

# Care and Support Seminar

## Dementia in Housing

**NATIONAL  
HOUSING  
FEDERATION**

### **Plenary four: Dementia masterclass: What housing staff need to know**

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# Anchor

Housing and living well with dementia



**Happy living** for the years ahead

## Background

Older people are not broken adults

Supporting older people is viewed as 'nice'

Stay connected with compassion

Thrive and grow together





# Anchor

**Our passion at Anchor is giving older people a choice of great places and ways to live.**

**We are England's largest not-for-profit provider of housing and care to older people over 55 years**

**We operate from nearly 1,000 locations, including rented, leasehold housing and care homes providing services for more than 40,000 customers and employ 8,000 employees**



## What we know

- 800,000 people are living with dementia this will increase to 1 million by 2021
- Only 44% of people living with dementia receive a diagnosis
- 250,000 live in care homes = 550,000 don't !
- 1 in 3 people over 65 years old will have dementia when they die

The number of people living with dementia is equivalent to the number of older people with heart disease + cancer + stroke = combined

Prevention – what is good for the heart is good for the head



# Dementia

**The term 'dementia' is used to describe the symptoms that occur when the brain is affected by specific diseases and conditions.**

**There are over 100 types of dementia**

**The most common form of dementia is Alzheimer's disease**

**Symptoms of dementia include loss of memory, confusion and problems with speech and understanding.**

**Symptoms will manifest in the following areas**



# Symptoms

**Memory loss that affects day-to-day function**

**Difficulty performing familiar tasks**

**Problems with language – Aphasia**

**Disorientation of time and place**

**Poor or decreased judgment**

**Inability to carry out purposeful movements – Apraxia**

**Problems with recognising things and people – Agnosia**

**Problems with abstract thinking**

**Misplacing things**

**Changes in mood, behaviour and personality**

**Loss of initiative**

**Decreased need for sleep**



# Dementia

**While there are some common symptoms of dementia, it is important to remember that everyone is unique.**

**No two people are likely to experience dementia in the same way.**

**Dependent on:**

**Personality, out-going or shy**

**Life history, strong family ties, multiple bereavements**

**Health, mobility, sight, hearing**

**Neurological impairment, which parts of the brain are damaged**

**Social psychology, coping strategies**

**Supporting a person living with dementia is often about providing support for people who do not know they need it.**





## Person centred language

**When we write and talk about older people living with dementia our language does not always reflect person centred principles.**

**The language we use when talking to and about people living with dementia reflects the philosophy that underpins our values .**

**If we talk about people living with dementia as if they were not there or cannot understand us we are devaluing them as a person.**

**It is easy to use language that gives the message that a person with dementia is not valued, a nuisance, a problem, to be avoided, or to be afraid of.**

**It is important to avoid talking about or describing a person as a group of symptoms, medical terms and problems and focusing on what the person can't do rather than the person can do.**



## Person centred principles

- **Acknowledge each person is a unique individual in every situation.**
- **Do not view a person as being uncooperative**
- **Do with rather than doing to**
- **Use the person's name**
- **Do not use labels such as 'wanderer'**
- **Emphasis strengths**
- **Focus on the perspective of the individual**
- **See so called 'challenging' and 'difficult' behaviour as a form of communication.**
- **Accept that a person will display their feelings.**
- **Think about the person's reality and accept this, do not insist in yours or others reality**
- **Promote feelings of well-being**



# Communication

## Top Tips

- **Be clear and precise**
- **Make sure the environment does not impair communication**
- **Listen to the content not just the words**
- **Allow enough time for people to think things through**
- **Try rephrasing questions if at first you are not successful**
- **Make sure you do not leave people inappropriately**
- **Be as honest as you can without causing distress and loss of dignity**
- **Recognise and support the individual.**

**Not going well – if you keep doing what you always did you will keep getting what you always got.**



## **Living well with dementia**

**Number of people aged 65 and older passes 10 million for first time, with over-85s the fastest growing section of society**

