



Aberdeenshire
Health & Social Care
Partnership

Making Connections

Aberdeenshire Dementia Strategy

2021-2030 | *Summary*



Why does Aberdeenshire need a dementia strategy?

There are more than 3,000 people living with dementia in Aberdeenshire. In 2018/19, 471 people were newly diagnosed with dementia. Each new diagnosis affects not just the person who receives the diagnosis, but their family and friends.

'Dementia' is an umbrella term for more than 100 different types of diseases that damage brain cells so that they cannot work properly. Each person's experience of dementia will be different. Dementia is not a natural part of ageing and is not just about memory loss, though this may be a symptom of dementia.

The population of Aberdeenshire will grow over the next 20 years. Most of this growth will be in the older age group of age 75 plus.

Since age is the biggest risk factor for dementia, we expect the number of people living with dementia to increase. Along with this, we will also see an increase in the number of people who become carers of people with dementia.

It is important that we do everything we can to support and enable people living with dementia and carers, which is why we have developed this strategy. The strategy is for everyone who is affected by dementia.

To support and enable people, we need a strategy that is:

- ▶ designed with and for people with dementia and carers
- ▶ safe, effective and focused on the person
- ▶ delivered in a way that means everyone is working together to deliver the best services and support
- ▶ committed to promoting rights and reducing inequalities



The strategy will run for ten years, during which time we will monitor progress as we deliver it and regularly report on what it achieves.

How has the strategy been created?

We consulted widely to ensure that services are designed with and for people with dementia and carers. The strategy has been developed in partnership with people with dementia, carers, and people from statutory and third sector organisations.

We heard from more than 470 people through engagement sessions and a survey, which was available online and in paper format.

In March 2019, the Life Changes Trust (a charity that funds work to enable people living with dementia and carers) hosted a three-day collaborative dementia learning event for Grampian. A storytelling session in Aberdeenshire supported people with dementia and carers to talk safely and openly about their experiences of living with dementia.

To inform this strategy, we carried out a further eight storytelling sessions. We learned a number of helpful things directly from people with dementia and carers during the storytelling sessions. For example, that they would prefer their diagnosis and support to be in the community, and to be less medicalised. They also need places to be dementia friendly and enabling so they can get out and about.

All of this helpful information from the storytelling sessions, engagement sessions and the survey shaped our thinking and led us to identify six strategic priority areas:

1. Being well informed
2. Getting a diagnosis of dementia
3. Knowing who to turn to
4. Living well with dementia
5. Developing health and social care support for people living with dementia
6. Caring for carers

What difference should the strategy make for people with dementia?

We want the strategy to make a real difference in the lives of people with dementia.

In the strategy we outline what we will do to support people with dementia.

- 1.** We will make sure that if you have dementia, or suspect you might, you will be given the information and advice you need. We want you to be knowledgeable about dementia and unafraid to talk to someone about it.
- 2.** Where possible, we will arrange for consultations and diagnosis to be provided locally so that there are no unnecessary delays. We want you to receive a timely diagnosis.

3. You will receive post-diagnostic support, in line with the Pillars Models of Alzheimer Scotland.
4. As well as being provided with post-diagnostic support, you will have access to a dementia-trained 'lead worker' who will make sure you have any wider support you need from the Health and Social Care Partnership. We want you to know what support is available to you and how you can access it when you need it.
5. We will make sure that our community spaces and public services are enabling and supportive for people with dementia so that you continue to get out and about.
6. We will also promote the development of dementia friendly communities so that you remain engaged with the people and places that matter to you.
7. We will work with community partners to provide social activities in Aberdeenshire that offer opportunities for all people living with dementia to stay connected and not become isolated or lonely. We want you to live a happy, healthy life.

8. We will make best use of technology where this can help you live independently, have fun and stay socially connected.
9. The support that we provide through Self-directed Support will be innovative, responsive, appropriate to your type and stage of dementia, and based on recognised good practice.
10. When you approach the end of life, we will provide high quality care that respects your wishes and focuses on what matters to you.

What difference should the strategy make for carers of people with dementia?

We also want the strategy to make a real difference to the lives of carers of people with dementia, such as family members and friends.

In the strategy we outline what we will do to support the carers of people with dementia.

- 1.** We will make sure that if someone you know has dementia, or you suspect they might, you will be given the information and advice you need. We want you to be knowledgeable about dementia and unafraid to talk to someone about it.

- 2.** We recognise that a diagnosis of dementia affects you as well as the person with dementia. We will arrange for diagnosis to be provided locally so that there are no unnecessary delays.
- 3.** We will uphold your rights as set out in the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. This means that you are entitled to a Carer Support Plan and, where eligible, access in your own right to Self-directed Support. This includes young carers.
- 4.** We will ensure that you can access practical and emotional support to help you in your caring role.
- 5.** We will provide short break options that mean you can take a break from your caring role.
- 6.** We will also make sure that respite services – both at home or in a residential setting – are available, desirable and appropriate.
- 7.** We will listen to your essential input during the process of dementia diagnosis and through all parts of the care journey.
- 8.** We value your role as a carer and will help you recognise your own needs so they can be met.

How will we know if the strategy is effective or not?

We will track our progress in meeting these commitments and will evaluate how they have made a difference for people living with dementia and carers.

From this strategy, we will develop a Delivery Plan and report regularly on our progress. The first Delivery Plan will be for 2021-22 and has been published along with the ten-year strategy.

There will be opportunities for people with dementia and carers to be involved in monitoring the Delivery Plan. We also welcome feedback if there is something you want us to know.

We can be contacted at:

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