People with dementia`s lived experience of their neighbourhood through the walking interviews

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Introduction
Living conditions for people with dementia in Sweden

• In Sweden there are around 158,000 (113,000-170,000) people living with dementia (National board of welfare and health, 2014)

• Around 56 percent are living in ordinary housing and this number is expecting to be higher in the future (National board of welfare and health 2012)

• Increasing number of single households (Bökberg et. al 2015, United Nations 2015, Odzakovic et al 2017)
Why the neighbourhood and dementia?


• “people create places, and places create people” (Macintyre et. al 2003)
What do we know?

- Places as city centres and shopping malls risk becoming “no go areas” (Duggan et al., 2008)

- Using any mobile research methods involving people living with dementia undertaken to explore experiences of outdoor everyday life are few (Brorsson et al., 2013)
Aim

The aim is to explore the lived experience of the neighbourhood among people living with dementia.
Method

• A qualitative study was conducted (Moustakas, 1994)

Walking interviews is a participatory research method (Emmel & Clark, 2009)

• The participant’s outdoor local context to observe behavior and listen to narrative at same time (Garcia, 2012, Carpiano, 2009)

• Tour guide for the researcher on the walk (Garcia et., 2012)
**Study setting:** 400 000 inhabitants in South-Eastern Sweden

Participants were living in different types of neighbourhoods:

- Multi-dwelling buildings
- Single detached dwellings in the city
- Single detached dwellings in rural areas
• In total, 14 individuals with dementia and two spouses (n=16) were recruited to participate in walking interviews. 11 men and 3 women, 4 participants were living in single household.

• Telephone contact with the participant or the spouses before the walking interview

• The walk was led by the participant who decided the time, route and length. No geographic boundaries. The length of the interviews was 47 minutes (median).

• Coding and analysis of the interviews according to a qualitative method
Results

Years in the dwelling

Being able to continue to be part of and get out in the neighbourhood and nature by walking

Marital status
Being able to continue to be part of and get out in the neighbourhood and nature by walking

Fanny, 87 years old with Alzheimer’s disease, 6 years in dwelling:

• “So I take a walk around like this ... I am so happy as long as I can walk on my legs, so I’m so greatful that I can walk on my legs and shopping by myself”

Anders, 80 years old living with Alzheimer’s disease and frontotemporal dementia, 40 years in dwelling

• “I can walk up to twice a day in the neighbourhood, for the garden is not enough for a walk...... I'm happy ...happy that one can go out and stay outside”
Lennart, 82 years old with Alzheimer’s disease, 16 years in the dwelling

• “It's so beautiful here everywhere. But it's the most beautiful time now. Yes, we have wonderful nature “

Per, 77 years old with Alzheimer’s disease, 7 years in dwelling:

• ”Nice, when the sun shines the colours and oak trees. The white water tower. Look what different the oak is and it has a lot of leaves left. Look there is a another tree”
Last words from Doris living with dementia

“I think it needs to discuss more in the community about dementia so that people know what it is about, just because you have this disease doesn’t mean that it is dangerous, you are not dangerous to its neighbors or others in the neighbourhood, and we don’t fight down people or something. It's just that you do not remember what they have been talking about, or sometimes it can be hard to find everywhere “
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Recommended future reading


