

The Role of Dementia Care Advisors

The National Dementia Strategy for England (Department of Health, 2009) recommended Dementia Care Advisors (DCAs) be embedded into local dementia services to deliver post-diagnostic support (PDS) to people with dementia (PWD) and their carers. However, in practice there are many ways in which DCAs are deployed across the region. They are often employed by different organisations, have different referral criteria and completely different duties and job descriptions.

The Thames Valley Strategic Clinical Network (TVSCN) commissioned a project to examine the ways in which DCAs are deployed in Berkshire. The purpose was to understand how the differences in DCAs scope might impact on the quality of the PDS provided, and to use this learning to inform the development of the DCA roles elsewhere in the Thames Valley. The key learning from Berkshire was as follows:

- * **The criteria for referral to the DCA should be consistent across areas.**
- * **Healthcare professionals should actively refer PWD and carers to the DCA service rather than encouraging self-referral.**
- * **DCAs might be best based within Memory Clinic offices.**
- * **DCAs should actively increase their visibility with potential referrers within their locality.**
- * **DCAs should use the appropriate NHS record keeping system.**
- * **DCAs should receive at least tier two dementia awareness training, peer support and adequate and appropriate supervision from professionals experienced in Dementia.**
- * **All DCA roles should address some core duties and responsibilities with the majority of their time being patient-facing.**
- * **DCAs should offer longer-term support and proactively offer the option of having a routine follow-up.**

TVSCN propose to move this work forward by holding a workshop event to share the learning from Berkshire and to establish a best and consistent model for the Dementia Care Advisor role across the region.

Dementia in BME communities

Staff in Buckinghamshire have been working on a project to raise awareness of dementia in BME communities, commissioning two films for staff and patients.

My Life, My Memories (<http://bit.ly/2ggEJy4>) focuses on the experience of people affected by dementia from different communities in Bucks.

Living Well With Memories (<http://bit.ly/2gvWLCp>) provides clinical advice on the prevention and management dementia and the types of support available.



Got something to share?

If you have an event, a website, a new application or anything you'd like to share with dementia professionals across Thames Valley, let us know! Contact Sian Roberts (sian.roberts2@nhs.net) or Sylvie Thorn (sylviethorn@nhs.net).

Enhanced Dementia Friendly Practices Project: Update and Learning

Eight GP surgeries across the Thames Valley are working towards becoming Exemplar Dementia Friendly Practices within their respective CCGs.

The practices are taking part in a TVSCN sponsored project which is using an enhanced Dementia Friendly Practice model to deliver improvements in their clinical leadership skills in dementia, support their respective CCGs dementia programmes, and disseminate their knowledge and learning across the wider Thames Valley region.



The project is now half way through, and each of the practices have made progress with their actions plans and have improved their Dementia Diagnostic Rate (DDR) towards the 67% target, or maintained this standard if they had already achieved this target at the start of the project. We have also seen individual successes from the programme with one GP lead recently being appointed as the Dementia Clinical Lead for their CCG and another being short-listed as a finalist for the GP Awards under GP Innovation, using the Dementia Friendly Practice model. This is a fantastic achievement.

Some learning has already emerged from the project, that may be useful for other practices to adopt;

1. Request an up to date list from your local memory clinic of all patients diagnosed with dementia within the last year. Ensure the patients are coded and on the Practice Dementia Register.
2. Carry out memory screening at the Flu clinics, particularly those at greater risk of dementia (the elderly, housebound, those with pre-existing Long Term Conditions).
3. Screen patients with a Long Term Condition at their annual review using the initial screening question; "Have you or your friends or family have had any concerns regarding your memory in the last 12 months?". If the patient say yes, then arrange for a full Dementia Screening using 6CIT or GPCOG.
4. Consider training other staff members to conduct memory screening; e.g. Pharmacists reviewing patients in care homes, practice nurses, HCAs etc.
5. Consider having joint clinics for Dementia Annual Reviews with the Dementia Advisors.
6. Involve your PPG to increase dementia awareness in your local population.

Dementia Diagnosis App



Yorkshire and Humber Dementia Clinical Network have produced DiADeM, a dementia diagnosis app for use in care homes. This is a digital version of the paper-based tool, and can be downloaded here (after registering):

<https://diadem.apperta.org/downloads>

Diagnosing Dementia in Younger People tool

The Young Dementia Network has developed a tool to assist in the accurate and timely diagnosis of young onset dementia, by raising awareness of the condition as well as the wide variety of symptoms that people may experience.

