



DISCOVER
SKILLS FOR CARERS

Developing carers' digital skills to improve the everyday lives of carers and cared-for older people

*Dr Verina Waights,
The Open University*

DISCOVER



- Partners: Greece (1), Spain (2), Holland (1), UK (3), and Ireland (1).

Carers

- ❑ Long standing physical and mental health problems, e.g. back pain, stress, anxiety , depression*
 - Health problems more prevalent when care exceeds 20 hours per week
- ❑ Likely to be financially less well off or living in poverty
 - 60% of participants in DISCOVER are not in paid employment
 - across EU 42% of carers are in the lowest income percentile**
- ❑ Likely to be socially isolated due to caring role



* (Pinquart & Sorensen 2003, OECD 2011, Mencap 2013) ** (Eurocarers 2015)

Being online



- ❑ 30% of Europeans have never used the internet, mainly older adults and people living with disabilities
- ❑ Adults not online felt less able to learn new skills
- ❑ Older people using the internet
 - Felt more in control
 - Hardly ever felt isolated or lonely
 - 78% felt the internet had improved their lives
 - 42% felt the world would not be the same without it
 - 23% felt it enhanced relationships
- ❑ Online carers in the UK report internet saves time (70%), saves money (40%) and reduces feeling of isolation (42%)
- ❑ DISCOVER: 90% of carers think computers could make their life easier and 27% think they enable people to have more time for each other
- ❑ Use of tablets by people aged 65-74 increased from 5-17% (2012-2013)

The Skills Zone



DISCOVER
SKILLS FOR CARERS

ABOUT

SURVEY

SERVICES

WHATS NEW

MY MAP



Using the Web



Connecting
For Care



Enhancing Care
Skills



Making Your Skills
Count



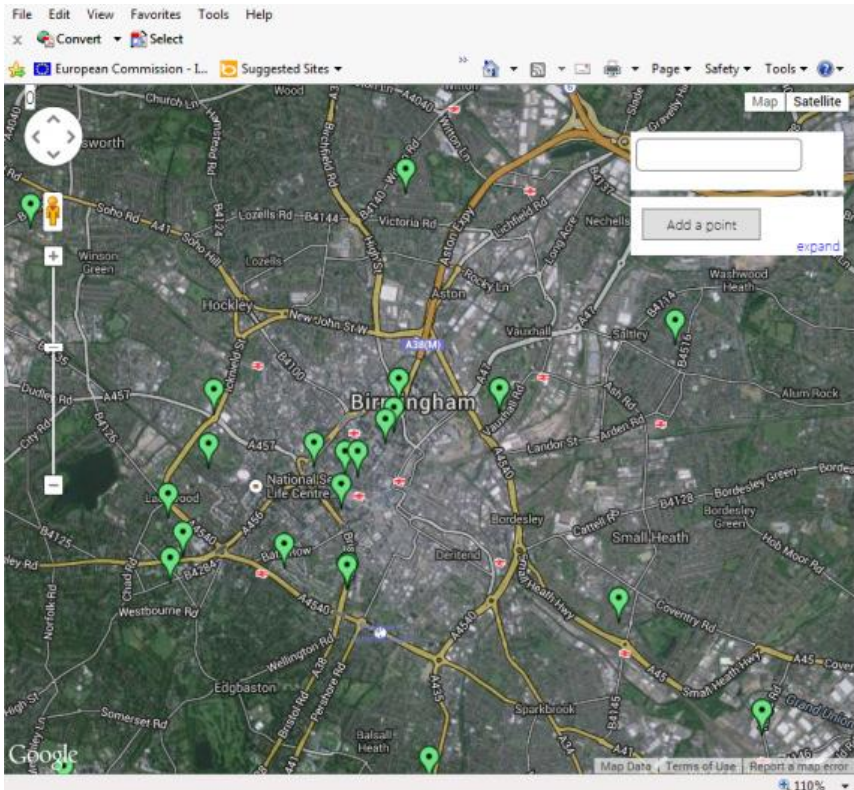
Click one of the above buttons to browse skills activities by topic area

Brain Games



Click above for a list of all brain games

Local and National Services



My map of local services



Skills Zone

START ▶ Skills Zone ▶ Links to local services

Links to local services

All Dementia Disability Mental Health Older Adult Carers Finance Misc NHS



Websites of national organisations

Using the web



Choose a topic from the icons below.