**16 per cent of the population is now either approaching or passed 65 years old**

**As more of us live to a greater age, many more of us also wish to live independently for longer, whatever our physical, mental and emotional needs may be.**

**For individuals living with dementia, independence remains a felt and valued need.**

**Increasing experience and growing evidence shows us that there are effective ways of ensuring that this is maintained.**



## **What people say they want**

**At its best, good housing aims to enhance an individual's experience of independence, empowerment and accessibility.**

**Independence – Doing things for yourself**

**Empowerment – Retaining the ability to make choices**

**Accessibility – Equal rights and opportunities**

**and**



## **What people say they want**

**The ability to age in a single place that feels like home**

**Meaningful relationships and interaction with other people**

**Activities that are suited to the individual and which bring pleasure and a sense of accomplishment**

**Management of pain or discomfort, including incontinence, and of common behaviours such as anger and distress**

**Homely and easy to understand environments**

**Appropriate assistive technology that is well explained and is used in accordance with the persons needs/wishes**



# **Living well with dementia in Anchor**

**November 2006**

**Recruitment of a dedicated Dementia Specialist Team**

**Each member of the team an expert and specialises in one particular aspect of dementia support**

**Role is to provide support, consultation and be a communication channel for advice, training and best practice**

**Every location had a dementia key contact**



## What we did

### What do we did – the practical approaches?

- Teach and educate
- Provide specialist advice and support
- Research, evidence and dissemination of information
- Development of service

**Training and support must be sustained and be continuous  
however leadership, excellent supervision and time for reflective  
practice is also an essential component.**

**Leadership!!!!**



## Teach and educate

**Understanding and respecting the individual as a person and not an illness is the key message and training to connect to the emotional being is pivotal.**

**It enables employees to feel confident to build relationships to feel empathy with the person living with dementia, each other and have pride in their position.**

*Housekeeper "I was scared of dementia because I didn't know what to do. I don't feel scared now, I feel I can help"*





## **Information for all employees**

### **Website**

**Information and education 'dementia specific' intranet site**

**Includes information booklets and toolkits**

# Supportive communities

**Creating supportive environments – inside and outside  
Educating surveyors**



**Our challenge is to create an environment that is sensitive and responsive to long term human emotional, physical needs and well being.**

- **Compensate for the disability**
- **Maximise independence**
- **Reinforce personal identity**
- **Enhance self-esteem.**



## Activity toolbox





## **Supporting families and friends**

**Rolling programme of information and education sessions**

**What is dementia, the different types and symptoms and how a dementia is diagnosed and person-centred dementia care the principles and concept**

**Dementia from the person living with dementia's point of view and communication approaches and techniques**

**How to support, enable and promote skills for the person living with dementia and taking care of yourself Provide individual family support**

**Face to face and telephone support**



## **Person centred volunteering**

**The purpose of 'relationship based volunteering' is for the volunteer to be matched to individual customers based on both individual's interest's hobbies and or personality**

**The aim of the match is to enhance social inclusion, combat isolation and promote independence and life skills through meaningful activity, occupation and friendship**





## Don't have a Specialist team

**Identify your movers and shakers**

**The can's the cant's and the wont's**

**Who knows what, where are they ?**

**Create a movement of change agents**

**Identify Community and Professional links**

***Alzheimer's Society local branch***

***Mental Health Team***

***Independent Mental Capacity Advocate***

***Deprivation of Liberty safeguards team***

***Carer support networks***

***Dementia friends' initiative***



## **Living well with dementia in Anchor**

**Best practice is not just about what we do, it is also about how we think, feel and understand.**

**Teaching, education with on going support changes how people think, feel and understand.**

**Colleagues empowered by education and enabled by support make a positive difference.**

**Create empathy, make connections and build relationships to connect emotionally to the person.**

**People with dementia have a voice, if we take the time, if we stop to listen we will hear.**

**VALUE!**





To leave you with.....

**Home is not where you live but  
where people understand you.**

**Christian Morganstern – German poet and writer**