



## Information for carers supporting people living with dementia

Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (MCHFT) is committed to making reasonable adjustments for people with dementia coming into hospital.

This leaflet has been produced to help answer any questions or concerns you may have whilst your relative/friend is in hospital or is attending an outpatient appointment.

### This is Me

The Trust is working closely with the Alzheimer's Society to enable important information to be passed on to staff. 'This is Me' is a booklet that provides a pen portrait of the person living with dementia and can be acquired through your local Alzheimer's Society branch, downloaded from their website

[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) or via **Anna Chadwick** (Dementia Lead Nurse).

If you already have a completed 'This is Me', please make sure you bring it with you to share with staff when you arrive at the hospital.



Mid Cheshire Hospitals **MCHFT**

**Information about ME to help YOU:**

**My Support plan**

Your name is \_\_\_\_\_

You can call me \_\_\_\_\_

I agree that the information in this support plan may be shared with other relevant health and social care workers.

**Me as a person**

How I am generally as a person, my disposition: \_\_\_\_\_

How I respond to new situations and difficulties: \_\_\_\_\_

What upsets me: \_\_\_\_\_

How you can support me to be positive and help me when I am distressed or withdrawn: \_\_\_\_\_

What is important for you to know about my past and how this may affect me today? \_\_\_\_\_

I used to work at \_\_\_\_\_

### Information About Me To Help You

The Trust uses this personal support plan to enable us to provide sensitive, person centred care to the person living with dementia during their stay in hospital. You will be offered an appointment to complete this with staff early in the person's admission.

### Dementia Lead Nurse

MCHFT employs a Dementia Lead Nurse, Anna Chadwick. Please feel free to contact her to discuss any issues you may have and she will do her best to sort out any worries or concerns.

**Direct Line: 01270 273796**

**Email: [anna.chadwick2@mcht.nhs.uk](mailto:anna.chadwick2@mcht.nhs.uk)**

### Easy Read Leaflets

The Trust has a number of easy read leaflets available. Please contact the relevant Ward or Department Manager who will be able to tell you what is available.





### During the hospital stay:

- We aim to work in collaboration with you, ensuring that you are listened to, consulted and supported. Including people and their carers in care and treatment planning will enable a fuller picture of the person's needs and how the dementia affects their behaviour and general well-being.
- Ward staff will welcome you and show around the ward, making sure you know where the toilets are, where to get a drink and the general ward routine. You should also be directed to other facilities i.e. Hospital shop, café etc.
- Ward staff will keep you updated about care and treatment plans (assuming that the person is happy for their information to be shared) and will work in collaboration with you to ensure that sensitive and individualised care is provided.
- The Trust is happy for carers to remain in hospital with the person. We have several RVS flats available for you to access, should you wish to stay overnight. Please ask the Ward Manager about their availability.



### Visiting times

Each ward has its own designated visiting times. However, as a carer of a person living with dementia you should be able to visit without restriction wherever practicable and at the discretion of the nurse in charge of the ward, You will be supplied with an open visiting pass to enable this.



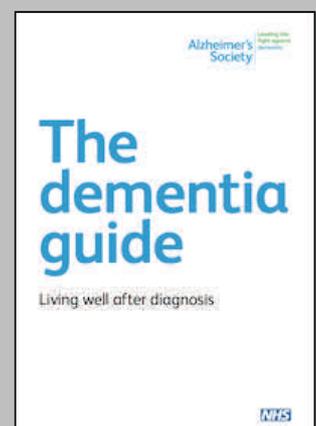


### Ways you can help:

- Attend the appointment offered by the ward and provide information and history about the person you support establishing a positive working relationship from the offset. A document called 'Information About Me to Help You' will be completed and this information will form the basis of a personal support plan whilst in hospital.
- Use your 'Open Visiting Pass' to visit in hospital and provide support at any time. This will be given to you by the ward. Your in-depth knowledge of the person in hospital is extremely valuable to the whole team and we value and appreciate your input.
- Ensure dentures, glasses and hearing aids are available and in good working order.
- Help staff by informing them of the best way to communicate with the person in hospital.
- Personalise the immediate environment. Familiar items such as photo albums, a blanket from home, or activity the person can enjoy will alleviate anxiety commonly experienced in the unfamiliar hospital environment. **Please consult staff first about items you may wish to bring.**
- Notify staff if you notice a change in usual behaviour. For example, tell staff if the person is not as alert as usual, or is displaying behaviour that is not typical of the way they normally behave.



- Offer feedback to staff as needed in a timely way. We are always willing to try a different approach if it will be of benefit.
- Complete the Carers Survey that ward staff will give you. We collect feedback using this questionnaire. The survey is anonymous, so please be honest, as we need to fully understand any shortfalls alongside any strengths in order to improve the service we provide. Please hand this in to a member of nursing staff once completed.
- Use the contact information provided by the ward to access further information and support, including accessing a carer's assessment if required.
- Complete 'This is me' from the Alzheimer's Society alongside the person living with dementia. This is a useful pen portrait of the person living with dementia. You should keep this at home but should ensure it travels with the person to appointments, admission to hospital, respite placements, day care etc. It will help support them in an unfamiliar place.
- Ask ward staff for a copy of 'The Dementia Guide'. This is written by the Alzheimer's Society and provides a wealth of useful information, including support organisations, contacts and practical advice.





## Getting Ready to Leave Hospital

As the person's health improves, discussions will commence about how best to support their ongoing care needs from hospital. If it is felt that the individual will need some form of support on discharge, a referral will be made to the Integrated Discharge Team. A social worker will be allocated to the person and they will meet with them and their carers to make an assessment of the care/support required.



Dementia is a condition which can affect a person's insight, capacity and ability to make decisions. This can result in differing views between people with dementia and those caring for them. While the person with dementia has capacity they must be supported to make their own decisions and articulate their views. However, if they lack capacity, best interest principles will be applied. Balancing the needs and views of carers and those of the person with dementia is essential to successful discharge planning.

## Being a carer

When your relative/friend leaves hospital you can be faced with important decisions and pressures. You may be taking on a caring role for the first time and are unsure as to what to expect. You may already have been a carer, but your caring role may be changing as the person comes out of hospital. You may be unsure whether you can provide all the help they need. You may also be anxious to get the person home as soon as possible or feel pressure from friends, family or the person themselves.

- As a carer you are entitled to a carer's needs assessment. This is your opportunity to discuss the way caring affects you and the impact it has on all aspects of your life, to discuss the help and support available to you and to plan for the future and care emergencies. These assessments are completed by your local council. Cheshire Carers Centre can help you prepare for the assessment. The ward will give you the relevant contact numbers.
- Some GP surgeries record the names of carers in order to ensure you receive appropriate information about the help and support that is available. To register for this scheme pick up a 'Does your GP surgery know you're a carer?' leaflet from your GP and hand it back to your GP reception.



**Please remember: The dementia nurse is available for support, advice and information during your person's journey through the hospital.**