The busy carer - learning through quick reads and videos

Step 3: If you make a mistake in your typing, there's always a remedy.

To delete a letter, place your cursor (mouse pointer) just after the letter and click. Then press **Backspace** briefly. (Always press briefly – otherwise, you'll get repeated deletions, spaces, letters or whatever.) Or place your cursor just before the letter, click and press **Delete**.

stephen



stephen



How do I get email?



How to set up an email account, send messages and recognise spam



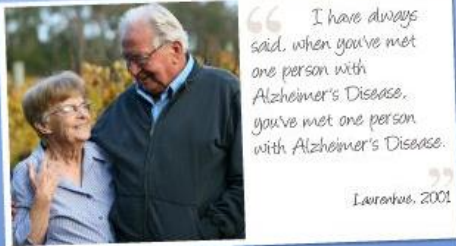
Course content: Introduction to dementia care (1 of 10) | 00:04:00

Estimated time required: 20-30 minutes

Section Four: **The person with dementia as an individual** Choose a section

Every person with dementia is still a person and cannot be defined simply by their dementia. It is important to recognise that each person with dementia is different from every other person with dementia.

Knowing a person's strengths, needs, preferences and difficulties will enable us to provide the support that the person needs.



Over to You [Take Notes](#)

Do you know about the strengths and abilities of people with dementia that you support?

How can you enable people with dementia to use their abilities to the full?

When you are ready, move to the next section where we'll look at how dementia can impact on those closest to them.

