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Research Article

National stakeholder consultation on how to measure care home residents' quality of life

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Plain language summary

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The Developing research resources And minimum data set for Care Homes' Adoption and use study aims to explore how we can link together and safely share information about older care home residents so that care settings (such as hospitals, GPs and care homes) can best meet their needs. To work towards this aim, we are identifying what information is most important to capture and share in a 'minimum data set'. Having information about care home residents' quality of life was recognised by residents, their family members, care providers, researchers and health professionals as something that is important to measure. Quality of life describes the general well-being of an individual and is more than whether someone is healthy or not. By measuring a person's quality of life, it is possible to explore how changes in their care or innovations within their care home affect their sense of well-being. We asked care home staff, experts on ageing, healthcare workers, local authority officials and family members of residents what is important to know about residents' quality of life. In the first online survey (June 2022), we learned from 30 individuals that any quality of life measurement tool needs to be simple, reliable and meeting the needs of the residents. In our second survey (September 2022), 72 individuals gave us their thoughts about different quality of life measurement tools. They told us about whether they would use these tools, how much confidence they have in them, and what they see as strengths and weaknesses of the tools. This feedback helped us choose the right tools to measure quality of life in care homes and make sure they are a good fit for care home residents.