

The Future Care Group - Dementia Strategy

2023 – 2026

Introduction

In 2009 the UK Government set out their 5-year strategy – ‘Living Well with Dementia’, the aim of this strategy was to improve awareness and provide better access to specialist services for those people living with Dementia.

See link: www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-well-with-dementia-a-national-dementia-strategy.

This UK Government strategy has three key steps:

- Ensure better knowledge about dementia and to remove stigma
- Ensure early diagnosis, support, and treatment for people with dementia and their families and carers
- Develop services to meet changing needs

At the Future Care Group our Dementia Strategy is based on these three key steps and the seventeen key objectives embedded in the UK Strategy. We have included the principles that we feel will support and provide our residents and their loved ones with a positive and meaningful experience

According to Dementia UK there are approximately 850,000 people currently living with dementia in the UK, this number is expected to increase to 1.6 million within the next 20 years. Approximately one third of people (one in three people) living in care homes live with dementia, therefore, dementia is a rising challenge for Health and Social Care Providers.

Adult Social Care is the only healthcare setting that tries to understand how to support a person living with dementia. We can really get to know the resident and their loved ones and develop a person-centred approach to their care and support.

Dementia is a condition for which there is no cure, it is caused by a disease of the brain that over time impairs a person’s ability to live independently. Symptoms include, but is not limited to:

- Mild to severe memory loss
- Fluctuations in mood
- A change in personality
- Confusion and agitation sometimes with expressed behaviour
- Physical changes such as severe weight loss and poor mobility placing the resident at risk of injury from falling

The impact of this on family and friends is significant so it is vitally important that this group of people receive appropriate support, guidance, and advice from the team.

Our Commitment

Future Care Group is committed to delivering high quality services for our residents and our Dementia Strategy has been developed in accordance with our Mission, Vision, and Values. We have developed our Dementia Strategy with the support of our Dementia Champions and members of the Senior Management Team.

Our aim is to provide our residents living with dementia with care and support that is compassionate, effective, safe, and person-centred. This care and support will be provided by staff that are competent and appropriately trained and who understand the importance of working in partnership with the resident and their loved ones.

We want every resident living with dementia to receive care and support that is as unique as they are. To do this, we believe the main key points are to really understand what is important to the individual, how they have lived their life, what their likes and dislikes are and to draw all this information together to develop plans of care that are specific to the individual resident.

Our Vision

Inspiring and enabling people to live a meaningful life, as part of a great life. Committed to changing the way care is being provided and perceived by embracing innovation and new concepts of care.

Our Mission

Making a difference in the life of those we engage with by inspiring moments of joy, happiness, and a sense of belonging within our unique communities based on the needs and choices of each individual.

Our Slogan

Your Future Matters

Our Strategy

Our Dementia Strategy consists of **five pillars** within which sits several key principles.

Our five pillars are:

- Our People (Colleagues)
- Our Residents
- Our Friends, Relatives and Stakeholders
- Our Environments
- Lifestyle and Wellbeing

We have also introduced the concept of L.I.F.E (LIFE) – our theme that links to our vision and values and threads through all our strategies and approach.

LIFE is an acronym for:

L – Listen

I – Interact

F – Freedom

E – Engagement

We believe that the simplicity of LIFE will speak to our colleagues at all levels and will help them understand concept of person-centred care and will support them in delivering care and support that is meaningful and enhances the lives of their residents and loved ones.

Care will be delivered in safe environments that promote independence and enhance the resident's wellbeing. This links to our Lifestyle and Wellbeing strategy and will also link to our End-of-Life Strategy to ensure residents entering the last stages of life achieve a 'good' death.

Principles included in each pillar are listed below:

Our People (Colleagues)

Recruitment - Our interviews will include dementia specific questions; we believe it is key to employ the right people who have an understanding and interest in caring for people living with dementia. We will potentially assess the Emotional Intelligence of potential staff.