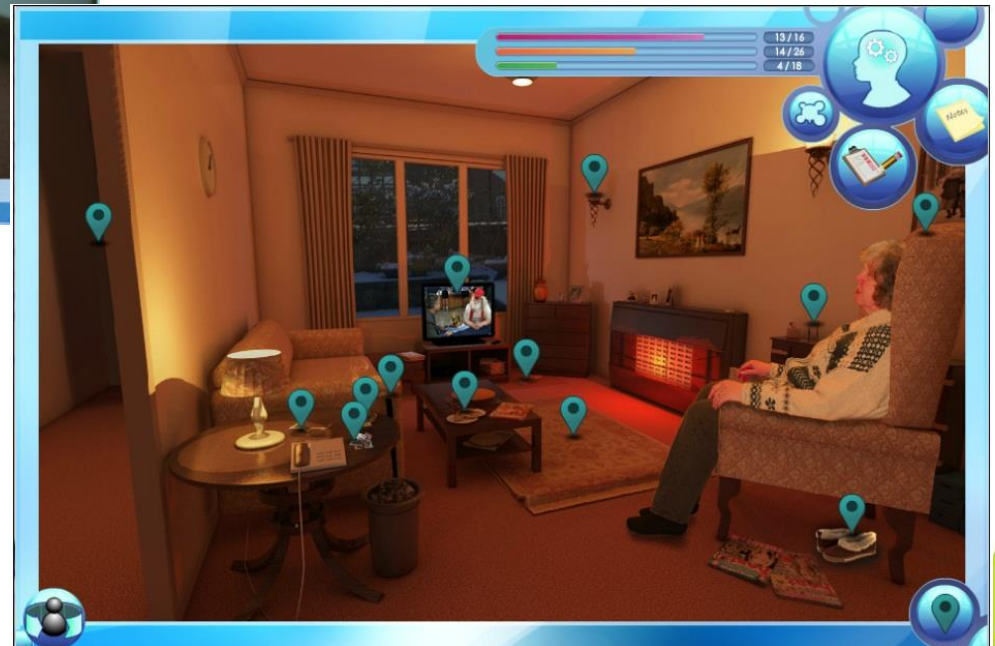
Hear text Turn on Text Only > Credits >

Previous page 7/7 Next

Reducing the risk of falls



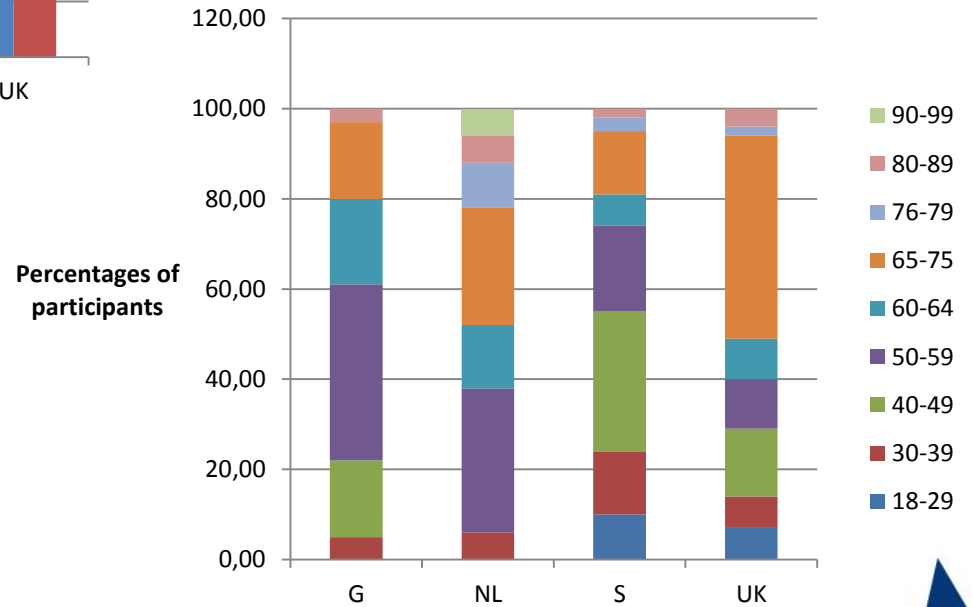
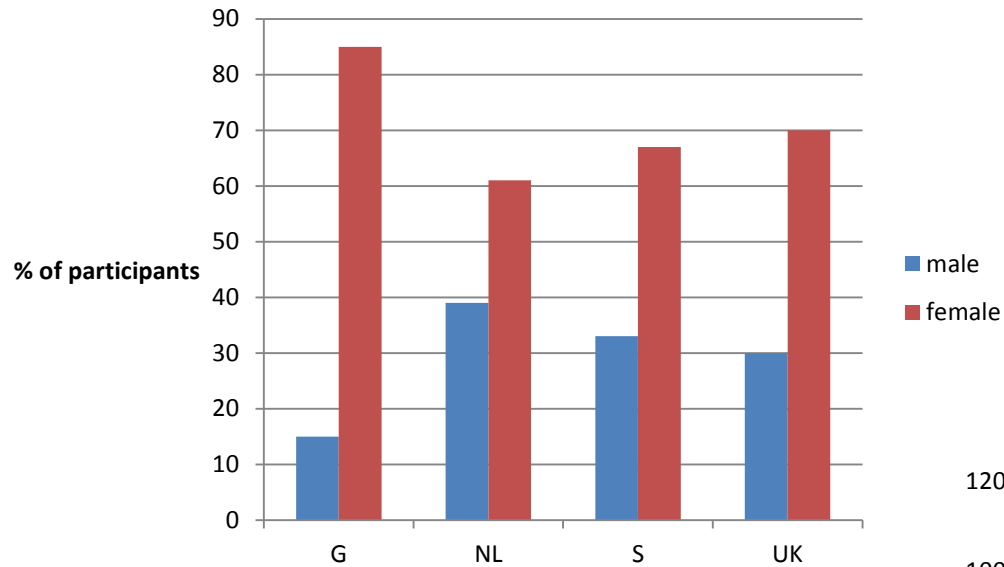
DISCOVER
SKILLS FOR CARERS



