



# Rethinking Vocational Support for Employees with Dementia.

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## Understanding current systems: Fishbone cause and effect diagram

**Deciding what to test-**  
The cause of staff not having experience or training was selected as a test of change as my colleagues are easily accessible, have a vested interest as it supports them in practice and developing resources or training is sustainable, cost-effective and can be completed within the project's timescale.

Employer's concerns regarding health and safety, performance issues & a lack of confidence and knowledge in how they can support their employees.

Potential stigma from colleagues and employers.

Client worried about making mistakes and concerned about what employers and colleagues may think of their capability.

Media influences focus more on advanced dementia as opposed to early onset and client's capabilities.

### Identifying the problem:

Currently there aren't any specific standardised OT vocational tools, guidance and interventions for staff to use to support clients with a dementia diagnosis to remain at their work.



## Creating conditions- Identifying key stakeholders

### Clients-

People with memory issues who are in employment can continue working with the correct support. The evidence base for, and interest in, people living with cognitive issues remaining at work are increasing (Chaplin & Davidson, 2016; McCulloch et al., 2016) & it has been proven that continued employment can be beneficial for people's memory (Ritchie et al., 2017).



### Occupational Therapy staff & Management-

*Occupational Therapists play a central role in helping people remain in their work with memory issues by advising on reasonable adjustments to their employers* (Allied Health Professions Federation, 2012).



### Employers-

Memory issues at work will also be a potential issue for organisations and employers as the workforce ages, the retirement age rises and the number of people with memory issues increases (Centre for Economics and Business Research, 2014).



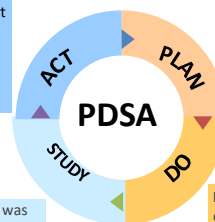
## Change idea-PDSA cycle for quality improvement

**Act:** Create a memory strategies booklet which OTs can utilise to support clients, standardise practice and increase their skills and confidence.

**Plan:** Improve OT service provision for clients with dementia to retain their employment by up-skilling OT staff by standardising our practice, thus increasing staff confidence.

**Study:** The questionnaire was emailed to the team some work with this client group and others don't. 8 responses highlighted that staff feel they lack skills and confidence and would benefit from additional resources.

**Do:** OT will create a questionnaire for OT colleagues to complete to identify what interventions they are currently providing, how confident they feel delivering these and what they feel could be improved.



### OT colleague's feedback from questionnaire-

OT's scored their confidence between 'Not at all confident' to 'fairly confident' and some staff didn't complete it as they have no experience of working with this client group in relation to their work. 'A resource pack, a better knowledge of the support available in the workplace for clients with dementia, training and a designated person to ask questions to' would all improve their skills and confidence going forward.



## Project aim statement:

To improve OT service provision for clients with dementia to retain their employment, which can be achieved by increasing staff confidence and skills by an additional 25% by December 2025.

## Plan going forward...

### Implementation-

Create a memory strategies booklet which OT staff can use for client self assessment, coping strategies, making reasonable adjustment recommendations to employers and also as a guide for clients to access useful links and resources. The next step will involve sharing the booklet with clients, colleagues, management and patient information for feedback. I will then make any amendments prior to circulating it to the OT team to use in practice with clients in June 2025.

### How it can be adopted and spread wider-

Plan to re-score the skills and confidence questionnaire to see if there has been an improvement by December 2025 which will be 6 months and again in June 2026 which will be 12 months of the OT's using the booklet. OT will also share the document with the National Primary Care group if it has been useful to enquire if any other Health Boards would find it useful to implement.

Memory strategies booklet & references QR code-