Dementia Champions - Each home will have at least one Dementia Champion who will undergo foundation training with the *University of Worcester*. They will then support the strategy in their home by training and supporting colleagues in how to deliver person-centred compassionate care. They will be the 'go to' person in the home that staff can go to if they need any further guidance or support. The Dementia Champions will meet regularly with the Dementia Lead to make sure our approach is up to date and in line with current best practice and guidance.

Inductions - Inductions for our colleagues will include a session with the dementia champion, as we have people living with dementia in all our homes, all new colleagues across all departments will undergo this training.

Training - We will provide a blended approach to learning. This will include workshops, one on one support from the Dementia Champions and members of the Quality and Compliance Team, mandatory training sessions are available on our e-learning platform.

Training toolkit - Each home will have access to a training toolkit which will give colleagues an opportunity to engage in experiential learning to 'walk in the shoes' of a person living with dementia. Where appropriate we will also provide bespoke training such as the Dementia Tour Bus. The Champions will support our teams to put their training into action to deliver great outcomes for the residents in our care. We will create an information hub in the staff area's that will provide staff with further information and guidance, we will also create this strategy on one page for easy reading.

Quarterly meetings - Champions will meet with the Group Dementia Lead on a quarterly basis to discuss outcomes from Dementia Audits, to explore best practice in dementia care and to discuss and resolve any barriers the champions have experienced and to network with each other. We will provide up to date evidence-based information which will be accessed from a valid source such as the Department of Health Dementia website.

Audit - The Group's Dementia Lead will complete a Dementia Audit of each home as a baseline and share the outcome with the Home Manager and Dementia Champion and then support the home to achieve the actions identified from the audits

Industry standards - The Group Dementia Lead will attend national conferences, and forums and bring any learning or new ways of working back to the dementia champions' network to plan how to implement any changes to our current approach.

Catering - Our chefs and catering teams will be provided with the training and support required to provide our residents with a nutritionally balanced diet with snacks being made available 24/7. Our catering and lifestyle teams will work together to improve the mealtime experience with meals being presented in a professional manner. We have created a Chef's forum where ideas and best practice can be shared amongst the group. The Group's Dementia Lead and Catering Lead will collaborate with the Chef's to improve the appearance of textured modified food and snacks to enhance the diet of our residents who have swallowing difficulties.

LIFE - We will support our colleagues understanding of the importance of LIFE and how this translates into their day-to-day work. Dementia champions will provide advice, practical and coaching support to our teams in house. Colleagues will also be able to easily access support from the Groups Dementia Lead and / or Dementia Champions.

Care awards - We will celebrate and display our internal talent by making submissions to local and national dementia care awards.

LGBTQ+ - Group Dementia Lead will provide advice on the needs of residents from diverse cultural backgrounds, and those with specialist needs such as learning disabilities and the LGBTQ+ communities.

Residents living with a Learning Disability – Over the coming years the number of people in our care homes who live with a learning disability is expected to rise. Improved healthcare has led to an increase in longevity for this group of people, who have mainly been supported in the community by increasingly aged parents. It is well known that people with a learning disability are pre-disposed to developing dementia in later life, therefore it is crucial that our teams understand the specific needs that might arise for someone who has an existing cognitive impairment who then goes on to develop dementia. We will work to support this group of residents through our ongoing training, with the support of the learning disability team and by ensuring they are provided with the right care, right culture, and right support.

We also understand that someone living with a pre-existing mental health condition who develops dementia may need careful assessment and support from specialist mental health professionals as it is important to understand how these two conditions may affect each other.

Our Residents

Care plans - Care plans will focus on the positives e.g., what the resident can achieve on their own or with support, plans will also identify 'the little things' that are so important to each of us. We will involve our residents and enable them to make choices and take risks within a safe environment, helping them to retain their independence for as long as possible.

Life History/knowning me - Each resident will complete a 'Life History/knowning me' for us to understand how they have lived their lives, what would they like to achieve whilst in our care and which people make up the resident's support system.

