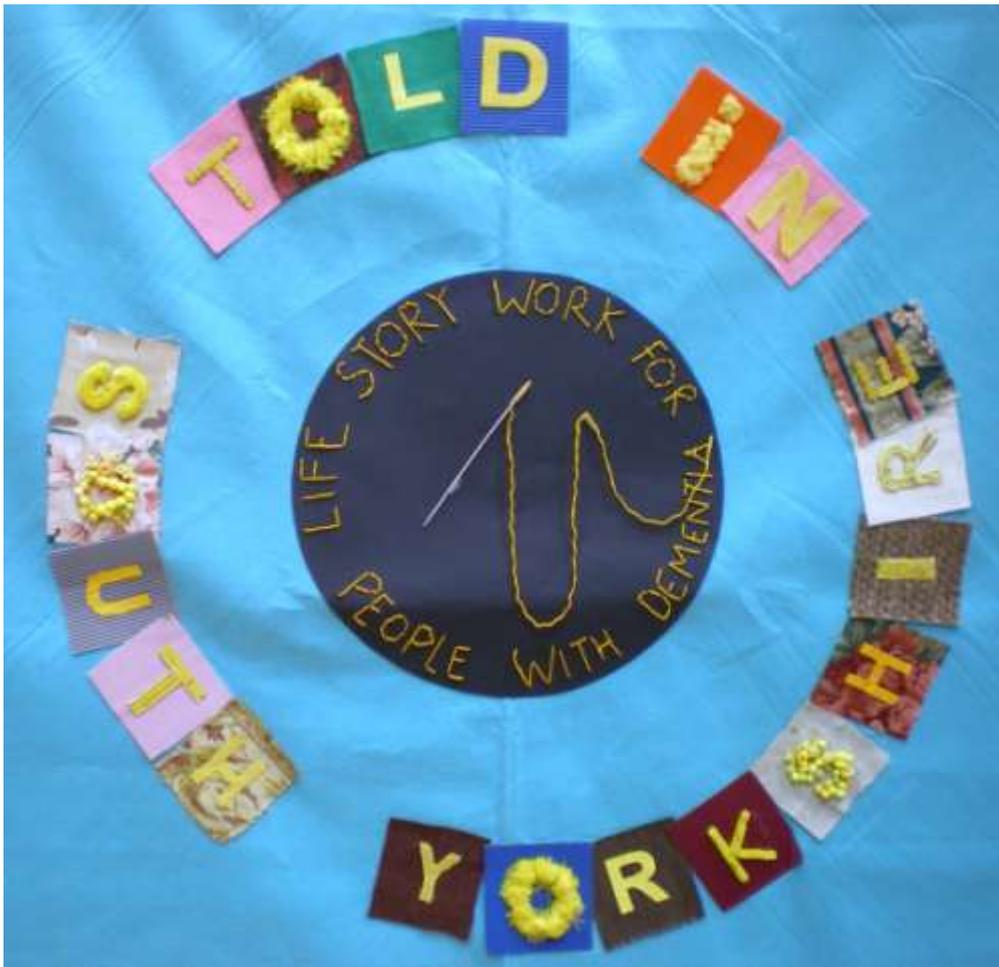


Life Story Workshop for People who have Dementia

Wednesday 20th June 2012

Held at Darnall Dementia Group



Evaluation and Report



Background

The workshop was planned as part of the ‘Told in South Yorkshire Life Story Work for People who have Dementia Project’. This project is aimed at getting life story work used more widely and also understanding life story work from the perspectives of people who have dementia, family carers, volunteers and care staff. Funding for the workshop came from Collaborating for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care and the Foundation of Nursing Studies.

This evaluation and report summarises what happened during the day and includes photographs and quotes from what people thought about the day.

The Workshop

The workshop was attended by 20 people, a mix of people who have dementia, family carers, volunteers, staff working in healthcare and University staff.

Eight people with dementia attended. The event focussed on enabling them to share their memories and stories related to a memento they were asked to bring along. The mementos included ornaments, photographs, objects and craft or artwork.

The day commenced with tea, coffee and biscuits

University staff Tony Ryan and Jane McKeown welcomed everyone to the day. Tony explained that the day aimed to be an enjoyable opportunity to share memories and stories. Jane explained the programme for the day and set people off sharing their mementos with one or two other people.

A photograph was taken of each memento and then a family carer or worker encouraged the person to say something about the memento. These memories were written onto a sticky label and were attached to the reverse of the photograph.

A sandwich lunch was provided which allowed people to chat and socialise. After lunch people completed writing their memories related to their memento.

The photographs and written accounts also enabled the group to share their memories and mementos within the wider group if they wanted to. This took place by people moving between tables and mixing as they wished. Views were gathered about how people had experienced the day.

The day ended with Jane and Tony thanking everyone for their participation and noticing the connections and conversations that had come about from the sharing of the stories of the mementos. Lynsey thanked the Wednesday group for allowing the workshop to take place.



What People Said....

The Atmosphere

“I thought it went very well, everyone gelled”

“People seemed comfortable, no-one got too upset”

“There was a fantastic atmosphere”

“People were sociable I can't say a bad thing about it”

“In big groups you can get people who dominate, the small groups made it more friendly”

“I've enjoyed it, it's the company – who you are with”

“It's been a particularly good day”

“I've loved it, you know really loved it”

“I enjoyed coming today and enjoyed everyone's company. I like the talking with each other because I am usually on my own”

“Very, very nice – feels like coming home”

“Think it's been alright”

“It was nice to meet different people and nice to talk to different people”

“I've enjoyed being involved in everything and like the people and feel very welcome”

“Haven't been here before, it's been interesting and I like the people they are very friendly”

“It's nice to be with 'our gang', making new friends, I like being amongst all my friends, I don't want to go home it's Dullsville”

Memories and Conversations

“It was good to see people in different environments, people I might usually see on a Friday, I’ve seen different sides to them today”

“Everyone seemed to enjoy talking about their memento and sharing it”

“I keep a lot of memories to myself” (became a little tearful)

“It jogs your memory listening to others”

“It was pleasant and interesting, you get to know things”

“Something about the age group – how would it work across a much more diverse age group – would people make the same connections?”

“I like sharing memories, I like having a laugh”

“You talk about things you wouldn’t usually talk about”

“The first time I’ve had an opportunity to talk like this, I wish there had been something like this for my Mum, an interesting day”

“It gets it into your head that it’s one day at a time”

“I really want to keep looking at that one” [the photo]

“Wish I had known about life story work before”





Practicalities

“We needed more helpers, there were times where helpers had to do other jobs than just spending time with the person”

“It would have helped perhaps to have had a helper to work with couples where a person with dementia came with their family carer.”

“The food was perhaps a little too ‘bready’ a few people commented, we may use FEAST another time?”

“Food excellent”

Concerns

“A long tiring day, too quiet”

“I felt that not all the usual Weds group attendees got as much from the day as they do from a normal Wednesday – not as engaged or relaxed”



To end with a short poem from Tina

**“I like Tony
Tony like’s Teen
Tina is lost
When Tony’s not been”**