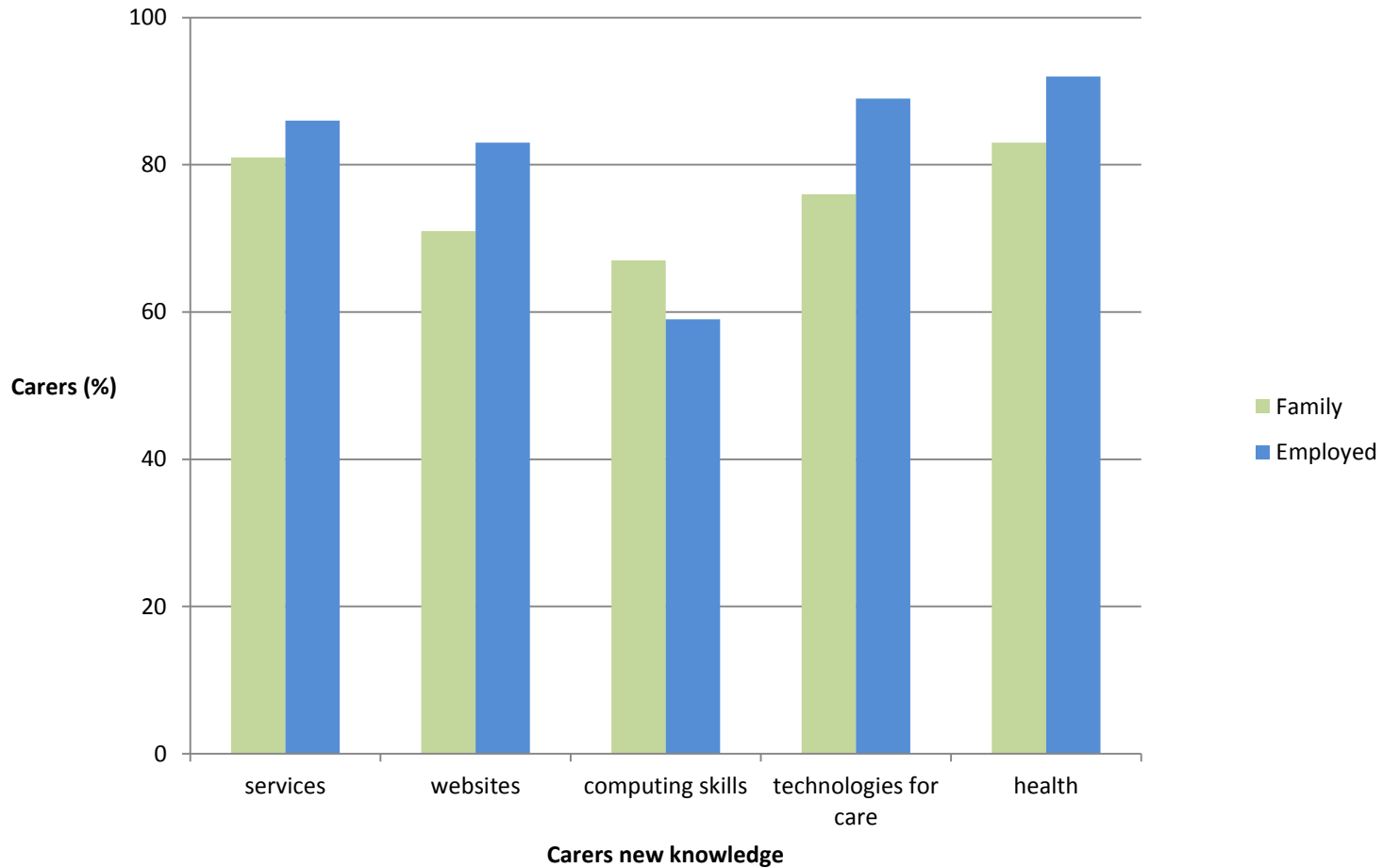
Carers



DISCOVER
SKILLS FOR CARERS



Learning through DISCOVER



Importance of high quality information/safe environment



I find it's good because everything's all in one place that you can click on and you haven't got to keep typing and Googling and searching this and searching that'

