

Dementia Champions second graduation ceremony

Northern Ireland's second cohort of Dementia Champions recently celebrated their graduation at a ceremony held in their honour in Antrim.

Health and social care staff from across Northern Ireland, who work in Health and Social Care Trusts and in non-statutory health organisations, were successful in completing this innovative training programme in professional dementia care.

Congratulating the successful graduates, Lorna Conn, Dementia Together NI Project Manager, Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), said: "I am delighted to launch our second Dementia Champions award ceremony which represents

the culmination of the hard work and dedication of our graduates, their managers and our training providers Connected Health and the North West Regional College (NWRC). This programme was specifically designed to support the development of Dementia Champions as agents of change in improving the experience, care and outcomes for people with a dementia. It represents a landmark on our journey towards a better quality of life and wellbeing for people receiving dementia services. I have no doubt that the commitment demonstrated by today's graduates reflects their ongoing commitment to delivering this shared vision into the future."

The Dementia Champions Training Programme was developed and provided in partnership by the HSCB, the Public Health Agency (PHA), Connected Health, NWRC, the Department of Health and Atlantic Philanthropies.

Speaking at the event, Ryan Williams, Connected Health Chief Officer, said: "We are very impressed by the calibre of all of today's participants. The graduates work in Mental Health, Learning Disability and Older People's Services across a range of disciplines from nursing and occupational



Graduates from Four Seasons Healthcare (Southern area) pictured at the recent Dementia Champions Ceremony are Louise Reilly, Deputy Manager and Alexandra Bell, Senior Care Assistant at Seapatricks Care Home in Banbridge

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therapy to hospitals and community care settings. Their dedication and enthusiasm throughout the Dementia Champions programme is already making real changes in peoples' lives through setting and raising the standards of dementia treatment and care." The programme enables students to gain knowledge and skills on all aspects of dementia care including receiving a dementia diagnosis, research and evidence-based practice, communication and designing enabling environments. The course is delivered via a blended learning approach of five study days, online resources and the submission of work-based assignments.

Geraldine Lavery, Head of Health at NWRC, said: "The Dementia Champions programme exemplifies how much can be achieved in terms of health and social care workforce upskilling through partnership working and maximising the use of technology enhanced learning. NWRC are proud to have worked collaboratively with Connected Health and Dementia Together NI to deliver a challenging, innovative and enriching programme of training which already is having an impact on dementia care practice."

The first cohort of Dementia Champions in Northern Ireland graduated on 1 February 2017; one further cohort will complete the training programme during 2017. This will bring the number of Dementia Champions in Northern Ireland to over 250.

Volunteers and staff from Dementia NI, staff from across the voluntary, statutory and independent sectors, and, academics and regulators were thanked for their ongoing contribution to the development of the Dementia Champions training programme.

Belfast HSCT graduates



Northern HSCT graduates



South Eastern HSCT graduates



Southern HSCT graduates



Western HSCT graduates



Top ten tips for carers

Carers' Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. Carers' Week took place from 12–18 June 2017. Dementia Together NI would like to extend thanks to Fiona Kerr from 3fivetwo Training Academy, Ciara Jemphrey from Alzheimer's Society, Bronagh Goan and Megan Mason from PHA and Sally Kelly from HSCB who worked alongside Teresa McGarvey from Dementia Together NI to devise the following tips for carers.

1. Don't forget about number one ...

When caring for someone don't forget about your own needs, make sure to take some time out, have a short break, meet with friends and treat yourself. How can you look after others if you don't look after yourself?

2. It is good to talk ...

You are not alone and it is good to be frank and honest with people you trust and can help you. Link in with your local dementia navigator and other healthcare staff in your Trust to ensure your loved one has regular reviews of their care package. Their needs will change and it is important to get the right one for them, as well as this there are great volunteers in communities right across Northern Ireland that can offer support.

3. Every day is a school day ...

We can always learn and there are many support groups and training sessions available where you can pick up extra tips on how to support a person with dementia. You'll also meet people who like yourself have a caring role and have the opportunity to broaden your circle of friends.

4. Remember you are only human ...

Don't forget that you are doing your best and there are things that you won't be able to change. Acknowledge your importance to the person with dementia and the positive difference you are making to their life.

