Alternative ways of supporting the voice of people with dementia in research: a systematic review

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How can people with dementia communicate?

- Verbal communication

...but also:

- Non-fluent /augmented communication
- Body language & non verbal communication
- Communicating through the arts
- Sensory stimulation
What methods support alternative forms of communication?

- **Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)**
  - **Augmenting communication e.g.**
    - Low tech Word boards, digital symbols or images
    - Photo elicitation
    - writing
  - **Alternative communication e.g.**
    - High tech speech synthesis devices
    - Gesture
    - Arts-based methodologies
Review 1: Mapping the use of these methods

- Literature found in AAC, practitioner, linguistics Journals
- Narrow parameters of review: dementia, AAC + voice elicitation focus n=6
- Methodologies: Photovoice TM, Talking Mats TM, digital stories, performing ethnography
- 11,522 records screened for eligibility
- 85 studies considered relevant in terms of their dementia or AAC empirical or theoretical focus
Main themes dictating transfer or application of methods (amongst wider communication impairment literature):

- Academic precedent
- Candidacy
- Enhancing communication outcomes
- Features of AAC device itself
Review 3: Synthesising the knowledge from other uses of AAC methods across groups and contexts

Unifying frameworks for assessing or appraising AAC

- The WHO International Classification for Health and Disability (2002)
- The Communication Matrix (Rowland, 2004)
- Narrative Assessment Profile (Bliss & McCabe 1998)
- Culturally Valid Lexicon (Nigam, 2006)
Aims of the final review:

- Update the scoping review
- Evaluate the characteristics of the studies found
- Synthesise application of augmentative or alternative methods
- Compose a framework for interpretation of studies
Outcomes of series of reviews:

- Ensure that dementia research does not ‘re-invent the wheel’ in creating best practice of reporting and analysing alternative forms of communication
- Enhancing theoretical underpinning
- Suggesting new application of methods
- To encourage greater scrutiny of methods in a research context
- Add to interpretive systematic review methodology knowledge
References


