

# Older People as Peer Researchers:

## A reflection on the TESA DRI project

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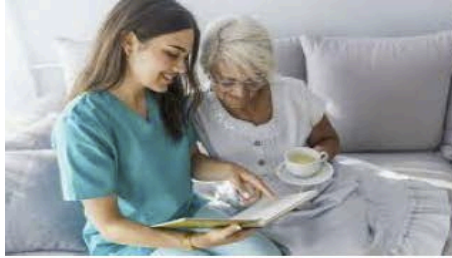
# Introduction

- The TESA DRI Project
- The Peer Researcher Role
- The Experiences of Peer Researchers



# Research Aims

To explore the perspectives of PLWD who live in person-centred supported, technology enriched housing schemes, their family and paid employees at the facilities.



**Paid Caregivers**



**Family and Friend Caregiver**



**Giving Voice**

**People Living with Dementia**

**Inclusion**



**Peer Researchers**

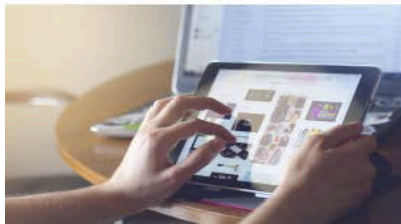


**Experiences**



**Best Practice**

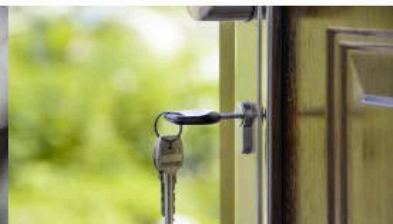
**Technology**



**Person Centred Care**



**Transition**

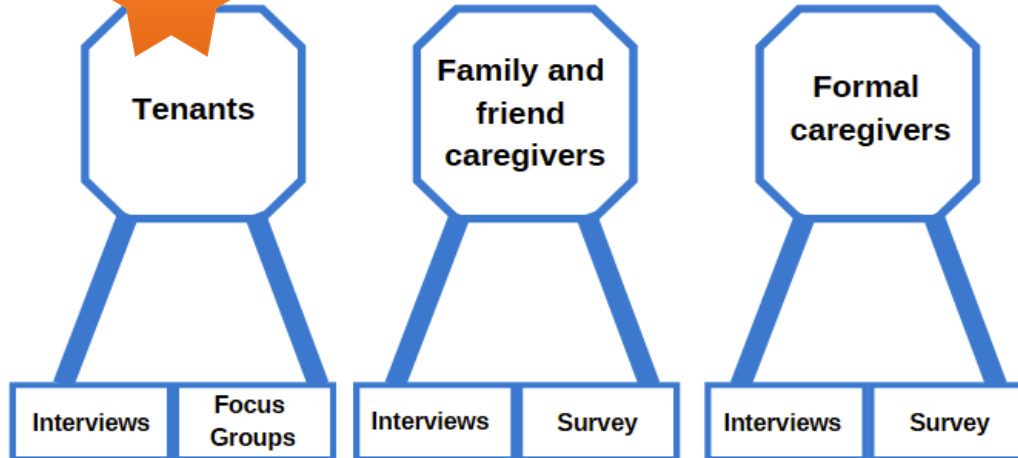