5. Interests and hobbies are key ...

Not only for you, but for the person with dementia. Shared activities are a great way for the both of you to spend time together and day trips involving an activity offer a great opportunity for you to reminisce of happy memories in the future.

6. Take a helping hand ...

If you can, share the care with friends and family by arranging a rota and don't be afraid to ask for help.

7. Be patient ...

People with dementia can find it difficult to communicate how they feel. It is our responsibility to change how we communicate in order to effectively support the person. We must STOP, LOOK and LISTEN and search for the meaning behind every communication or behaviour, especially if the person is anxious or distressed. For more advice on communicating effectively see www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/communicating-effectively-person-living-dementia

8. Technology in this day and age ...

Technology, for example, YouTube, can be used to look up old music, TV shows, hymns, photographs and historical events which you can reminisce over together. Also tele-monitoring can support a person with dementia to live independently for as long as possible with the reassurance of knowing that someone can be contacted in an emergency.

9. Independence everyday ...

Support the person with dementia to do things themselves. Talk to them about how you can help so that they don't feel you are taking their independence away rather than being a support to them.

10. Plan ahead ...

It is important for everyone and not only the person with a dementia to consider financial aspects such as Power of Attorney, wills and change of care arrangements which may be necessary. The needs and wishes of the person you are caring for should be respected. You never know when you may need these.

Best Practice E-Manual – creative reminiscence and life story work

A Best Practice E-Manual has been developed from the work carried out by the Sharing Memories Building Communities Project, an initiative supported by the Big Lottery Fund through their Connecting Older People programme.

The initial four year programme focused on improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing of older people with disabilities, including people with dementia, living in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust catchment area. The project was a partnership between the Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

Over the past four years, Sharing Memories Building Communities has delivered over 700 creative reminiscence sessions with 407 participants and in excess of 130 memory based products have been produced. In the creation of 77 life story products 599 home visits have

been carried out. In light of the project's success, The Big Lottery Fund has funded an additional year of the project to establish a firm legacy of good quality reminiscence work. That legacy has included developing and delivering training courses and creating an e-manual to provide an accessible resource to continue meaningful engagement in creative reminiscence and life story work.

The resources included in the manual are firmly based on the experience of staff in this project, drawing on experience gained from other work undertaken by the Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland in recent years, including Valuing Heritage, Valuing Memories; Remembering Yesterday Caring Today; and Life In a Box - Older Men's Life Stories; and the work of noted academics in this field.

You can find out more at www.rnni.org



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The Northern Ireland Civil Service Recognising Excellence Awards 2017



Nichola Cullen, Lorna Conn, Seamus McErlean, Eleanor Ross and Sarah Travers

Introduced in 2015, the annual NICS Awards Scheme is a means of recognising those teams and individuals who deserve just that, recognition. The scheme is open to all staff within NICS and provides an opportunity to reward outstanding commitment and excellence during the year.

There are a total of 10 categories producing 13 awards - five team awards and eight awards for individuals.

The NICS Awards 2017 were presented at a glittering ceremony at Parliament Buildings on Thursday 18th May 2017.

The Dementia Together NI team was one of three shortlisted nominees for the Customer Service Excellence Award, an award for a team who have demonstrated excellence and innovation in the operational delivery of public services. Congratulations to the team who were awarded a runners up trophy.

Bangor carers celebrate success

Family carers from Bangor recently completed a programme of free workshops to assist them in supporting and caring for a loved one living with dementia.

The programme was delivered by Maureen Pue from 3fivetwo Training Academy at the Welcome Centre, Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church – one of the relaxed, warm and welcoming venues used to host the workshops.

One carer remarked: “I enjoyed the chance to interact with other carers, at various stages of their journey and realise that it’s not just me”. Another said that “it was one of the most valuable courses they had ever been on”.

The training for carers is delivered right across Northern Ireland. If you are interested and you reside in the South Eastern Trust area, please contact 028 9073 5273 or email dementia@3fivetwo.com for further information. If you reside in the Belfast, Northern, Southern or Western Trust areas, please contact 028 9038 7480 or email NICaregiver.Training@alzheimers.org.uk for further information.

