



Evaluating the Provision, Availability, Cost, and Quality of Health and Social Care for the Elderly Frail in a Rural Community

Summary of benefits

What we will try to do: The research will identify and examine exactly what health, social, housing, charitable, voluntary, and community support is currently providing / offering / available to the elderly and frail residents of Debenham and the surrounding villages. Initially the project will gather statistical data about the current situation, performance and quality of services. Following on, from the point of view of the person who may be seeking help, the study will look at the following questions by surveying and interviewing patients / users / carers / etc. about this support:

Is it sufficient to meet their needs as local residents?

Is it readily available without significant waiting times?

Is it sufficiently well-known locally and easy to contact and use?

Does it involve significant problems of transport, remoteness, family involvement?

Is it welcoming and person-friendly?

Does it meet their expectations of quality?

Has it helped make their quality of life and well-being better?

Is the personal cost reasonable?

Potential benefits: The study will provide an overall local viewpoint of the Health, Care, and Well-Being of the elderly frail¹ and their families in the Debenham area. We believe that this will assist / advise in:

Creating a guide to the health care, social care, wellbeing and community-based services that are available to our residents, and how to access them

Cataloguing local non-statutory/charitable/community groups, activities, services, agencies, etc. that can potentially help reduce social isolation in the elderly frail and contribute to their overall health and well-being

Identifying the potential for new local support services

Prioritising the development of local services and activities

Understanding the weaknesses and strengths of the current situation

Planning local resourcing to meet current/anticipated demand

Improving the delivery of services where they do not meet expectations

Additionally: The study could assist, in a Suffolk-wide context, by:

Understanding and comparing the strengths, weaknesses and potential of individual communities

Providing a model that can be used in analysing the potential of local and county-wide initiatives

Creating a person-centred database of health and social care provision in individual communities

Enabling individual communities to express their wishes and plan their development with regard to their elderly residents

Also: It is believed that this research is unique in the UK and will help in:

Attracting significant national professional and academic interest

Enhancing the existing national reputation of Debenham and The Debenham Project as an exemplar of best practice in dementia support

Encouraging other communities to think about adopting a pro-active approach to supporting, not only those who are living with dementia, but also all their residents who are having to cope with the impact of being elderly and frail

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ⁱ By using the term "elderly frail" we are describing those who have chronic, and often, multiple conditions which are generally associated with an ageing population. The Debenham Project focuses on support of families living with the impact of dementia on their lives but also seeks to help all who may benefit from the services and activities it offers.