

8.4 Dementia

Dementia presents a huge challenge to society. There are currently 800,000 people in the UK with dementia and there are estimated to be 670,000 family and friends acting as primary carers. There will be over a million people in the UK with dementia by 2021. The current financial cost of dementia is £23 billion a year to the NHS, local authorities and families and the cost will grow to £27 billion by 2018. In the next 30 years, the number of people with dementia in the UK will double to 1.4 million and the cost of caring for these people will rise to a staggering £50 billion a year. These are the economic costs, the cost to individuals and their families are much more profound.

Dementia affects 1 in 6, 80 year olds and 1 in 14, over 65 year olds. Women aged 75 or over are more likely to develop dementia than men. People from black and minority ethnic communities are three times more likely to develop a young onset dementia (before the age of 65) in the West Midlands.

The National Dementia Strategy: Living Well with Dementia was a five year strategy to improve outcomes in dementia which will come to an end in February 2014. Commissioners are currently developing a local dementia strategy for Walsall.

In March of 2012, the Prime Minister issued three challenges on dementia to be addressed by March 2015. They were:

- Driving improvements in health and care
- Creating dementia friendly communities that understand how to help
- Better research

The Prime Minister's ambition is to raise the diagnosis rate from the national average of 44% to 66% by March 2015.

Indicators:

Walsall has an estimated prevalence of over 3,106 people with dementia (2013-2014). Of these, 43% have a diagnosis of dementia. Walsall's diagnosis rate has increased from 28% four years ago, where it was the lowest in the West Midlands, but this is no longer the case.

Long waiting times for assessment resulted in a significant number of people not receiving their diagnosis during 2012. If those people had received a diagnosis during this period, the diagnosis rate could have been as much as 47%. These issues are being addressed in a new model Memory Assessment Service, with an additional 11 staff and crucially, will seek to address the biggest criticism of lack of support when first diagnosed.

Six Personal Assistants in Dementia will work with people for several months after diagnosis. They will provide practical help such as applying for benefits to pay for additional help at home, provide information, support and signpost to other forms of support such as Dementia Advisors and Dementia Cafés.

Some of the other ways we are trying to improve the diagnosis rate include:

- GP and practice nurse education
- Emphasising the benefits of diagnosis in Primary Care
- Ensuring the GP dementia lists capture all patients diagnosed with dementia
- The development of a desktop tool to support GPs
- A Dementia Friendly Communities programme to make Walsall a more dementia friendly place to live by working with businesses and organisations who are public facing
- Upstream interventions which help to identify people who are not yet diagnosed
- Encouraging GPs to sign up to a dementia directed enhanced service; and
- Dementia awareness campaigns – working with partners to extend to a wider range of people

The Dementia Prevalence Calculator, created by Dementia Partnerships, enables health and care communities to gain a better understanding of their local estimated prevalence of dementia in the community, and among people living in care homes. It allows General Practices and Commissioners to establish a baseline by which to set and work towards local quantified ambitions for improvement in diagnosis rates, as set out in the NHS Mandate 2012, and inform local joint strategic planning, commissioning and service redesign and improvement.

Improving dementia awareness amongst health care professionals was identified in the previous JSNA as an opportunity and steps have been taken across Walsall to improve the workforces' knowledge of dementia. Four training modules have been developed in partnership between the council, Manor hospital and mental health staff, which are offered free of charge.

Raising the public's awareness of dementia and reducing stigma are now a priority. To support this, documents in English and five South Asian languages have been developed and interpreted and recorded as podcasts. A video is offered in several languages and will be available via the Walsall dementia website which is being refreshed following the change from a PCT to a CCG.

Reducing the prescribing of antipsychotics for dementia continues to be a priority with a further audit planned. Walsall has reduced the prescribing of antipsychotics by 50% so far. Work continues in supporting care homes, hospitals and GPs to reduce this further with the development of tools, guides and the support of pharmacists.

Priorities for action –

- *Reduce the risk of developing dementia by improving healthy lifestyles will lower the prevalence over time. The message of 'healthy body, healthy mind' needs to be reinforced at every opportunity*
- *Ensure all strategic plans recognise the increasing prevalence of dementia and the required financial investment to support this*
- *All health and care providers should demonstrate how they improve the quality of care and dignity for patients with dementia who are under their care*

- *Continue the integration agenda to create more seamless services for people with dementia and their carers*
- *Continue to support carers by further developing the Dementia Advisor and Dementia Café role*
- *Continue to support the Manor hospital in its dementia care improvements*
- *Commissioners to work with mental health service providers to review the current inpatient wards and day hospital and develop an options appraisal to offer alternatives to address the changing need*
- *Continue to expand the Dementia Friendly Communities programme which has seen several services successfully receive the NHS Walsall CCG and Walsall Council dementia kite mark certificate*
- *Commission more extra care and support for living at home services that give people more confidence to remain at home longer, particularly for those people with dementia*
- *Commission a range of individually commissioned bed based services, where appropriate, which best meet the needs of the individual with dementia and particularly where there is challenging behaviour*
- *Commission services which address the gaps in dementia provision in Walsall: crisis services to prevent un-necessary hospital and care home admission, intermediate care, working age dementia services and alcohol related dementia*
- *Improve end of life care in dementia*