

Flintshire Dementia Strategy Update November 2021

Consultation

The region of North Wales has a Dementia Strategy, published in March 2020. Flintshire County Council and the local Health Board are supporting the actions within the Regional Strategy.

Flintshire County Council, supported by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, also committed to having a local Dementia Strategy, to reflect local needs and priorities. The Flintshire Dementia Strategy aims to improve the lives of people living with dementia, and their carers and families, and to develop well informed and supportive communities.

A consultation process was undertaken between May and August 2021. This consultation engaged with people with lived experience, including carers and families, community groups, social care and health professionals, third sector service partners, and independent care providers.

Around 50 surveys were completed, and more than 100 people attended meetings to discuss the priorities for dementia in Flintshire. More than 700 individual comments and suggestions were received.

The feedback from the consultation has been used to identify the key priorities and to produce a detailed plan of actions.

What people said

- Dementia is affecting more and more people and families.
- Understanding of dementia has improved, but there is an opportunity to increase knowledge in all age groups.
- Many people don't fully appreciate that healthy living can prevent or reduce the risk of developing dementia.
- There is a fear and stigma about dementia and people think that it is very difficult to live well with dementia.
- It is perceived that the assessment and diagnosis process can take a long time for some people.
- Covid-19 restricted access to GP's and clinics, delaying regular health checks and assessments. There is a risk that this has created about a backlog in diagnoses.
- Keeping people connected and active in supportive communities is seen as vital to helping people live well.
- People want access to flexible care and respite services, and community activities. Transport challenges make this more difficult, especially in rural areas.
- There is positive community engagement in Flintshire. Demand is high for more dementia and age friendly groups, activities, employment and volunteering.

Priority

Help people to reduce or delay the risk of developing dementia and to recognise the symptoms of dementia.

Improve the support and information provided to people before, during and after an assessment and diagnosis of dementia.

Provide person centred care and support services to help people with dementia to live well, at home or close to home.

What we are doing

- ☑ Health and Social Services' teams promote the [six steps](#) and [5 ways to wellbeing](#).
- ☑ [Flintshire County Council Dementia Website](#) provides information about dementia and the support available.

- ☑ Developing health and social care workforces that strive to make every contact count, identifying symptoms and making timely referrals.
- ☑ Working closely with third sector partners to increase the understanding of dementia and support available.

- ☑ Establishing home and community support, including flexible respite services.
- ☑ Implementing the Progress for Providers support model in residential and home care.

What we will do

- ☐ Review and update information about healthy living to reduce the risks of developing dementia.
- ☐ Work with people with lived experience to develop understanding of symptoms and behaviours.
- ☐ Ensure that information is accessible to all and not just limited to online media.

- ☐ Implement a new Therapies Service in Flintshire to support people early in the assessment stage.
- ☐ Support the regional implementation of new memory assessment service practices.
- ☐ Adopt regional research recommendations to improve awareness of links between learning disabilities and dementia.

- ☐ Develop dementia champions to provide information and signposting across the community, and in health care settings.
- ☐ Support regional actions to implement new All Wales Standards for dementia.
- ☐ Initiate local actions in support of regional psychology and behavioural initiatives.

Priority

Provide support to carers and families, including advice, respite and to help build strong support networks with other people with lived experience.

Develop dementia friendly and supportive communities for people living with dementia and their carers and families.

Enable people with lived experience of dementia to have a leading voice in the development of supportive services and communities.

What we are doing

- Working closely with North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) to assess and respond to the support needed by carers and families.
- Reviewing and adapting respite services to meet the changing needs of people living with dementia, their carers and families.

- Continuing to expand the 'Dementia Friends' programme across the Council workforce, local businesses and organisations.
- Working towards being a Dementia Friendly Council to improve access to care, respite and community activities.
- Support communities to safely restart community meetings and activities following the period of Covid-19 restrictions.

- Ensuring that people with lived experience can contribute to the development of dementia actions and initiatives in Flintshire.
- Promoting the participation of people with lived experience in regional and national research and development.

What we will do

- Review Workforce Development and Training programmes to ensure Council and other service providers have the skills and tools to do the job.
- Respond to regional opportunities for joint working and sharing best practice, to improve and deliver value for money services.
- Identify ways to improve the experience of hospital admission for people living with dementia and their carers and families.

- Enable people, particularly in rural areas, to engage in community activities to build strong support networks.
- Build a culture of positive storytelling and sharing lived experiences that help others to live well.
- Evaluate and adopt best practices across the region, such as 'Safe Places' in Wrexham.

- Support the development of local and regional dementia training, with input from people with lived experience.
- Enable people with lived experience to help improve the accessibility of dementia support information and services.

Priority	What we are doing	What we will do
Putting the Strategy into action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Developing a detailed action plan based on the consultation feedback and aligned to the Regional Dementia Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a new Flintshire Dementia Strategy Implementation Group to oversee the implementation of the action plan and priorities. <input type="checkbox"/> People with lived experiences, including those diagnosed with dementia, carers and family members will be invited to play a key role in this group.

If you would like more information, or want to be involved in achieving the actions described in this update, please contact:

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Notes:

The term **dementia** describes symptoms that may include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem solving or language. There are many different types of dementia. The most common is Alzheimer’s disease but there are other causes such as vascular dementia or dementia with Lewy bodies.

Dementia is a major public health issue in Wales. Approximately 42,000 people in Wales have dementia. It is most common among older people - dementia affects one in twenty over the age of 65 and one in five over the age of 80. Where someone is under the age of 65 at the point of diagnosis, this is commonly referred to as ‘young onset’ dementia. As life expectancy increases, there will be older people and so more people with dementia. (Source: Health Challenge Wales “Dementia-How to reduce the risk”).

The cases of dementia in the North Wales Region, covered by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), are predicted to rise by 44% by the year 2040.