Antrim Hospital implements John's Campaign



Antrim Hospital has implemented John's Campaign within the acute care medical wards, following successful implementation in a number of wards in Holywell Hospital Antrim.

Promotional posters, a carer's leaflet and carer's passport have been developed and are available on wards A1, A3, A4, B2, B4, C3.

Johns Campaign has the full support of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust Chief Executive Tony Stephens, the Senior Management Team, the Executive Director of Nursing Eileen McEleaney and the Nursing Executive Team.

The NHSCT has pledged its commitment to the inclusion of families when people living with dementia are admitted to its wards. If you are a carer please speak with the nurse in charge and ask for a carer's passport. This permits you to stay with the person you care for and allows for free car parking outside normal visiting hours.

If you are able to support the person you care for through a hospital admission, the benefits you bring are invaluable – particularly during transitions in care and around discharge time. You know the person, you understand what they like and dislike, and you are aware of their health issues. You can contribute to their safety, confidence and wellbeing and help them maintain their level of function. You can facilitate communication between various groups of professionals in and out of hospital.

In order to promote person centred care you will be recognised as part of the care team treating your loved one and you can contribute to the everyday care of your loved one if appropriate to do so.

The NHSCT plan to roll out John's Campaign to other wards in Antrim Hospital, Causeway Hospital and community facilities throughout 2017.

John's Campaign

for the right to stay with people with dementia

for the right of people with dementia to be supported by their family carers

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Latest: [Blog post My Mother's Dementia and My Hospital's Changes](#)

Video of the Week: [Song from Orla Mathews of the Antrim Area Hospital in N. Ireland](#)

John's Campaign was founded in November 2014 by Nicci Gerrard and Julia Jones. Behind its simple statement of purpose lies the belief that carers should not just be allowed but should be welcomed, and that a collaboration between the patients and all connected with them is crucial to their health and their well-being. John's Campaign applies to all hospital settings: acute, community, mental health and its principles could extend to all other caring institutions where people are living away from those closest to them. In the time since the campaign was founded, **over 1000 institutions have pledged support** and a lot of progress has been made - but there is a lot yet to be done.

On this site you will find the **history of John's Campaign**, the **voices** of some of those who have provided its **inspiration** and **support**, and the **organizations** with whom John's Campaign has worked in partnership. Our **participants** page lists every UK trust and health board, both those who have signed and those who have not yet done so. Increasingly it will also list the residential home providers who chose to make their welcome to families explicit by joining our campaign. You can **read the pledges of those who have** and see **examples of their good practice**. We collect **useful resources** and have **implementation advice** for those turning our **principles** into practice.



Logo and slogan artwork by
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Contact Us

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For more information, see [our contact page](#).

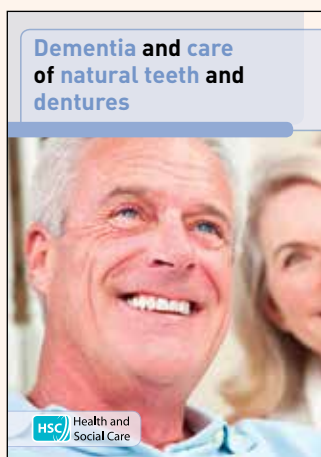
New dementia information booklets

This quarter saw the launch of two new booklets developed by Dementia Together NI, the Public Health Agency and relevant healthcare professionals. This brings our range of booklets to five and these are based on what those affected by a dementia told us they needed more information about. Special thanks to Eileen Tomany and the Northern Ireland Speech and Language Therapy Dementia Forum and the Southern Trust dental leads for their work in writing these invaluable resources.