This is my Life - Our Lifestyle Teams will complete life story work to understand the person and to find out who and what is important to them. We will engage our team in 'This is my Life' moments and encourage them to develop their own 'memory box' so they understand the importance of filling the residents' boxes with meaningful objects. We will run initiatives to improve our resident's wellbeing by establishing one thing that the resident would still like to achieve, our colleagues will then endeavour to make this happen so our residents can have a wonderful experience whilst living in our homes.

Bedrooms - Each resident will have a 'personalised' bedroom where they can be surrounded by items that are familiar and important to them. We will work in collaboration with our residents and their families to decorate bedrooms with items that are meaningful to the resident.

Non-verbal cues - Those residents who have episodes of expressed behaviour will be supported in a positive way, we will try and identify triggers or non-verbal cues to reduce the episodes of expressed behaviour.

External support systems - We will make sure that residents who have received a recent diagnosis of dementia are signposted to the correct support systems external to the home and we will help them to navigate through these systems.

End of Life - We will make sure that the correct support is provided to our residents at every stage of their journey through dementia ending with a dignified end of life experience that dovetails into our End-of-Life Strategy.

[Our Friends, Relatives and Stakeholders](#)

We will share our Dementia Strategy with the relatives, our local clinical commissioning group and hospital liaison services.

Reduce the number of antipsychotic medications - We will work in collaboration with GPs, specialist dementia and mental health services, dentistry pharmacy and local community services to offer a wide scope of advice, intervention, care, and support. We will work with these services to reduce the number of antipsychotic medications used as these can impact on the quality of our resident's life, through regular clinical audits and internal governance.

Support to relatives - Our dementia champions will support the relatives of new admissions who may be struggling with their loved ones increasing needs. We will work to forge strong relationships with our families, listening and acting on feedback and involving them, where appropriate in the development and ongoing review of the resident's care plans. We recognise that families and loved ones play a fundamental role in the ongoing care and support of our residents so they will be included in all decisions made about the resident's life at the home.

Dementia support group - We will encourage our friends and relatives to develop a dementia support group in each home and a buddying service to support the loved ones of newly admitted residents and for the families of newly diagnosed residents. We will hold friends and relatives' forums inviting external professionals from Alzheimer's society, Dementia UK, and Admiral Nurses to come and speak at the forums.

Additional reading - Where appropriate we will ensure our families and /or representatives are well informed, by providing a variety of platforms to access information about dementia. We will create a handbook that will provide information about dementia and the support available. We will ensure this is available in a variety of languages and is accessible to all.

Technology - We will use technology to enhance communication between the resident and their loved ones. MYO will be available to all residents and their families; this is a unique platform where families and friends can be involved in the day to day lives of our residents. MYO is a safe communication tool where residents can share what they have been doing during the day, post messages and pictures and can also video call their loved ones. As it is a two-way communication tool relatives and friends can also send direct messages back to the resident, this means families who may be some distance away can be integrally involved in their loved one's care and support and exchange information with the care team.

Catering - Our catering teams will meet with our residents and their loved ones regularly to find out the specific likes and dislikes of each resident and what meals were personal favourites; these can then be added onto the menu.

Our Environments

Professional advisors - We will work with a design company to create environments that are designed to engage people with dementia making sure our residents are safe, comfortable and have space for privacy or opportunities to spend time with others. We will ensure that our environments enable our residents to take risks safely, supporting their independence for as long as possible.

Outside spaces - Residents will be able to access safe outside spaces freely. We will provide our residents with appropriate furniture and fittings in line with our colour palette that has been specifically designed for people who live with dementia.

Destination points - Our environments will provide meaningful destination points such as a sensory space for Namaste sessions and each home will develop their own 'vintage cafe.' These areas will naturally blend into the environment so transitions, through walking loops will not be hampered by marked visual changes of spaces. Our residents will also be supported with wayfinding to support them in moving from one destination to another. The walking loops will be intuitively weaved into the flooring so encourage our residents to have a walk throughout their homes and exercise spontaneously.

