



# Retro-fitting our housing for dementia-readiness: right people, right approach, right time

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# What do occupational therapists do?

Occupational therapists help people of all ages overcome the effects of disability caused by illness, ageing or accident so that they can carry out everyday tasks (occupations.)

Occupational therapy provides practical support to empower people to address the barriers preventing them from doing the activities that matter to them. This support increases people's independence and satisfaction in all aspects of life.





# What do occupational therapists do?



- Home adaptations
- Planning and design of new-build accessible housing
- Re-housing people to more suitable accommodation

## Support from an occupational therapist

An occupational therapist can work with you to overcome the barriers that prevent you from doing what matters to you. Occupational therapy can help you to:

- Use your strengths and abilities to stay active.
- Adopt strategies and techniques to continue with daily occupations (activities)
- Make changes to make life easier and to live safely in your home
- Access your community, getting to the shops and local facilities.
- Continue with valued roles, such as working or caring for others.
- Advise family and friends on how to support you to live well with dementia.



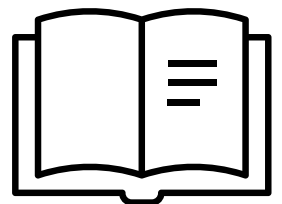
# Occupational therapy in the APPG Report

## **Adaptations and home improvements:**

- **Key issue 9:** Home Improvement Agencies and Occupational Therapists play a vital role in supporting people to navigate the complexities of the grants system, to access appropriate technical advice and to manage building work to make homes dementia-ready. Access to HIAs or Occupational Therapists can be variable across the country. (p.7)

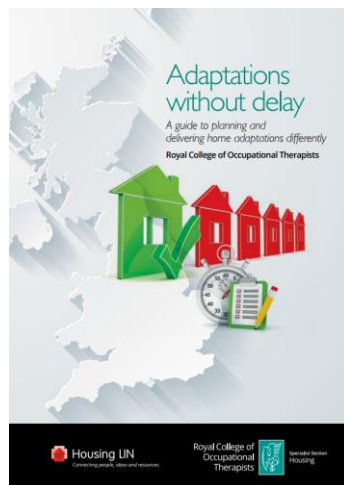
## **We recommend that the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government:**

- **18.** Promote more widespread adoption of Dementia Dwelling Grants and the role of Home Improvement Agencies / Care and Repair Agencies, and Occupational Therapists, in supporting older and disabled people, including households with someone with dementia. (p.11)



# Adaptations Without Delay

“Successful delivery of home adaptations is reliant on knowledge and understanding of **what works best for the person** and their situation. In practice, people need **timely** advice about what they might need, **how** they can get it and **who** can help them.”



[www.rcot.co.uk/adaptations-without-delay](http://www.rcot.co.uk/adaptations-without-delay)

