



## Warm technology and quality of nursing home care

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### Background

Warm technology (WT) aims to improve quality of life of people living with dementia by supporting and enhancing human potential, social connectedness, dignity and self-reliance<sup>1</sup>. How dementia care professionals and researchers think about the relationship between WT and the quality of nursing home care (NHC) is currently unknown. Also, there is a lack of international consensus on the definition of quality of NHC. The Tovertafel served as an example for WT in this study. The Tovertafel was developed during a PhD project at the Technical University in Delft, the Netherlands, with the goal to reduce apathy in nursing home residents with dementia. It stimulates physical and social activity by projecting interactive purposeful games on a surface<sup>2</sup>.

### Purpose

To explore how dementia care researchers and professionals define the concept quality of NHC and how they believe WT contributes to this.

### Methods

- Online interviews with 9 researchers and 20 dementia care professionals in England, Ireland, Canada, USA, and the Netherlands;
- Semi-structured interview guide based on:
  1. The integrated model of Rantz et al.<sup>3</sup>
  2. The fundamentals of care framework<sup>4</sup>
  3. The Dutch quality framework for nursing home care<sup>5</sup>
- Open, axial and selective coding using Atlas.ti

### Results

#### What is quality of nursing home care?

Interviewees made a distinction between the physical and the social domains of quality of NHC. Although they had difficulties defining the concept, everyone agreed that NHC should be person-centered. This means that caregivers should always put themselves in the residents' shoes and keep personal preferences in mind. This approach should be reflected in every aspect of care. Furthermore, the following elements were mentioned several times:

- Providing whatever the resident wants
- Captivating the most out of life
- Providing safe and effective care
- Building relationships and creating a sense of belonging
- Consistent, compassionate and joyful care, delivered in a dignified way

#### How does warm technology contribute to the quality of nursing home care?

According to the interviewees the Tovertafel is able to contribute to the quality of NHC in the following ways:

- Supporting care professionals in the provision of person centered care
- Providing trust from residents
- Improving work pleasure of dementia care professionals
- Creating a safe, pleasant and homelike environment
- Increasing family involvement
- Increasing (non-verbal) communication

Some researchers and dementia care professionals also reported positive effects on the physical domains of quality of care (e.g. washing, dressing, safety). However, these effects were often seen as indirect effects of the Tovertafel.

### Conclusions

Warm technology, such as the Tovertafel, seems to have a positive effect on the quality of NHC, primarily by supporting person-centered care and by having a positive effect on several social quality of care domains, such as providing trust, increasing family engagement and communication.

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*"So for me, the Tovertafel is the essence of what person-centred care is. It's really making people feel like they belong, you know, that they can interact with people."*

(Innovation manager, Canada)

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*"It definitely contributes to a better quality of care but in the broadest sense. Better care for clients, but also better care in which the staff feels happy in what they do."*

(Quality of care expert, the Netherlands)

*"So I think the Tovertafel has the ability to help staff find a fun way to help a resident move away from those issues that are distressing to them, that create anxiety"*

(CEO Healthcare Organisation, USA)

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