



INTERDEM MEMBERS – BRIEF CURRICULUM VITAE

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NAME: Laura Cole

TITLE: Dr

PROFESSIONAL GROUPING: Senior Lecturer, Researcher, Psychologist

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PRESENT POSITION: Senior Lecturer of Older People and Dementia Care, and Course Lead for MSc Dementia Studies: Contemporary Approaches to Practice

HIGHEST ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION: PhD

YEAR OF PHD QUALIFICATION: 2015

PROFILE OF MEMBER:

I am a Senior Lecturer and Course Lead for the MSc Dementia Studies at the Geller Institute of Ageing and Memory (GIAM), University of West London (UWL).

I am a psychologist and have worked with people living with cognitive problems and dementia for over twenty years in various clinical, care, and research settings. Prior to my academic posts, I worked in a memory clinic as a research psychologist, a care manager (social worker) in an older people's team in London, and a care worker in a specialist dementia unit.

I am a mixed-methods researcher. I have investigated and explored the views and experiences of people living with dementia and their family carers on residential respite services, the timing of a move to a care home, continence management (or problems with using the toilet), and the effectiveness of reminiscence art groups in improving quality of life in care homes.

I am President for the Geriatric and Gerontology section at the Royal Society of Medicine in London, a member of the editorial board for *Dementia: Journal of International Social Research and Practice*, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and a member of the Higher Education Dementia Network (UK).

AREAS OF EXPERTISE:

Neuropsychological testing

I have extensively used neuropsychological tests to screen and assess cognitive impairment and dementia (e.g. MMSE, ADAS-cog, CAMCOG), depression and anxiety (e.g. GDS, Cornell), behaviour disturbances (e.g. NPI), and carer burden (Zarit).

Dementia care mapping

I am a qualified dementia care mapper (8th edition) and have practiced this observational tool for over a year throughout the RADIQL study (see below) in which we used this tool as a quality of life outcome measure.

Sensitive and taboo topics

My work has involved discussing sensitive topics such as family relationships over time, incontinence, and dementia. These issues require sensitivity as they are often viewed as stigmatising and taboo topics, which some people might feel difficult to discuss or explain.

KEY PUBLICATIONS (Max. 5):

- Cole, L.,** Drennan, V. M., Manthorpe, J., Hatzidimitriadou, E. & Iliffe, S. (2022). Experiences of intimate continence care and the impact on the family dyad relationship for people living at home with dementia and their co-resident family members. *Dementia*, 21(5), 1556-1573.
- Cole, L.,** Samsi, K. & Manthorpe, J. (2022). Factors affecting dementia care practitioners' decision-making about moving to a care home for persons living with dementia: a factorial survey. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 30(5), e1651-e1661.
- Cole, L.,** Samsi, K. and Manthorpe, J. (2021). Professionals' views on the 'optimal time' for people living with dementia to move to a care home. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 36(1), 136-142.
- Cole, L. &** Drennan, V. (2019). Living with incontinence: the experience of people with dementia. *Dementia*, 18(5), 1826-1839.
- Cole, L.,** Samsi, K. and Manthorpe, J. (2018). Is there an 'optimal time' to move to a care home for a person with dementia? A systematic review of the literature. *International Psychogeriatrics*, 30(1).1649-1670.

RELEVANT RESEARCH ACTIVITY:

(i) Grants Awarded

Understanding how and why live-in care packages are arranged and sustained, when dementia is the primary support need: A mixed methods study (LIVE-DEM).

Bartlett, R. (PI), **Cole, L.** (Co-app), Clark, T., Thompson-Coon, J., Rogers, M., Henderson, C., Harrison Denning, K., Brown, S., Rook, G., Day, A. (2025-2027). Funded by National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), Health and Social Care Delivery Research (HSDR) Programme.

PPIE Research Network for people living with young onset dementia

Cole, L. (2024). Funded by University of West London Knowledge Exchange Seed Funding

Taking a break: Use of residential respite or short break services by people with dementia and carers: experiences, access, outcomes

Samsi, K. (PI), **Cole, L.** (Co-app), Orellana, K. , Manthorpe, J. (2019-2021). Funded by Alzheimer's Society. This two-year study aimed to 'map' existing models of residential respite for people with dementia, and explored (through qualitative interviews) the views and experiences of people with dementia and their family carers on residential respite services in England.

(ii) PhD and other projects

Dementia Experts For Involvement Network for Younger people with Dementia (DEFIN-YD): Young onset dementia public engagement project

Based at University of West London in collaboration with University of Northampton, and University of Worcester (2021-2023): Funded by Wellcome.

Investigating "optimal time": Multiple perspectives on the timing of moving into care homes for people with dementia

Based at King's College London: 2016-2019: Funded by the NIHR School for Social Care Research, this was a 3-year, 3-part study to identify if there was a 'best' or 'optimal time' for a person with dementia to move to a care home. The study used a mixed methods approach which included: 1) a systematic review of existing literature; 2) qualitative interviews with people with dementia, family carers, social workers and care home managers; 3) a factorial survey with 100 dementia care practitioners.

Exploring experiences of intimate toileting care and the impact on the family-dyad relationship for people with dementia and their cohabiting family carer

Based at St George's, University of London (Doctorate gained 2015): My doctoral thesis was a qualitative study which used semi-structured interviews with people with dementia and family carer dyads in their own homes to explore their experiences of incontinence, and how this may have affected their interpersonal relationship together. The study was conducted through a programme of work called EVIDEM (Evidence-based Interventions in Dementia: Changing practice in dementia care in the community: developing and testing evidence-based interventions, from timely diagnosis to end of life"), funded by the NIHR.

Reminiscence Arts and Dementia - Impact on Quality of Life: RADIQL

Based at Royal Holloway, University of London: 2014: RADIQL (Reminiscence Arts and Dementia - Impact on Quality of Life) evaluated the impact of reminiscence art groups for people with dementia living in care homes, where their quality of life was measured over a six-month intervention period using Dementia Care Mapping. This study was in conjunction with AgeExchange a charity in South East London and funded by Guy's & St Thomas' Charity.

CURRENT RESEARCH INTERESTS/ONGOING PROJECT TITLE:

Current interests:

My interests focus on the care experiences of people living with dementia and those who support them (family carers, care workers, organisations, services), with the aim of improving care services and increasing quality of life. Themes within this are: care homes, care workforce, continence and using the toilet, family carers, home care, person-centred care, integration of health and social care, interpersonal relationships, mental health, quality of life, sensitive and taboo topics, social psychology, stigma.

HOW DO YOU INTEND TO CONTRIBUTE TO INTERDEM:

I am an active member of INTERDEM's Young-onset Dementia Taskforce, and co-lead for the Capacity Building for Early Career Researchers workstream.