Eating, drinking and swallowing - A guide for carers of people living with a dementia

This booklet aims to provide information on how the eating, drinking and swallowing of a person with a dementia may be affected. It includes sections on:

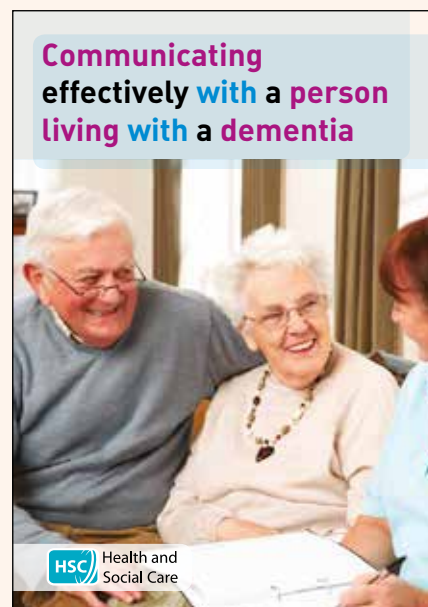
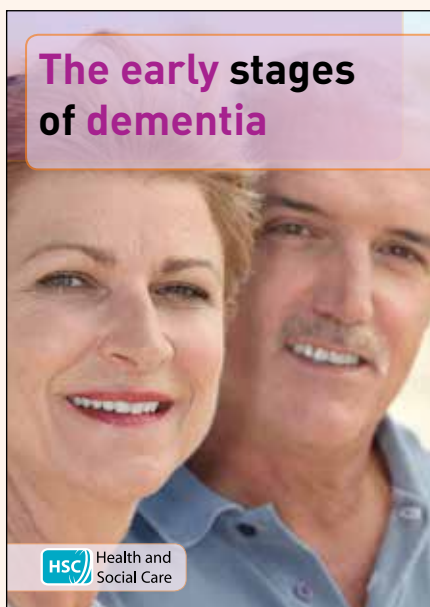
- Memory and concentration;
- Coordination;
- Swallowing;
- Behaviours displayed at mealtimes.



Dementia and care of natural teeth and dentures

This leaflet provides information on the importance of good dental care for people living with a dementia and advice for carers. This can be an area that gets neglected as dementia progresses and other healthcare needs take priority but it is vital that those with a dementia have good oral care to allow them to communicate as well as possible and decrease any pain or discomfort.

Copies of our booklets are available at www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications or by contacting Martin McCrory at martin.mccrory@hscni.net



Success for NHSCT at GAIN Awards

The NHSCT experienced huge success at the Guidelines and Audit Implementation Network (GAIN) Annual Health and Social Care Quality Awards, in Mossley Mill Newtownabbey on 30 November 2016.

Mandy Ellis, a Practice Development Facilitator within the person-centred practice, nursing innovation and development team won first place for her in-reach into nursing homes training, education and development initiative.

The initiative aims to maintain residents/patients safely in their care home, reducing avoidable emergency department attendances and reliance on community nursing services. A large percentage of people in the care home environment are living with a dementia so specific training is provided to nursing home registrants and links are made with the dementia home support team.

Maria Loughran was awarded second place for her presentation on behalf of the NHSCT on an initiative that aims to enhance the experience for patients living with dementia in the acute ward environment through the introduction of Dementia Companion roles.

In January 2016 the NHSCT introduced a Dementia Companion (Band 2) into two acute care wards in Antrim Hospital. They are the first HSC Trust to introduce this role.

The overall purpose of a Dementia Companion is to enhance the safety and experience for patients living with dementia who are admitted to an acute care ward by creating ward environments that are

both person-centred and dementia friendly.

The role of a Dementia Companion is to spend time befriending and chatting with patients and support and assist patients and families with the use of memory folders and other activities as guided by the nursing staff.

Additionally a Dementia Companion helps patients to maintain a tidy, clutter free environment around their bedside, ensuring patients have their call bell near at hand and any personal items are close by the patient.

They encourage and assist patients at meal times also ensuring patients receive sufficient fluids as guided by the nursing staff. Also if a patient is engaged in purposeful wandering they remain with the patient to ensure their safety and support and assist patients to remain safe within the ward environment.

Through both initiatives the NHSCT can demonstrate improved patient and family experience, through compassionate support, tailored education and releasing nursing time to care.

Both studies have proved successful with positive outcomes. The trust has received further funding to extend the dementia companion role to other wards and to extend the nursing home initiative across 40 care homes located within the NHSCT. The Trust have recruited a further four dementia companions who will be located in medical wards in Antrim and the emergency department. The NHSCT will monitor these roles closely and continue with a robust evaluation approach.



**Health and
Social Care**

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