

## Seen as a Person

# Digital Art Promoting Social Interaction between Dementia Residents, Families and Carers

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**BACKGROUND:** A recent pilot study (Theijsmeijer et al., 2018) among people with (moderately) severe dementia in nursing homes revealed that showing artistic photographs that fit the (premorbid) interest of the person, inventoried among family carers, seems to have a more favourable effect on mood, social interaction and speech than neutral photographs or photographs with positive facial expressions. The current study builds upon these findings and aims to investigate the feasibility and effectiveness of a person-centred photo intervention.

### OBJECTIVES:

- To develop a digital version (app) of the person-centred photo-activity intervention
- To investigate its impact on social interaction, mood and quality of life of people with advanced dementia living in nursing homes
- To investigate the intervention's impact on person-centred attitude, sense of competence and empathy in (in)formal carers.
- To develop an implementation toolkit for wider implementation in care organizations



Photo-activity during pilot study with visual artist Laurence Aëgerter (<http://photographictreatment.com/>)

### METHODS:

*Design:* Exploratory randomised controlled trial involving 90 residents with dementia (45 photo-activity/45 conversation) and their (in)formal carers. Three measurements: baseline (T0), 4 weeks later (T1), and follow-up 2 weeks after T1. A process evaluation will determine the facilitators and barriers to the intervention's implementation.

*Measures:* INTERACT observation scale (Baker & Dowling, 1995); Smiley Face Expression Scale (Van Weert et al., 2005); Qualidem (Ettema et al., 2007); NPI-Q (Kaufert & Cummings, 2000); Short Sense of Competence Scale (Vernooij-Dassen et al., 1999); Approaches to Dementia Questionnaire (Lintern et al., 2000); Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1983).

### RESULTS:

Study results will be available in **Spring 2023**. It is expected that residents participating in the photo activity intervention will feel acknowledged as a unique person with their own experiences, which will positively impact on their social interaction, mood and quality of life. (In)formal carers involved in the intervention will develop a more person-centred and empathic attitude and more sense of competence. An implementation toolkit will facilitate dissemination of the photo-activity.



Initial mock-up of the digital photo-activity intervention

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