# Research Design

Literature Review



PPI: Peer Researchers →



Dissemination

# Patient and Public Involvement





# What is a Peer Researcher?

- **A person who...**

Brings lived experiences to research

Belong to the same peer group

Relate to the experiences of the participant group

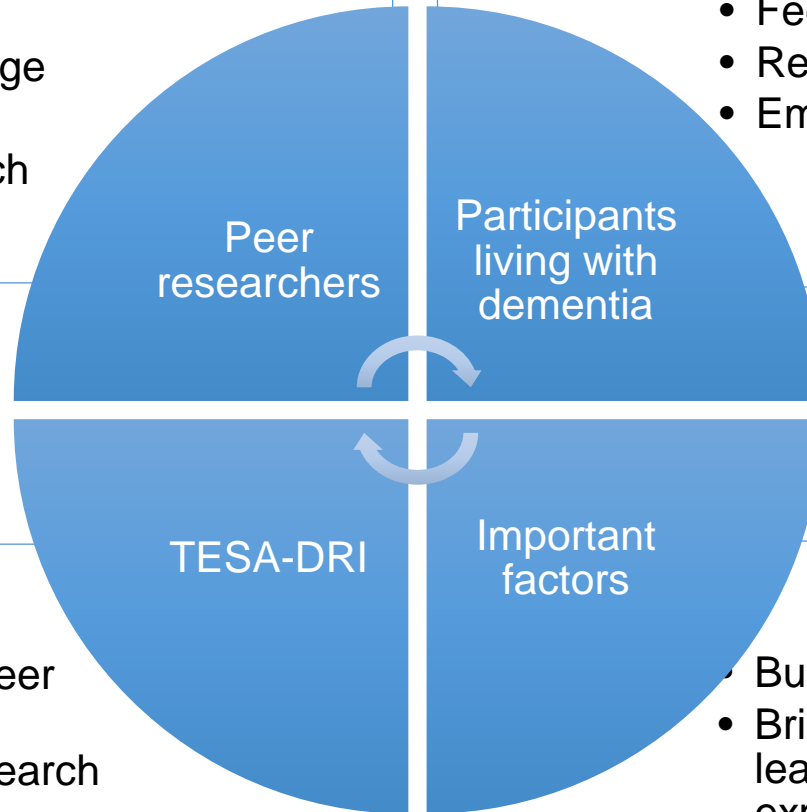
Moves away from 'expert' researcher

Comfort for participant

# The Importance of Peer Researchers

- Capacity building
- Relate to peer group
- Experiential knowledge
- Diverse population
- Active role in research

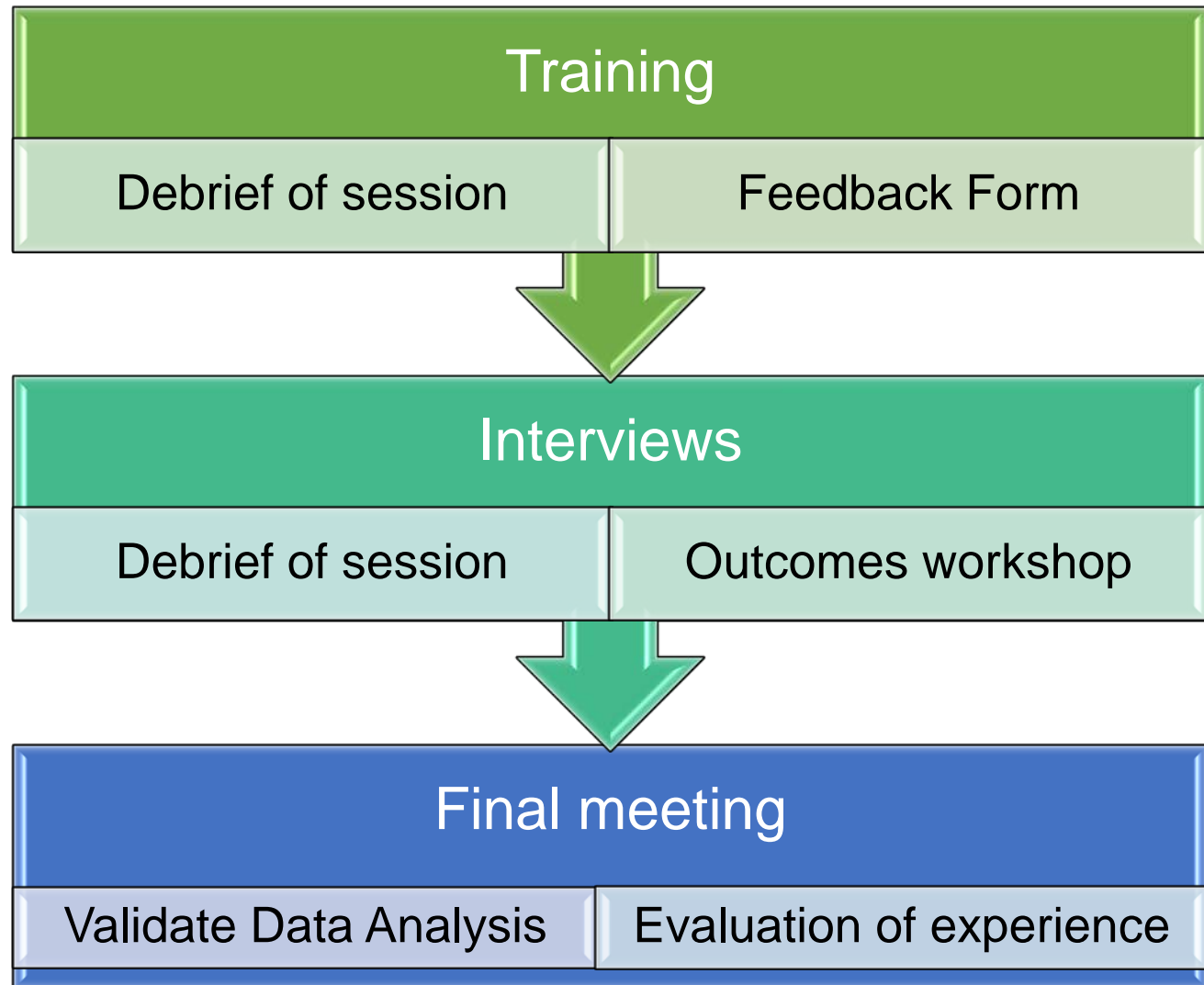
- Get a voice
- Feel more comfortable
- Relate to peer group
- Empowerment



- Facilitate the role of peer researcher
- Meaningful role in research
- Increased credibility for research findings