Female carer over 50, UK

'sometimes the information you find is deceptive, it could scare you more than help you... so you have to know how to differentiate the good information'

Female carer, Spain

'I didn't realise at the time but not knowing enough about strokes, he would have been better off being transferred to a hospital in Birmingham. There's a dedicated stroke unit ... nearer to his house, but I knew none of this at the time, that he could have done that

Female carer, UK

Improving quality of care - technologies aiding independence



'[I] didn't know about automatic pill boxes and think this would be a great idea for my mother. Currently my sister is making sure she takes her pills on time'.

Female carer, Spain

'When you have epilepsy it's really dangerous if you have a fit in your sleep... she {my mum} won't wear her medical bracelet because she can't stand things on her wrist and round her neck so the full sensors are out... but the one under the bed seems like a really good fit for her. To be honest I never even heard about it'.

Young adult carer, UK

Preventing falls



'I have learned to help her do specific exercises to prevent another fall'

man caring for his mother-in-law, UK

'I found the falls scenario interesting and have changed the living space of the older person that I care for to protect them.'

Female carer, Greece

'What to do yourself when you fall. Not to panic and do what you have to do (phone for help etc)'

94 yr old male reciprocal carer/cared for person, Netherlands

Coping with challenging behaviour



‘Dementia was an ‘unknown terrain for us’ ...I not only know more about dementia through DISCOVER but now understand the ‘change of behaviour that goes with that’

Female carer caring for mother in law, Netherlands

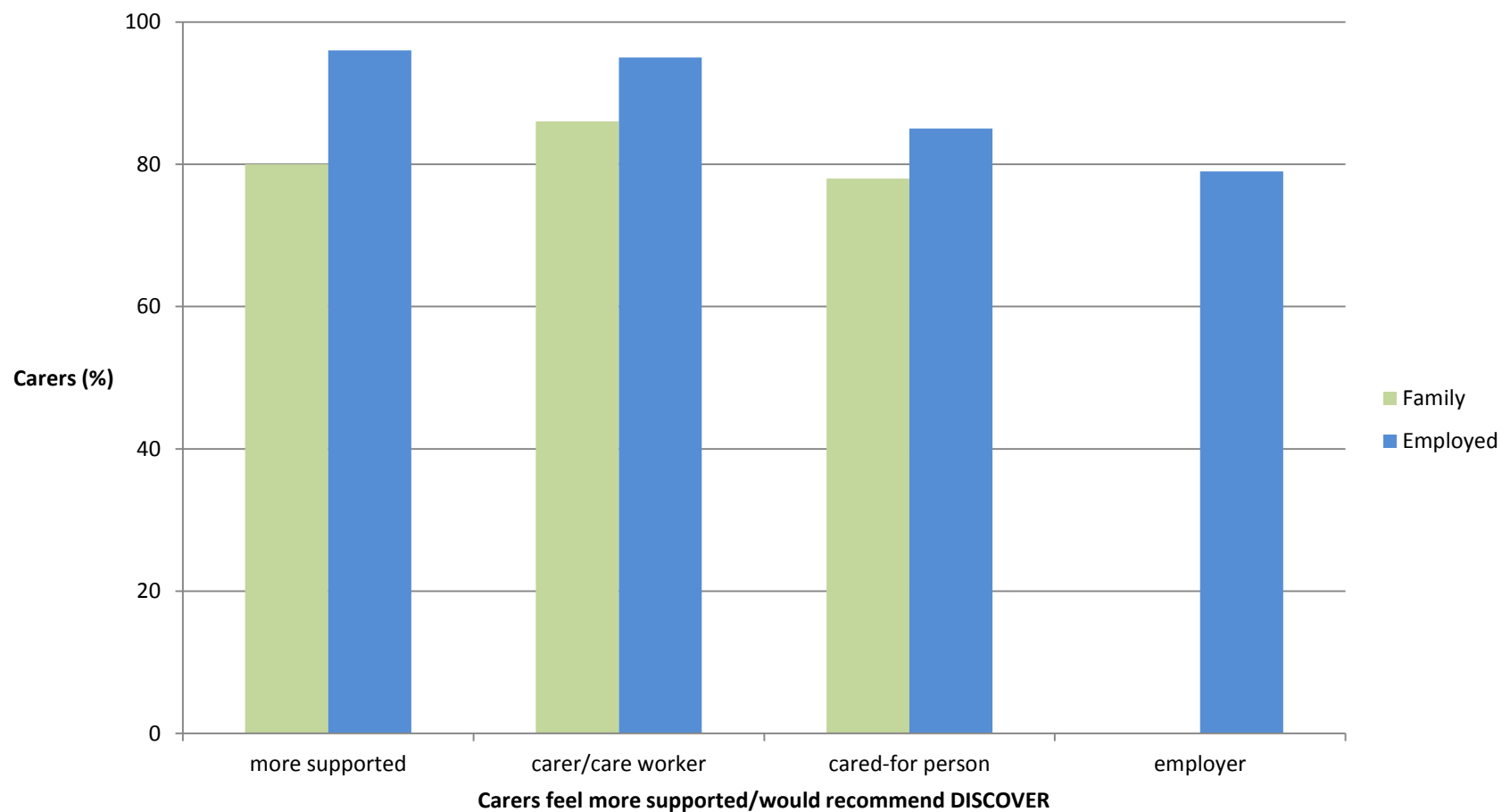
‘[I wanted to know] how to better for the care person because Alzheimer is difficult to understand. Sometimes I became angry even I know it's not his fault. Now I can do this’.

