

## Stand by Me

### Literature review about couples with a learning disability and couples with dementia - Easy-read summary

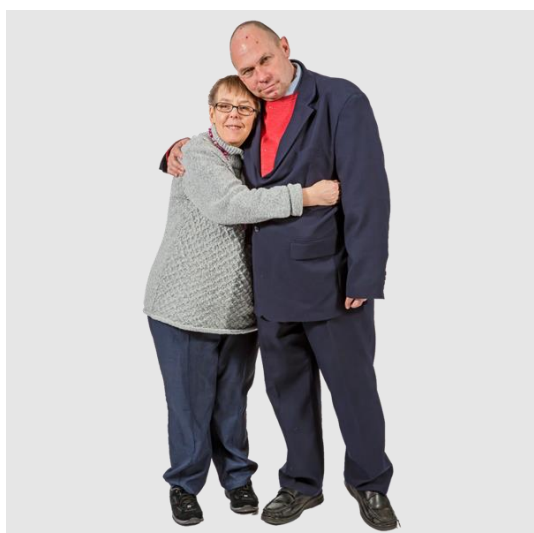


#### What is a literature review?

A literature review is looking for all the research articles and books that have been written about a topic.

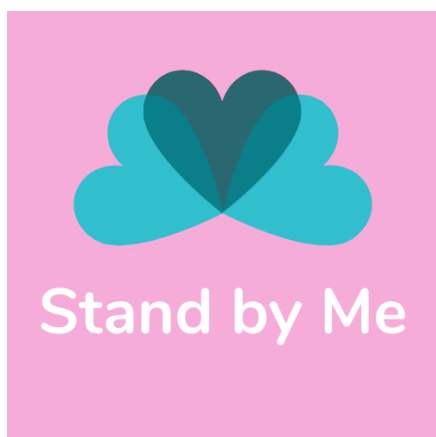
#### What did we do?

We looked at over 3000 research articles.



#### Why did we do it?

We wanted to see if there has been any research about couples with a learning disability where one partner has dementia.



## What did we find?

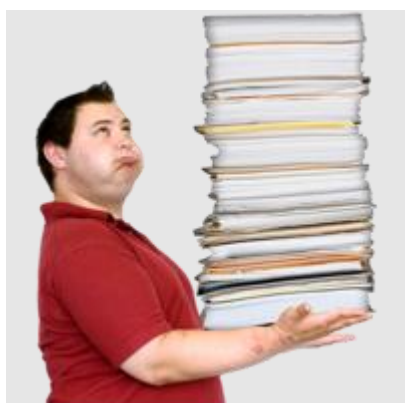
We did not find any research about couples with a learning disability where one partner has dementia.

Our study will be the first.



## What we did next

We did two literature searches on different topics related to this.



## Search 1 – Couples with dementia who do not have a learning disability

First, we searched for research about couples where one partner has dementia and neither has a learning disability.



We looked more closely at 8 reviews that summarised 73 studies.

Most studies were conducted in North America and in Europe.

### What we learned



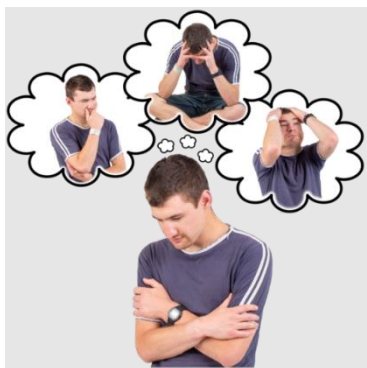
The research reviews showed us how couples experienced and responded to changes in their relationships.

One partner often starts to help the partner with dementia more.



This can include taking over household tasks, as well as helping their partner get dressed.

There was hardly any mention of couples getting regular support from professionals or services.



Many researchers only spoke to the partner who did not have dementia.

These studies talked more about stress and how one partner helps the other.



When researchers spoke to both partners, they included more positive description of people's relationships.

The couples spoke about their love for each other and how they helped each other.



### **Search 2 – couples with a learning disability who don't have dementia**

In the second search we looked for research about older couples with a learning disability where neither partner had dementia.



We found 10 research studies.

- 5 from the UK.
- 3 from Israel.
- 1 from Ireland.
- 1 from Spain.

Researchers spoke to people with a learning disability, professionals and parents.



In three studies people with a learning disability were co-researchers.

Most studies focus on what helps people with a learning disability to start or end a relationship.

There are fewer studies about what helps people to be in a relationship for many years.

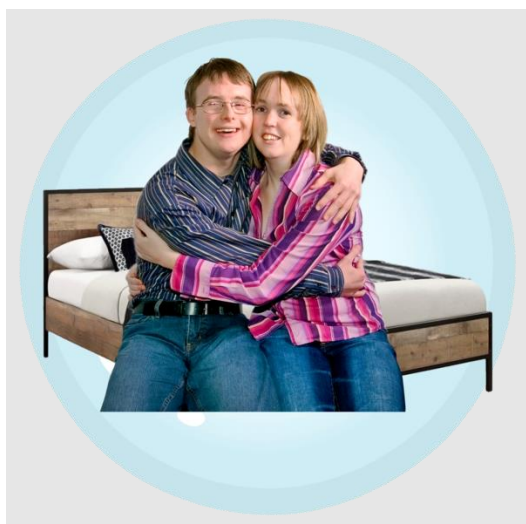


### **What we learned**

Workers and family members are often very involved in the lives of couples with a learning disability.



Workers and family members sometimes support couples, but they can also stand in the way of relationships.



For example, some couples with a learning disability were not allowed to share a bedroom or move in together.

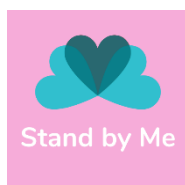
Most couples where one person had a learning disability already had support before a dementia diagnosis.

We did the literature review as part of our Stand by Me study.

The study is funded by the Dunhill Medical Trust.

The review was published by the journal *Ageing & Society*. You can read it by clicking on this link: [Link to journal article](#)

Jacobs, P., Watchman, K., Wilkinson, H., & Hoyle, L. (2023). Couples with intellectual disability where one partner has dementia – a scoping review exploring relationships in the context of dementia and intellectual disability. *Ageing & Society*, 1-40. doi:10.1017/S0144686X22001416



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