- Building infrastructure in NI
- Bridge gap between learned knowledge versus experiential knowledge

# Peer Researcher Role in TESA





# Peer Researchers

Recruitment

Demographics



Motivation

# Peer Researcher Training

2 Day Training Course

Peer reviewed



# Data Collection

- PR ranged from between 1-6 interviews each from a total of 22 interviews

**Ethics**

**Comfortable  
Environment**

**Safeguarding**

**Voice recorder**

**Topic Guide**

**Consent**

**Confidentiality**

**Debrief Form**

## Steps to enhance participation

- Flexibility
- Transportation
- No payment but lunch included
- Supportive relationship with project researcher

# Debrief Outcome

*'Really good'*

*'Difficult to establish a connection'*

**How do you feel after the interview?**

*'Invigorated'*

*'Pleased'*



*'I could relate as a peer'*

*'A bit more challenging'*



# Debrief Outcome

Keeping it  
*simple*

*Silence* / non-  
immediate  
response are ok

Using visual **cues**

**Eye contact**, be  
affirming and  
interested

## STRATEGIES



Interview **timing**

**Repeating**  
questions

**Seating** was important

Giving *time* to  
respond

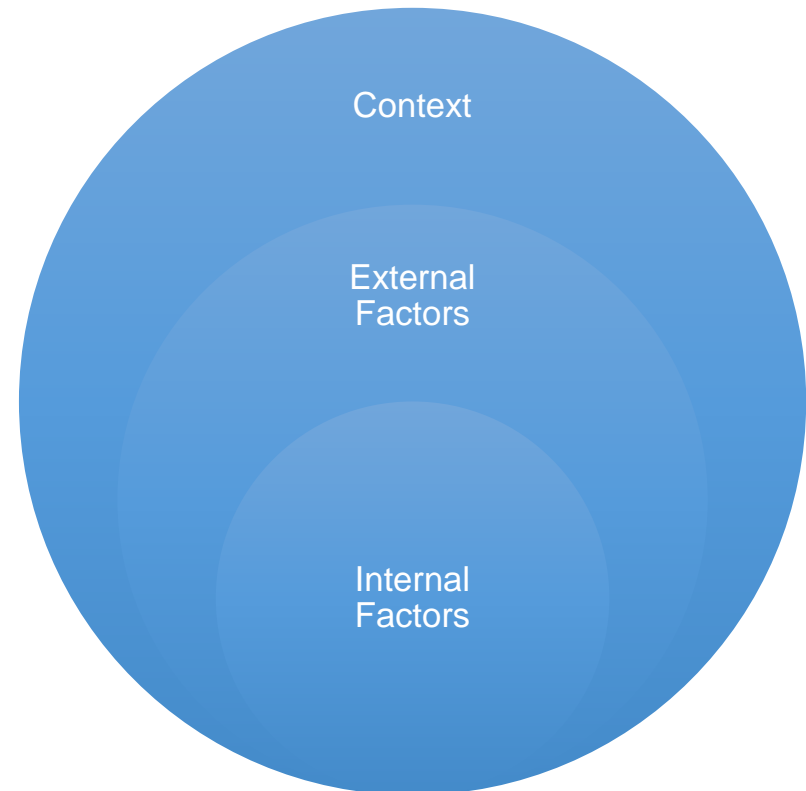
*Prompts* to  
explore  
responses

Making a  
**connection**  
with  
interviewee

# Data Validation

5 peer researchers took part in validation

- Read interview transcripts
- Group discussion of themes
- Shown coding framework
- Generated themes





# Peer Researcher Experience Evaluation

5 PR completed the evaluation form

All five PR were interested in volunteering in future projects



***'Reconnecting to the lived experience of older people'***

***'Meeting older people'***

***'Feeling of value'***

***'Having a role in a piece of valuable research'***

***'Gaining an understanding of issues concerns and contentment of people living with dementia'***

# Peer Researcher Experience Evaluation

5 PR completed the evaluation form

All five PR were interested in volunteering in future projects

***‘Feeling a bit outside the project’,***

***‘Would like to have contributed a  
bit more’***

***‘Trying to gauge the level of  
person being interviewed to set  
tone for the interview’***



# Peer Researcher Experience Evaluation

5 PR completed the evaluation form

All five PR were interested in volunteering in future projects



**Information about tenant**

**Information about project**

**More...**

**Contact with other peer  
researchers**

**Interviews**

# Researchers Experience

## Opportunities

- **Natural conversation**

- **Relatability**

- **Confidence**

- **Skills**

- **Sense of security because of support**

- **Making a connection with tenant**



## Challenges

- **Starting afresh with each peer researcher**

- **Keeping skills up to date**

- **Dynamic of a third person**

- **Silence**

- **Ensuring research objectives are met**

# Lessons Learnt

- Inform future training
- More involvement
- Focus groups commitment
- Create a peer researcher network
- Measure impact



# Acknowledgments

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