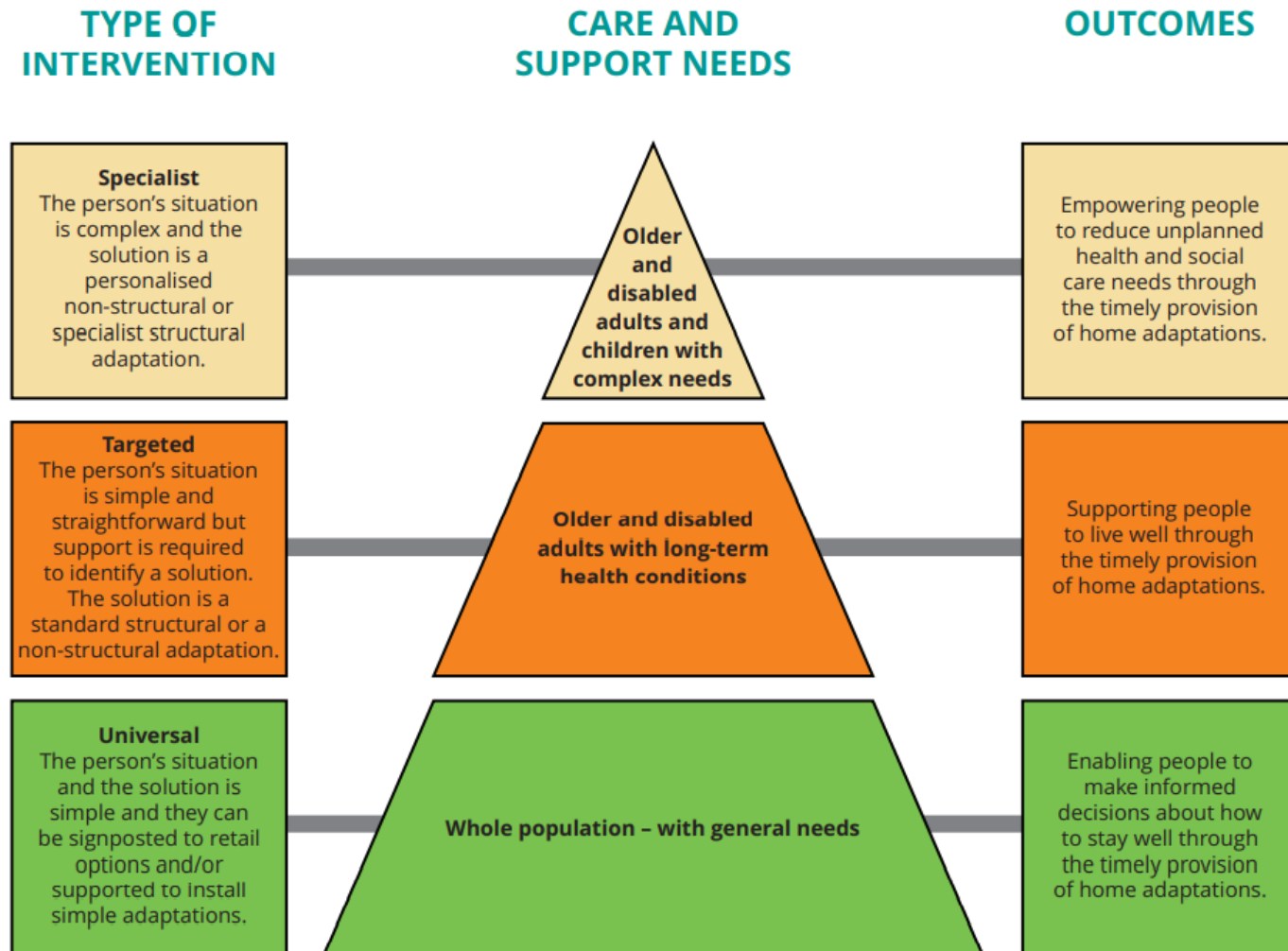


Figure 1 The Adaptations without delay framework

## Increasing approaches that are...

### **Personalised**

- Focusing on individual needs, not 'one size' solutions

### **Timely**

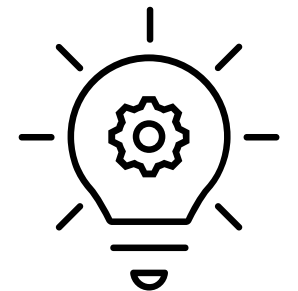
- Swift access to funding and appropriate professionals

### **Preventative**

- Pre-emptively stopping or slowing deterioration

### **Technological**

- Embracing mainstream and bespoke equipment





# Living with Dementia advice

## Staying active in everyday life

**You have a future** – hopes and dreams can still be realised.

**Keep doing what you enjoy** and what's important to you.

**Keep your routine going.**  
Routines provide structure and familiarity.

**Decide what you need help with** and what you don't.

**Try something new.**

**Use technology**, like mobile phone apps, to stay independent.

## Taking care of yourself

**Exercise**, get out and about.

**Eat regularly** and have a balanced diet.

**Stay connected** to family and friends.

**Keep talking.** Let people know what helps you with communication.

**Take time to relax.** Be aware of how you feel, it's OK to have time to yourself.

**Try to do one thing at a time.** Don't put yourself under pressure.

## What you can do at home

**Use reminders** for information, dates and appointments. Everyday technology can help.

**Declutter** so the objects you use every day are easier to find.

**Use colour contrast** to make objects stand out.

**Remove trip hazards**, like rugs.

**Make sure rooms are clearly lit.**  
Consider night lights.



# Living with Dementia advice

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## Arranging to see an occupational therapist

You can talk to your GP or a health and social care professional about seeing an occupational therapist. There are occupational therapists working in specialist dementia services and in broader services like rehabilitation and enablement teams.

You can also call the help and advice line of your local council to request advice and an assessment.

Details of occupational therapy services are usually found under *Social Care and Health* on council websites.



<https://www.rcot.co.uk/sites/default/files/Guide%20%E2%80%93%20Living%20with%20Dementia.pdf>