Female carer for father, Spain

‘I have changed the way I talk with my son [who has had a stroke]’.

Female carer, Spain

Feeling more supported



Improved well-being



Less stressed

'I have found that being internet literate has been brilliant because of getting the shopping delivered because now my spine has gone, even pushing a trolley round is terrible.'

Carer looking after husband living with stroke, UK

Active minds

'It [playing brain games] keeps your brain active doesn't it that's why I do crosswords that's how I keep my brain active, I won't touch the maths side of it, I see numbers and I think I'm not touching that because I know I'm hopeless at it.'

Male carer looking after daughter with special needs, UK

wellbeing

Statement Over the last two weeks...	Carers who felt this all or most of the time		Carers who felt this only some of the time or never	
	carers	Employed carers	carers	Employed carers
I have felt cheerful and in good spirits	44%	48%	26%	1%
I have felt calm and relaxed	44%	43%	2%	8%
I have felt active and vigorous	39%	58%	13%	1%
I woke up feeling fresh and rested	25%	26%	21%	1%
My daily life has been filled with things that interest me	35%	59%	17%	3%

Stakeholders' perspectives



It is an amazing concept, bringing it [Services etc] all together

Carer outreach worker, UK

Generally, there was a better understanding of health conditions, but simultaneously there was an improvement of carers' knowledge about the use of technologies

Psychologist at Care Home, Greece

Caregivers who participated present generally a consistent positive feedback having also pointed out during consultations what they have learned with DISCOVER.

Psychiatrist at a Memory clinic, Spain

Benefit for Cared-for people



■ Pre DISCOVER

- Less than 25% of carers felt the people they cared for would benefit from developing their digital skills

■ Post DISCOVER

- 85% of carers would recommend Discover

Conclusions



Carers, despite feeling very pressured

- learned new skills
- gained new knowledge
- accessed local and national services
- valued leisure activities
- improved the quality of care
- felt more supported in their caring role and less isolated
- feelings of wellbeing improved

Carers would recommend DISCOVER to other carers

Stakeholders

- valuable addition to care services
- improve care services
- enhance the lives of carers and the people they care for

Using DISCOVER



Contact



For further information please contact:

Dr Verina Waights verina.waights@open.ac.uk

www.discover4carers.eu