

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



SCRUTINY PANEL 3 – DEMENTIA FRIENDLY TOWN

CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS

The Scrutiny Panel is currently undertaking a review: Dementia Friendly Town that is investigating the town of Northampton can become a Dementia Friendly Town. The projected outcome is to make recommendations for Northampton becoming a Dementia Friendly Town

CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. Are you aware of what Dementia is, and its symptoms, please provide details?

Dementia is when part of the brain is damaged, it can be through disease (such as Alzheimer's) or strokes, brain damage or other factors. The most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer's disease. Common symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia include:

- ***memory loss – especially problems with memory for recent events, such as forgetting messages, remembering routes or names, and asking questions repetitively***
- ***increasing difficulties with tasks and activities that require organisation and planning***
- ***becoming confused in unfamiliar environments and problems with perception***
- ***difficulty finding the right words***
- ***difficulty with numbers and/or handling money in shops***
- ***changes in personality and mood***
- ***depression***

2. Are you aware of the effect on the health, wellbeing and the safety of people with dementia and their carers/families, if so, please provide details?

ii Effects of dementia	Impact on individual
Cognitive effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in recognising people and places • Remembering pin & phone numbers • Remembering where they live and difficulty in finding their way home • Poor short term memory • Easily confused and muddled • Poor concentration, attention and easily distracted • Unable to think clearly or problem solve • Difficulty in learning new things
Functional effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in completing the everyday tasks and activities of independent living • Difficulty in handling and managing money • Difficulty in keeping safe with appliances e.g. gas and electric cooking, ironing, boiling kettles etc. • Difficulty in knowing what to do next especially if out of routine • Problems following social cues • Word finding difficulty or loss of verbal skills • Slower reactions
Behavioural effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of social skills • Over active response to changes or stimuli in the environment • Repetitive behaviour patterns • Physical or verbal aggression • Inappropriate responses or behaviours
Psychological effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability • Mood swings • Frustration and anger with self and others • Changes in personality • Anxiety • Loss of motivation • Depression

3. Please can you supply details of the current and potential partnership working regarding supporting people with dementia?

Partnerships and Communities Team have supported by becoming 'dementia friends', we have all received the training. Nisha Mejer, Partnerships and Communities Support Officer is trained as a Dementia Champion and has provided training for the women's forum also.

As part of the Northamptonshire and Northampton DAA, NBC work with health, education, care and voluntary organisations to gain a better understanding of the issues surrounding people living with dementia and their carer's.

There is potential to work with local business and organisations to promote awareness and to work with others to ensure NBC is Dementia Frinedly.

4. Are you aware of any specific groups that are not accessing services, please provide details.

In 2013 Alzheimer's report identified that there may be some cultural barriers for BME groups at accessing Dementia Support. One of which was lack of awareness and the support available.

5. In your opinion please provide information of the benefits of Northampton becoming a Dementia Friendly Town.

- ***Business owners, bank owners, and faith communities might interact more positively with dementia residents, rather than react with avoidance or embarrassment.***
- ***Community leaders could help connect community members with dementia resources.***
- ***Community safety would increase through better protection of elders, and those with cognitive impairment, from harm and abuse.***
- ***More family members would seek diagnosis earlier, resulting in better treatment/care management, earlier connection to support resources, and improved decision making.***
- ***Dementia friendly communities provide more opportunities for people with dementia to experience feelings of normalcy and personal value. People with dementia would be able to contribute to the community and have intergenerational interaction – which is both health-enhancing and***

energizing. Dementia friendly communities would result in better quality of life for both the family caregiver and their loved one. (Alzheimer's and Dementia blog, 14th October 2015).

6. Do you have any other information you are able to provide in relation to a Dementia Friendly Town?

There are currently 16 Dementia Friendly Communities in the East Midlands and many more around the Country.

ⁱ <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/dementia-guide/Pages/symptoms-of-dementia.aspx>

ⁱⁱ <http://ilearn.careerforce.org.nz/mod/book/tool/print/index.php?id=256>