

The relationship between perceived functional difficulties and the ability to live well with mild to moderate dementia: findings from the IDEAL study

Everyday tasks like shopping, cleaning, and getting dressed are an important part of daily life. Being able to do these tasks lets people live in their own homes. We wanted to see if there was a difference in living well between people who could do everyday tasks well and those that had more problems. By living well, we mean their quality of life, their well-being, and how satisfied they are with their life.

We spoke to 1496 people with dementia and 1188 family carers. We asked each person to say how well the person with dementia could do certain tasks. We also asked them to rate their ability to live well.

We found that being able to do everyday tasks was related to living well. People with dementia who had more problems with everyday tasks found it harder to live well. People with dementia who had fewer problems with the same tasks found it easier to live well. Family carers said the same thing.

We also wanted to see if there were other things which made a difference. Family carers who felt more stressed said that the person with dementia had more problems with everyday tasks and were less able to live well. People with dementia with lower mood said that they had more problems with everyday tasks and that they were less able to live well. Memory ability and type of dementia did not make a difference to how well a person could do everyday tasks or their ability to live well.

This suggests that as problems with everyday tasks increase it is harder for people to live well with dementia. Even small problems with everyday tasks change how well a person with dementia can live well. As we ask people with dementia and their family carers the same questions over a few years, we will repeat this study to see if there is a change in the ability to do everyday tasks and to live well over time.

This is a summary of a [research article](#) which appeared in the **International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry** in April 2019.