Centre for Seldom Heard Voices: marginalisation and social integration

The Older Carers Research Project
Dr Mel Hughes

Context:

Over 51,000 carers in England are men over the age of 85 a number which has more than doubled in the last decade.

Carers over the age of 85 are the only demographic of carers where men outnumber women (59%).

Local data from the Bournemouth and Poole Carers Centre (CRISP) suggests that older male carers are the group least likely to ask for help and often present to them through GP services at crisis stage.

Aims:

Establish a research group of older male carers who are valued for their expertise and insights

Gain a deeper understanding of the needs of older male carers and to draw on their expertise to develop carer support and provision which improves the quality of life and citizenship for this growing and often hidden population of carers

Create representations and resources to enhance support and provision for older male carers

User led research in collaboration with:

healthwatch Dorset
BU PIER

Five Faculty of Media BA Media Production students

and 11 older male carers over the age of 85

Key themes

- Changing identity and role
- Sense of duty and commitment
- Own mental and physical health
- Learning new skills
- Experiences of support and care
- Acceptance

The older carers advice for carers

- Keep active
- Have time for yourself
- Develop a routine
- Make use of technology
- Involve the person you care for in tasks

View our film: Chief Cook and Bottle Washer on You Tube VWgEaUHs97s
Read our paper: Hughes et al 2017 Chief Cook and Bottle Washer: Life as an Older Male carer, Journal Of Community Nursing, Vol 31, No 4