

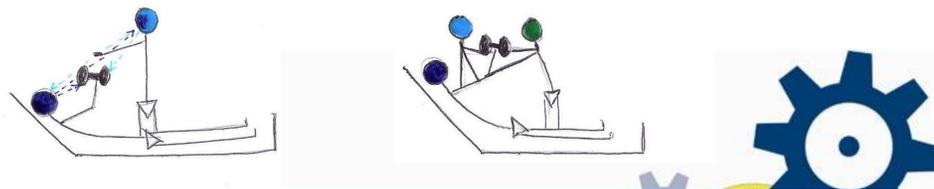
# Caring relations at the margins of neurological care home life: The rehabilitative work of hotel service staff

## The research

My research examines how the futures of people with severe brain injuries are being shaped during their rehabilitation.

I spent 5 months at two neurological rehabilitation centres owned and run by independent health care companies in England, observing day to day rehabilitative practice and interviewing people with severe brain injuries, their families and health care workers.

## Who is 'doing' rehabilitation?



At the centre of neurological rehabilitation, as constructed within the clinical literature, is the assessment and treatment of people with brain injuries by a 'multidisciplinary team'. Those considered 'core' to this team are consultant physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, clinical psychologists and social workers.

But as I spent time being with the people that live and work in these places, I saw other people doing work with patients which contributed to their rehabilitation too.

I saw administrators, maintenance personnel, housekeepers and catering staff – all interacting and doing work with and for patients that constituted an informal type of rehabilitative work.

## The rehabilitative work of 'hotel service' staff

### Finance administrators - Cognition

Finance administrators create internal banking systems within neuro rehab settings and teach patients to account for their monies, orientate them to current prices of everyday items/costs and help co-design adaptive strategies to combat patients short-term memory issues.



### Catering staff – swallow, vision, inclusion

Catering staff carefully modify the consistency of foods to help patients swallow their food safely. They pay real attention to give modified foods colours and shape to help patients identify what they are eating. Catering staff also work hard to produce spreads at social gathering which include all types of modified diets so everyone is included.



### Maintenance men – Occupation

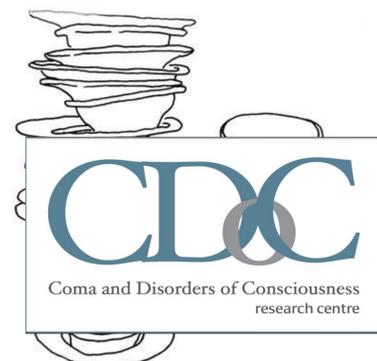
Being occupied and having occupation is a real concern for everyone at these sites and seen as really important for residents. Maintenance men provide both meaningful occupation such as gardening groups, but also real work – providing and supporting rehabilitating patients to carry out maintenance work for the centres.

### Housekeepers and receptionists – Communication and social interaction

Receptionists, administrators and housekeepers talk to and 'pass the time of day' with residents as they pass. The natural way that they do this generates automatic responses from patients in the moment.



*"We're housekeeper, part carer. Everyone has the same role – we're all responsible for the health and wellbeing of patients, in whatever way" - Ally*



Julie Latchem

[LatchemJM@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:LatchemJM@cardiff.ac.uk)

Supervised by Prof. Joanna Latimer  
& Dr Sara MacBride-Stewart

Hotel service staff are not marginal but central to caring relations in these places but central. They play a key, but often hidden and relatively unnoticed role in both the residing and the rehabilitating of people with severe brain injuries.