

Sharing ideas for service improvement

KATE BOYCE: Unfortunately the way a lot of home care services are set up people, the carers will go in and get the person up and they sit on the toilet when they get up. They get them washed and then they give them their breakfast and leave and shortly after that, that person needs a bowel movement and they can't go.

So you can get into a vicious circle with it. So the person holds back, becomes constipated, gets laxatives and then they're no longer able to hold on because of the effect of the laxatives and they become faecal incontinent.

I work quite a lot in supporting and advising home care staff and I've managed to persuade them to try a more flexible approach in some cases, where they're spending longer in the morning, so they get them up and go to the toilet and then give them their breakfast and still there doing other things in time to take them to the toilet when their bowels need to move, and they've actually found that this is working. Which is great because getting the message across from hearing other people saying that this actually works - we really need to start doing it - is a powerful message.