foley et al. 2017) was used to prioritise the educational content of the online resource. The educational content was informed by a literature review (Foley 2018) performed by two of the authors (AJ, TF), both general practitioners with a special interest in dementia care. The clinical content was further informed by dementia educational interventions developed for GPs and primary care teams as part of the wider research project (Quinn et al. 2017; Foley and Jennings 2016; Foley and Swanwick 2014). Once developed the educational content was reviewed by a multidisciplinary expert reference group. The expert reference group was purposively selected on the basis of their known interest in dementia care. The expert reference group included two general practitioners with an interest in dementia care, a physiotherapist, a nurse, an occupational therapist, a public health nurse, two geriatricians, two old age psychiatrists and an academic legal expert in dementia. The review of the clinical content by the expert reference group involved face-to-meetings, teleconferences and email conversations. The meetings were either audio recorded or extensive field notes were taken.

2.1.2. Development of the services and supports directory

The second phase of the resource development involved the development of the services and supports directory. This was an iterative process that required the formation of a stakeholder group. The stakeholder group included; eight national dementia advisors, representatives from the Alzheimer Society of Ireland (ASI) and representatives from existing dementia projects nationwide. The first phase of data collection involved collaboration with the ASI who provided access to their existing database of ASI specific supports and services. Phase two of data collection involved meeting with eight national dementia advisors who have knowledge of the on-the-ground supports available in each region. Phase three of data collection involved collaborating with various community based projects nationwide. All the information provided by the stakeholders was collated and a county-by-county database was created. This database was iteratively developed by continuous feedback from these stakeholders and added to by extensive internet searches. A searchable online tool was then developed that allows the user to search for services and supports by county and by type of service and support.

The data is updated on a monthly basis. The ASI updates their own ASI specific services and supports directory monthly and notify us of

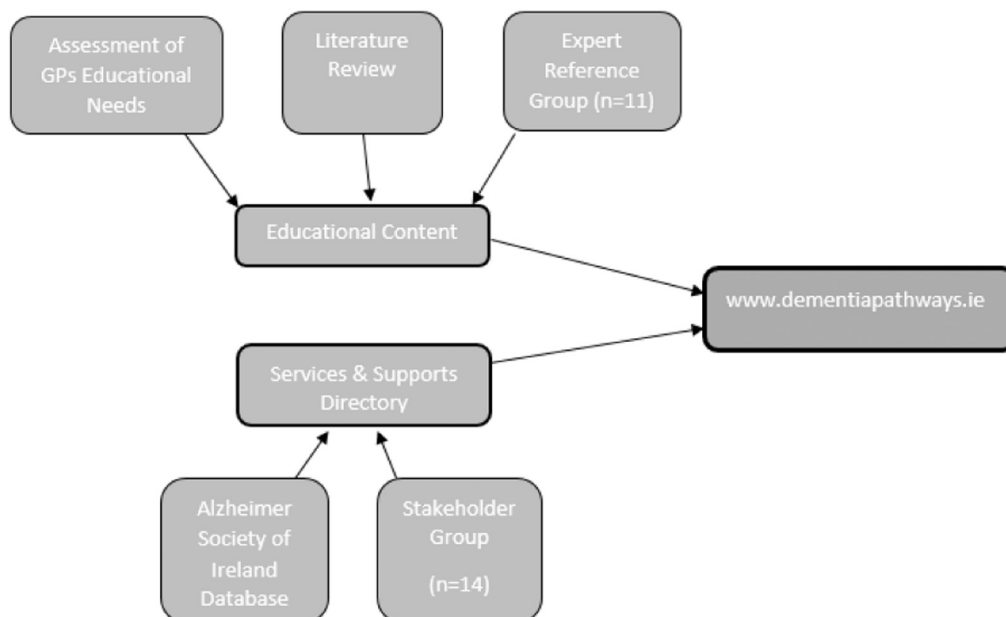


Fig. 1. The development of www.dementiaphways.ie.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6949005>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6949005>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)