Currently, many younger people are misdiagnosed with depression, anxiety, stress, marital issues, menopause or personality disorder before receiving a diagnosis of young onset dementia, and it currently takes twice as long for a young person to receive a diagnosis as an older person.

Early diagnosis is key to helping people with dementia and their carers live well by accessing treatment, support, information and advice as quickly as possible. You can view and download the tool here:

<http://bit.ly/YoungOnset>

The Implementation Guide and Resource Pack for Dementia Care

NHS England has published the Implementation Guide and Resource Pack for Dementia Care, also known as the Evidence-based Treatment Pathway (BTP), for NHS commissioners, providers and people with dementia & their carers. The guide sets out what good quality assessment, diagnosis and care looks like in the context of the dementia care framework. Specifically, this covers the following two mandates:

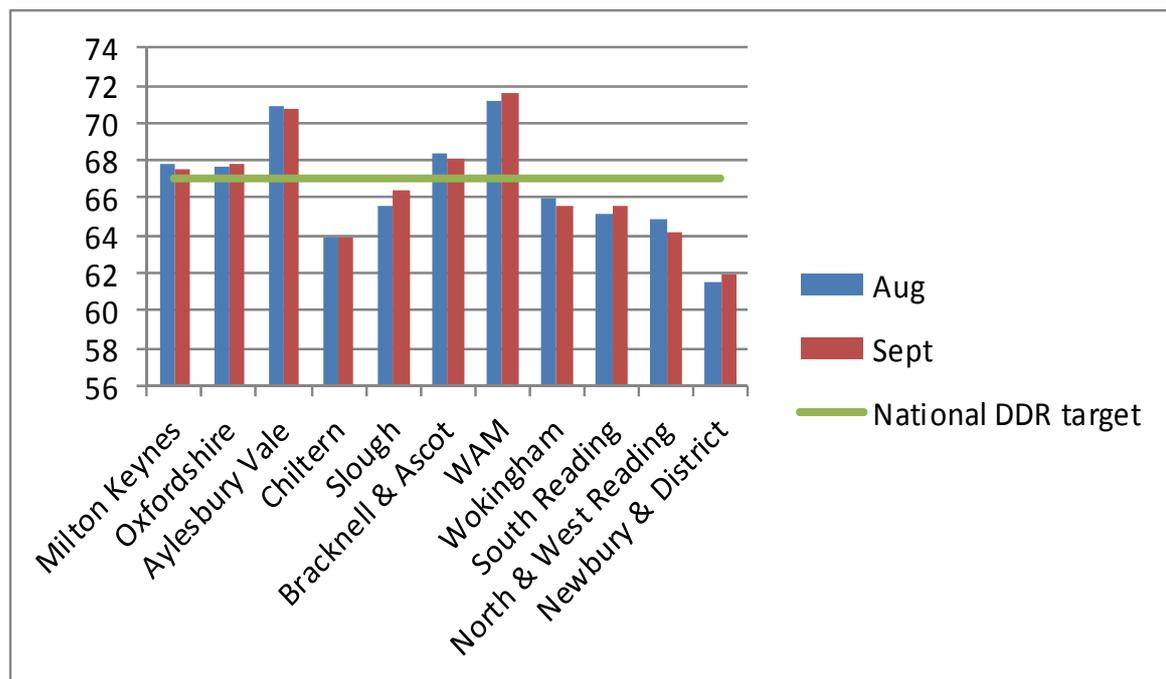
- * Increasing the number of people being diagnosed with dementia, and starting treatment, within six week of referral
- * Improving the quality of post-diagnostic treatment and support for people with dementia and their carers.

The pathway supports the delivery of objectives in the Department of Health's Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia 2020.



Dementia Diagnosis Rates

Thames Valley CCGs have collectively achieved a dementia diagnosis rate of 66.67%



The Dementia Guide for Carers and Care Providers

A new guide for anyone caring for a person with dementia has been developed by HEE TV, in conjunction with healthcare professionals, educators and professionals. The guide creates an understanding of the progressive nature of dementia, the challenges of caring for someone with dementia, and how to live well. You can watch a video about it here: <http://bit.ly/CarerGuide>

The Dementia Guide for Carers and Care Providers is available for **FREE** from iBooks, Amazon Kindle Store and Smashwords, or alternatively as an app through the Apple App Store.