



## CASE STUDY: DEMENTIA INEQUALITIES BOARD GAME

ARC NWC Theme: Health and Care Across the Life-course  
Project: Dementia Inequalities Boardgame  
NHS Priority Area: Sickness to Prevention

### KEY FINDINGS

- First fully co-produced board game addressing dementia inequalities, developed by University of Liverpool, ARC NWC, The Lewy Body Society, third sector representatives, and people with lived experience.
- Early evaluation indicates the game improves knowledge about dementia and associated inequalities among the general public.
- Roll-and-move game format illustrates barriers faced pre- and post-diagnosis, available support, and the positive impact of effective care.
- Includes question-based discussion prompts to engage players in reflecting on health inequalities, dementia care costs, and types of dementia.
- Fills a gap in public engagement tools, reaching non-academic stakeholders including students, health and social care professionals, carers, and the general public.
- Quantitative evaluation with pre- and post-game questionnaires shows positive knowledge gains.
- Supported by Wellcome Trust funding and ARC NWC, demonstrating the role of NIHR infrastructure in translating research into practical tools.
- Potential for international adaptation: currently adapted in Ireland, with discussions ongoing for other European countries and Australia.

### IMPACT SUMMARY

While standard interventions can try and address inequalities in dementia diagnosis and care as much as possible within continued social care budget restraints, a board game can raise awareness among professionals (both in training and qualified), the public, carers and people living with dementia, about these issues, generate discussion and enable sharing knowledge about barriers, facilitators and solutions.

**A co-produced Dementia Inequalities Board Game has been created and is now in use.**

The Dementia Inequalities Game illustrates barriers that people come up against both pre and post dementia diagnosis as well as the support available and the positive impact this can have. The game was created by the University of Liverpool, ARC NWC, The Lewy Body Society, and third sector representatives in collaboration with people who have lived experience of dementia.

### IMPACT DETAILS

This is the first fully co-produced game on dementia inequalities, with early evidence from the general public indicating its successful impact on improving knowledge about dementia and associated inequalities. Initial users of the game were asked to complete a questionnaire with early indications showing the game does improve knowledge of dementia inequalities. Evidence from over 300 allied health, nursing and psychology students at one UK University also indicated significant improvements in knowledge about dementia and inequalities after game play.

The roll and move style board game takes players on a journey, illustrating barriers that people come up against as well as the support available. Players can also answer a variety of questions, encouraging teams to consider and discuss issues including the cost of dementia care, and what types of dementia there are including Alzheimer's disease and Lewy body dementia.



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## IMPACT CONTINUED

The final game version includes content demonstrating various inequalities both in the pre-diagnosis and post-diagnosis stages, as well as additional questions to raise general awareness about dementia. The game can also be seen as a boundary object, prompting discussions about health inequalities, associated stigma, barriers and solutions to overcome them along the dementia journey. Playing the game can successfully improve knowledge about dementia and associated inequalities.

Without any previous co-produced game on inequalities in dementia, this public engagement activity and quantitative evaluation of the Dementia Inequalities Game has shown that the game fills a necessary and innovative gap to educate about the topic and reach non-academic stakeholders (including health and social care professionals, students, people affected by dementia) and the general public. This game has translated a substantial evidence base on dementia inequalities into a practical and usable tool for those with dementia, carers and those involved in treatment delivery.

The Dementia Inequalities Game was developed thanks to Wellcome Trust funding and supported by the ARC NWC.

## SOURCES AND EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

- Board game for sale
- <https://www.lewybody.org/product/dementia-inequalities-board-game-40-00-includes-p-p/>
- Giebel C, Hanna K, Tetlow H, Gabbay M, Cannon J. Co-producing a board game to learn and engage about dementia inequalities: first impacts on knowledge in the general population. Health Expect. 2024; 27:e13977. doi:10.1111/hex.13977
- Dementia community News coverage
- Giebel C, .... <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14713012241306489>
- <https://journalofdementiacare.co.uk/dementia-board-game>
- Example of public invite to try the game
- <https://arc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/event/festival-of-social-science-the-dementia-inequalities-game-workshop/>
- Blog / podcast on the development of the concept
- <https://www.dementiaresearcher.nihr.ac.uk/guest-blog-more-than-a-paper-co-designing-a-board-game/>

## SOURCES AND EVIDENCE OF IMPACT

The next step will be to run a full evaluation of the impact of the game play on knowledge about dementia and associated inequalities with health and social care professionals and students. Over 250 undergraduate and postgraduate students in nursing, psychology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and radiography at the University of Liverpool have already completed the game and knowledge questionnaires before and after game play, as part of their teaching.. It is also important to assess whether engaging in the game may change access to dementia diagnosis and care in the long term for people living with dementia and their carers and can lead to changes to care delivery in the health and social care workforce. In the future, the Dementia Inequalities Game has the potential to be modified for different countries or regions across the world, to be used as an awareness-raising and education tool to overcome stigma and improve knowledge. It is currently adapted in Ireland, and we are in active discussions to modify the game to different European countries and Australia.