

Assessment #4

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Architect and Sensory Design

Features of the social and built environment that contribute to the well-being of people with dementia who live at home: A scoping review by Jodi Sturge and Colleagues reviews 23 qualitative studies to explore how the social and built environment contributes to the well-being of people with dementia who live at home. This scoping review is centered around two main themes: Connecting to society and supportive relationships is important, and interacting with natural environments and public spaces is also key. These findings indicate that both positive and negative features of these environments impact the well-being of individuals with dementia. The author highlights the importance of involving people with dementia in the design of such environments to create more inclusive communities. This inclusive approach would lead to the creation of more dementia-friendly spaces that consider the needs of individuals with dementia, ultimately enhancing their quality of life and emotional health. This new information from this review helped me learn about the strong emphasis which is put on the role that both the social and physical environments play in supporting the well-being of people with dementia, especially those living at home. This new knowledge introduces the idea that the built environment should not only be a physical structure but a carefully considered space that encourages social engagement and access to nature. I learned that features like community connections and access to natural spaces are key to well-being, and the design of these spaces can have a direct impact on dementia care. This connects directly to my current research on sensory design in dementia care, as the review supports the idea that the environment itself—social connections and natural settings—affects cognitive and emotional outcomes. It aligns with the idea that designing spaces

thoughtfully, considering sensory inputs, is a critical aspect of dementia care environments. Additionally, the link between natural environments and cognitive well-being connects to the research I've done on therapeutic landscapes and how access to nature can reduce stress and improve cognitive function in individuals with dementia. This knowledge nails the importance of integrating both social and environmental considerations into my design work for dementia care facilities. For example, I could explore integrating outdoor spaces within dementia care designs to encourage residents to spend time in nature, or I might consider designing communal spaces where family members, caregivers, and other community members can engage with individuals in meaningful ways. My focus on sensory design for Alzheimer's homes will now expand to include aspects like community interactions and the integration of natural spaces, which could further support cognitive health and emotional well-being. Next, I will explore more about how urban and rural contexts influence these design features, as this was identified as an area for further research. Rural areas, while potentially offering more natural spaces, might lack sufficient social support systems. Understanding how these different settings impact dementia care can help me tailor my designs to suit specific environments and ensure that both social and natural features are maximized. Additionally, I will need to delve deeper into community-based design practices that involve people with dementia in the process, to create truly dementia-friendly environments. In conclusion, this source is a very valuable resource.

Although, at first glance, it might not seem immediately connected to the architectural design of dementia spaces, it provides a comprehensive look into how environmental factors—both social and built—contribute to the well-being of people with dementia. Jodi Sturge is also a credible author due to her academic background and position at the Population Research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Netherlands. This university is famous for its research in spatial sciences, urban planning, and environmental design, which supports the credibility of the source.

Citation

Sturge, Jodi. "Features of the Social and Built Environment That Contribute to the Well-Being of People with Dementia Who Live at Home: A Scoping Review." *Population Research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen*, 2020,
www.researchgate.net/publication/342877456_Features_of_the_Social_and_Built_Environment_That_Contribute_to_the_Well-Being_of_People_with_Dementia_Who_Live_at_Home_A_Scoping_Review.