

Information for Patients and Carers

Dementia

**Produced by
Patients' Voice
at
Hall Grove Group Practice
Welwyn Garden City**

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Introduction

This leaflet has been prepared by Patients' Voice who work to support the Hall Grove Group Practice and their patients. It describes the role of the Practice in diagnosing dementia and memory problems. It also offers information about the ways in which help, and information can be obtained from national and local organisations. The Practice has an information pack for dementia patients and their carers that includes copies of the following three documents

- *The Dementia Guide: living well after diagnosis*
- *This is me*
- *My Life Story.*

1. GP Role in Diagnosis and Management of Dementia

Initial diagnosis of possible dementia is likely to be when a patient is experiencing memory problems. During the appointment, the GP will review the patient's history and carry out an examination including a series of questions to evaluate the patient's memory. If dementia is a likely diagnosis the GP will arrange:

- a) Blood and urine samples will be taken and sent to be investigated by the hospital. A routine baseline ECG will be arranged in the surgery.
- b) After the results of these tests have been reviewed by the doctor the patient is likely to be referred to a local Memory Clinic, Roseanne House, Parkway, Welwyn Garden City.
- c) In the Memory Clinic, the patient will be seen by a Consultant and his team. They will take a full history relevant to the patient's physical and mental state. Further tests such as a CT scan of the head may be arranged.
- d) The Consultant will make the formal diagnosis and start treatment including medication as appropriate. The Consultant's clinic will follow up to make sure the patient is stable with the treatment plan.

The Memory Clinic Nurse will advise about the services available for help and guidance with Dementia for both the patient and family/carer. These services may include Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, and Social Services.

- e) Once stabilised on any medication the patient will be discharged by the Consultant. Self-help information will be provided for patient and family/carer.

The GP will provide necessary ongoing monitoring of the patient's progress and make annual medication reviews. The face-to-face appointments with the GP will also be an opportunity to see if any further help or support is needed.

2. National Organisations

2.1 Alzheimer's Society

The Society provides information, advice and support including publications and factsheets covering a wide range of issues associated with dementia. Particularly useful is their free booklet *The Dementia Guide – Living well after diagnosis*. As well as explaining medical matters, state benefits and social services, it includes advice on driving, making a will, arranging power of attorney, banking and other aspects of life. They also have a leaflet “*This is me*”. This is used to record information about the patient to help those who care for them to ensure that the patient's specific needs and preferences are carried out.

As well as dealing with enquiries, providing advice and publications, the Alzheimer's Society Helpline can direct patients and their families/carers to local services and support. There is also an online community, called Talking Point, for anyone affected by dementia where you may ask for advice, share information and join in discussions.

Welwyn/Hatfield local office: 01707 378365

National Helpline: 0300 222 1122

Website: www.alzheimers.org.uk/

E-mail: centralherts@alzheimers.org.uk

2.2. Dementia UK

Dementia UK provides specialist dementia support for families through the Admiral Nurse Service. It offers expert guidance and practical solutions for dementia patients and their families/carers as well as one to one dementia support. An activity they encourage is *Life Story* work in which the person with dementia is helped to review their past life events and build a personal biography recorded in their personal *Life Story* booklet available from Dementia UK.

Address: Dementia UK, Second Floor, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA

Helpline: 0800 888 6678 or 0207 697 4160

Website: www.dementiauk.org/

E-mail: info@dementiauk.org

2.3 Young Dementia UK

Young Dementia UK provides support and practical advice to patients and their families/carers affected by young onset dementia.

Address: Young Dementia UK, PO Box 315, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1ZN

General Enquiries: 01993 776295

E-mail: web@youngdementiauk.org

Support-Related Enquiries: 01865 794311

E-mail: support@youngdementiauk.org

Website: www.youngdementiauk.org/

3. Local organisations

3.1 Hertswise

Age UK, Carers in Herts, Hertfordshire Independent Living Service, Mind and several smaller organisations are leading the Hertswise service. This is for people of all ages living with dementia, low level memory loss or mild cognitive impairment. It is designed to help them easily access local support and advice as well as promoting physical and mental wellbeing through group and individual activities, including chair based exercise, music, walking, bowling, indoor golf and craft-based activities.

HertsHelp: 0300 123 4044

Website (operated for Hertswise by Age UK):

www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/our-services/hertswise/

Independent Living: 0330 2000 103

Website: www.hertsindependentliving.org/

3.2 Hertfordshire Adult Social Services

Help can be provided with accessing various local support services as well as finding suitable care homes. They will organise an assessment of needs upon request.

Helpline: 0300 123 4042

Website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/

3.3 Support for Carers

Carers in Herts provides a range of local services and activities to support those who act as carers whether family, friend or otherwise. Carers in Herts provide a monthly newsletter.

Telephone: 01992 586969

Email: contact@carersinherts.org.uk

Website: www.carersinherts.org.uk/

3.4 Safe and Well Visits

Crews from Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City Fire Stations will make visits, free of charge, to give advice on staying well, including advice on avoiding loneliness, keeping a home warm enough, eating and drinking properly and avoiding a fall. They can also suggest specialist support services available. Their visits include fire safety checks.

For advice and urgent referrals for Welwyn Garden City residents:

Contact: Lesley Catchpole

Telephone: 01707 343500

Email: lesley.catchpole@hertfordshire.gov.uk

For advice and urgent referrals for Hatfield residents

Hatfield Fire Station: 01707 346900

Non-urgent referrals for the whole of Hertfordshire

or to request a visit

Telephone: 0300 123 40 46

Website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/safeandwell/

PRIORITY IS GIVEN TO PATIENTS WHO HAVE DEMENTIA. *It is essential to have two working smoke alarms, which are put in **FREE OF CHARGE**.*

3.5 Care homes and Nursing homes

Many, but not all, care homes have facilities for dementia patients. There is a listing of care homes and nursing homes on the Hertfordshire County Council website. Some care homes provide for a brief respite stay, giving carers a well-earned break.