Wall colouring and décor - We have worked with a professional designer to ensure that the corporate colours and décor of the homes in keeping with intuitive design for people living with dementia. Palettes now in use, help to create a calm environment as well bring the outside in. The décor and furniture have been specifically chosen for these elements. Our pictures have been individualised and curated to support the generational reminisce whilst providing sign posting, conversation starters for our resident,

Music - Our Dining Areas will be welcoming with soft music playing in the background to enhance our resident's mealtime experience. In addition, we have provided all teams with generational appropriate music through our association with NAPA.

Our lounges – The lounges will be comfortable areas for residents to relax and watch TV / Movies / Sport or to engage in activities provided by our Lifestyle Teams. The lounges will have interactive and tactile material that will support the use of touch to engage and give comfort to our residents.

Specialist lighting systems - The circadian rhythm for people living with dementia can become disrupted which can result in sleep disorders and can cause episodes of expressed behaviour during the night. Where possible we will install specialist lighting systems in our dementia environments that can be beneficial in supporting these sleep disturbances. Light therapy can help to regulate circadian rhythms and enhance the wellbeing of people living with dementia.

Lifestyle and Wellbeing

Social and Activities

Meaningful activities - We will enable our residents living with dementia to be stimulated and involved in meaningful activities and events. Activities will be available 7 days per week

and throughout the day. Activities will be specific to where the resident is on their dementia journey.

NAPA - We will collaborate with external providers such as Burns Gym for exercise routines and will use the NAPA resources to provide a variety of activities.

Individual social and activity plan - Each resident will have a social and activity plan which will clearly identify individual likes and dislikes, whether they have any hobbies, and what their social circle is. We will look to link likeminded residents who share the same interests to promote engagement and friendships.

Spiritual needs - The social and activity plans of each resident will have a religion and spiritual plan in place to support spiritual needs. Our Lifestyle Teams will collaborate with local religious leaders to provide a range of religious services, either in person or to join services remotely.

Interactive activities will be available that maximise the residents' skills, enable meaningful occupation and well-being, such as painting, baking, gardening, jewellery making and so on. Residents will be supported to have purpose to their day, we want our residents to experience 'moments of joy' each day.

Interactive technologies - We will implement technology to support residents' wellbeing such as robotic cats, interactive tables, doll therapy and a technological solution to assessing pain levels for our residents who may not be able to communicate this verbally.

Music - Each resident along with their family will be encouraged to put together their 'play list' so their favourite music can be played.

Namaste

'Namaste' is an Indian greeting which means 'to honour the spirit within,' the purpose of Namaste Care is to provide comfort and pleasure to people with advanced dementia and those nearing the end of their life. Namaste Care offers the resident social and emotional support and helps them to feel connected and loved. Sessions will be conducted in a group setting or on a one-to-one basis and each home will have a dedicated Namaste space. Family and friends will be invited to take part as they may also benefit from attending a session.

The sessions stimulate the senses and enhance feelings of wellbeing by providing activities and interactions in a calm, unhurried and loving way. Sessions will include hand and feet massage, playing favourite or calming music, reading poetry, head massage, encouraging gentle movement, giving out favourite snacks and drinks and bringing the outside in, for example leaves in the autumn, pinecones at Christmas.

Some positive outcomes of Namaste include non-verbal residents beginning to speak, signs of anxiety disappearing, residents laughing at bubbles being blown around them and residents at the end of life who appeared agitated settling down. Family members have also been present during Namaste sessions and have seen a positive change in their loved one.

Delivery Plan

During the development of this strategy, it has brought to light that many actions are already in place, so we have some foundations in place to build upon. To meet this strategy an action plan will be developed identifying what needs to be done, by whom and within an identified timeframe.

The Group Dementia Lead and the Dementia Champions will lead the actions and regular updates will be published to evidence progress made.

