



Housing LIN

Connecting people, ideas and resources

Beginning to have conversations about mental health in later life housing settings

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Mental health can be a taboo subject among people in later life. This can have a negative impact on wellbeing.

The [Standing Together Project](#) at the Mental Health Foundation aims to address this by facilitating peer-support groups in retirement and extra-care housing schemes. The three-year Big Lottery funded project is a partnership with Housing & Care 21 and Notting Hill Housing Trust and builds upon [this earlier, similar project](#). Groups run weekly for six months. Tenants who participate have mental health issues, memory loss, learning disabilities and are isolated.

Building relationships and getting to know each other are the priorities at the beginning of groups. We ease into conversations about mental health by using the work the Foundation does; in the autumn around World Mental Health day, and in the spring, Mental Health Awareness Week. This enables groups to discuss ways to maintain good mental health. This is making a difference.

People have talked about mental health issues through conversations about loss, for example, how they want to be informed when another tenant dies.

The project is being evaluated to find out the impact on people's mental health, social relationships and participation – reducing the stigma around mental health in later life is a key part of this. We are delighted that the Housing LIN is a member of the advisory group and look forward to reporting on the evaluation's findings at a later date.

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