Residential Dementia Care - for those needing support with daily living activities 24 hours, 7 days a week

Nursing Care for those with Nursing Requirements/Support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/

or: www.carehome.co.uk/

3.6 Herts Musical Memories

Singing groups for people with memory problems or people with dementia and their carers

Welwyn Garden City group - most THURSDAYS 2.00 - 3.30

St Francis of Assisi Church hall, Church Road, AL8 6QJ

Session Leader: Wendy Hyams 07984 588532

For further information, please call Kerry Brabant 0208 9505757

or email: admin@hertsmusicalmemories.org.uk

Find out more on their website: www.hertsmusicalmemories.org.uk/

4. Power of Attorney

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) can be obtained for either Property and Financial Affairs or Health and Welfare or both. Lasting Power of Attorney is for those who still have mental capacity and enables a chosen person to manage the affairs of somebody who becomes unable to do so for themselves.

Court of Protection is for persons who no longer have mental capacity and where there is no LPA in place. Help with Power of Attorney and Court of Protection will be available through the major dementia organisations listed above. The Alzheimer's Society offers telephone help with making a Lasting Power of Attorney and has a free booklet "Planning Ahead" no 1510, dealing with this and legal matters. Tel: 0300 222 1122. There are, however, specialist solicitor firms who may offer free initial assistance.

An LPA can be done quite cheaply online by anyone. The Court of Protection can be very time consuming and expensive. The moral being not to delay in putting LPAs (Finance and Health) in place.

5. Attendance and Carers Allowances

Attendance Allowance is available to help with personal care for people who are physically or mentally disabled and aged 65 or over. It is paid at two different rates, depending on the level of care needed. Other benefits may be increased if Attendance Allowance is being received. Carers may get Carer's Allowance if patients have substantial caring needs.

For enquiries about carers allowance: www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/

or: www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance/overview/

Council Tax Exemption - Persons diagnosed with dementia can receive a discount or be given exemption from paying Council Tax depending on their circumstances. For more information see Welwyn Hatfield website: www.welhat.gov.uk/discountexceptions/

6. Organisations available day and night

Patients and their family/carers who need someone to talk to, especially at night when other organisations are closed, can call Silverline and the Samaritans.

6.1 Silverline

They are a national service which provides help and advice for older people day and night on their free and confidential helpline. This can include helping with finding local services.

Telephone: 0800 470 8090

Website: www.thesilverline.org.uk/

6.2 The Samaritans

They provide a free confidential service day and night and will give support to anyone who is troubled. The Samaritans are NOT just for people feeling suicidal.

Telephone: **116 123** (This is the whole number which can be called from any telephone.)

Website: www.samaritans.org/

6.3 Urgent and emergency care services

The NHS non-emergency number is 111. It's fast, easy and free. Call 111 and speak to an adviser, supported by healthcare professionals.

7. Support Tools - Support tools to enable person-centred care.

This is me – Alzheimer's Society

Life Story – Dementia UK

These booklets provide an easy and practical way of recording who the person is including details on the person's cultural and family background; events, people and places from their lives; preferences, routines and their personality. It enables health and social care professionals to see the person as an individual and deliver person-centred care that is tailored specifically to the person's needs. They can therefore help to reduce distress for the person with dementia and their carer. They can also help to overcome problems with communication, and prevent more serious conditions occurring such as malnutrition and dehydration.

Website:

www.alzheimers.org.uk/info/20033/publications_and_factsheets/680/this_is_me/

or: www.dementiauk.org/ and search for life story

8. Library Services

The Welwyn Garden City Central Library supports the Reading Well scheme which promotes the reading of books which support health and related matters. Books are available giving information and advice about dementia and normal aging, support with living well after diagnosis, practical advice for carers, personal accounts, and suggestions for therapeutic activities. (The scheme is also known as Books on Prescription but has nothing to do with prescriptions issued by doctors)

Contact: Welwyn Garden City Central Library, Campus West

Telephone: 0300 123 4049

Website: www.reading-well.org.uk/

9. Examples of Dementia Products and Services for purchase

[The inclusion of products and services does not imply that they have approval from the Practice]

9.1 Unforgettable

This is a marketplace of products and services for dementia and memory loss that makes it easier for carers to discover products that really help and for product and service providers to reach carers at home. These include GPS trackers, pill reminders, memory phones, music and tv.

Telephone: 020 3322 9070

Website: www.unforgettable.org/

9.2 Activities to Share

This is an online shop selling many types of games and activities that can help dementia patients and suitable for older people to help them reminisce about the past.

Telephone: 01227 200150

Website: www.activityestoshare.co.uk/

9.3 Active Minds

They offer products and games to help people lead active lives.

Telephone: 0203 488 2001

Website: www.active-minds.org/uk/

10. Dementia Holidays

There are some specialist holiday companies that cater for people - with or without their carers - who have dementia and other disabilities. A good source of advice and information on holidays if you might need some help and support is *Tourism for All*. Another dementia-friendly holiday company is *Dementia Adventure*.

Telephone: 01245 237548

Website: www.dementiaadventure.co.uk/

www.tourismforall.org.uk/

Email info@tourismforall.org.uk