

Your name

Alison J Morby

Alison Morby is currently studying for her PhD and is a teaching assistant at Leeds Beckett University. Her previous role was Sport and Physical Activity Development Manager for Kirklees Council responsible for the strategic development of Sport and Physical Activity across the borough. She was the lead for Public Health on the physical activity agenda and also lead a multi-faceted team offering a range of health related physical activity programmes to a range of target populations including people living with dementia and their care givers. In 2012 Alison was awarded an MBE for services to older people in public health.

Your PhD Title

Physical Activity and Dementia: The need for evidence based guidance.

Your mode of study FT/PT

F/T (GTA)

Your supervisory team

Dr Andy Pringle: Reader in Physical Activity and Public Health, Institute for Sport Physical Activity and Leisure, Leeds Beckett University, UK

Dr Zoe Rutherford: Course Director (Physical Activity), Institute for Sport Physical Activity and Leisure, Leeds Beckett University, UK

Prof Claire Surr: Professor of Dementia Studies, Dementia Research Team, School of Health and Community Studies, Leeds Beckett University, UK

Background to your PhD

An increasing number of people with dementia is resulting in a significant human and economic cost for individuals, families, caregivers and communities. Along with the general lack of awareness of the condition, which results in stigma and social exclusion, this presents dementia as a significant public health challenge. There is good evidence to suggest that being physically active and avoiding sedentary behavior has physical and psychological benefits for people living with dementia (Forbes *et al.*, 2015). Public health guidance is available on diet, exercise and other lifestyle choices which may prevent dementia. However, there is no evidence based guidance to support engagement in physical activity (PA) and reducing sedentary behaviour to improve physical and psychological health for people who are currently living with dementia.

The aims and objectives of the PhD

The aim of this PhD is to develop evidence based guidance to enable people with dementia to be physically active, reduce sedentary behaviour and improve health.

The objectives of this PhD are to:

1. To undertake a systematic review of literature to investigate the effects of PA and sedentary behaviour on the health and wellbeing of people living with dementia, the dose response most effective in improving health and wellbeing and the key implementation characteristics of physical activity/sedentary behaviour interventions for people living with dementia

2. To deploy formative research to identify who are the stakeholders who may use this guidance, what do they understand to be considerations in reducing sedentary behaviour and increasing PA, along with the factors likely to influence engagement with the guidance, what do stakeholders feel are the key features of guidance in order to best meet the needs of people with dementia?
3. To use data emerging from the systematic review of literature and the formative research to develop draft guidance for key stakeholders.
4. To assess the effectiveness of the guidance in supporting on or more stakeholders to engage people living with dementia in PA.?
5. To use outcomes emerging from this PhD to inform the promotion of PA for people living with dementia

Your study design and methods

A systematic literature review is currently being undertaken to address objective 1 (above) and investigate evidence that will underpin the guidance to be developed.

A formative assessment will be undertaken with a range of stakeholders to address objective 2. Stakeholders involved will include people living with dementia, commissioners, health and social care managers/professionals, care staff, exercise professionals and family caregivers. The proposed methods include questionnaires, focus groups, semi structured interviews and a Delphi Poll technique.

Findings from the systematic literature review and formative assessment involving relevant stakeholders will inform the development of the guidance.

Measurement of the use, value and relevance of the guidance will combine similar methods to the formative assessment.

What the contribution to knowledge will be

A range of Public Health guidance is already in place which makes recommendations on interventions that will prevent dementia or support health improvement (NICE, 2016). However, there is no specific evidence based guidance to support and encourage participation in PA and reduce sedentary behavior for people currently living with dementia. This PhD will work to develop this specific evidence based guidance.

How you plan to disseminate the PhD

This PhD will impact local communities and communities of practice. The iterative process means all stakeholders are central to this PhD. A half day event will be held to share research outcomes emerging from this study. Invitees will include Public Health bodies, PHE, NICE, local commissioners, exercise practitioners, care staff, family caregivers and people living with dementia. Relevant voluntary sector organisations including Alzheimer's Society, Making Space, Dementia UK along with local dementia action alliances will also be invited.

Guidance will become available to the relevant stakeholder to support/encourage them to increase PA, reduce sedentary behaviour with people living with dementia and so improve health.

A series of peer-review publications will be prepared and published in the PH literature as the PhD progresses over the next three years

For further information, please contact: A.Morby@leedsbeckett.ac.uk