

## Dementia

This leaflet has been made in the hope that it answers some of the questions that you may have if someone in your family has been diagnosed with dementia.

Medically: your GP will probably have that diagnosis confirmed by a Consultant who will indicate if drug treatments could temporarily slow down the progression of symptoms in some forms of dementia. In some cases, the person with dementia will be referred to the Community Mental Health Team and if appropriate, the Community Mental Health Nurse will visit your home for further assessment, advice and support.

There are **10 week courses** for those diagnosed with dementia, run by a Community Mental Health Occupational Therapist, Sue Southam, which are broken into three groups:

Early Memory Management

Moderate Memory Management

Functional Group - this addresses depression and anxiety.

These classes have been held in the Bungalow, next to the entrance to Wareham Hospital and are organised by the Dorset Healthcare Trust. Referral for these courses is done through the Community Mental Health Team. At present, the location and timing of these courses is uncertain and up to date information can be obtained from Diane Burt on 01202 705509.

The Dorset Healthcare Trust also runs Carers' Education Courses twice a year, lasting 10 weeks. The location and timing of these courses is available from Diane Burt as before.

**It is important that you register as a Carer with your GP at the Surgery.**

The Carers' Lead at Wareham Surgery is District Nurse Nicky Taylor who can be contacted on 01929 550784. Her role is to support carers by directing them to the help that is available. Your carer can be referred for a Carers Assessment with Social Care and Health whereby their needs will be reviewed to determine what assistance is required to support them as a carer.

On the SOCIAL side, as a person with dementia or as a carer, you have groups in Wareham that can support and inform you.

**Wareham Memory Café** which is held on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at the URC, opposite the Sainsbury's car park. Drop in from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm and there will be a warm welcome, tea/coffee and cake. Support workers will be on hand to give helpful advice. (This group is funded by a grant from POPPS and organised by the Alzheimer's Society)

There is a 4 session course, run over four weeks organised by St John' Ambulance, called the **Carers Support Programme** which offers you the opportunity to meet other carers, share experiences and ideas whilst learning about coping with memory loss, first aid, falls prevention, stress management and relaxation techniques. There will be a

course run in Wareham in the autumn - details of this course can be obtained from Kerry Course on 01305 751160.

POPPS has been mentioned – it is the Dorset Partnership for Older Peoples Project. Not only do they support the Wareham Memory Café, mentioned above, but they also provide a **WAYFINDERS** service on 01305 213345. This service gives free, impartial and confidential information (for people over 50) on a large range of topics but in particular, benefits, social activities, care agencies, keeping healthy, legal issues or, indeed, anything else that concerns you.

There is an **excellent booklet**, called “If Only I’d Known That”, written by Susan Hartnell-Beavis, customised for carers in Dorset by St John’s Ambulance and sponsored by POPPS. Copies can be obtained from the Wareham Surgery.

There are charities/organisations that will give you information on the phone or you may be able to access their websites.

**Alzheimer’s Society** on 01202 716393 – [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

**Age Concern** on 0800 00 99 66 and [www.ace.org.uk](http://www.ace.org.uk) .This will soon be merged with Help the Aged to become **Age UK**.

**Citizen’s Advice Bureau** on 01929 551257, based in Mill Lane, Wareham, great for advice and help with Benefits and Allowances

**Carerslink** is a telephone Helpline, providing free information, advice and support for Carers. Contact on 0845 4500 418 or [www.carers.org.uk](http://www.carers.org.uk)

**At any time**, you can ask for an assessment from the **Social Services** (01305 221016 or 01929 553456) to help work out what services would be helpful in your situation, for you, the Carer, **and** for the person for whom you care. They will be able to give you lots of information about help that is available – it is important that you ask for help before things get too much!

In conjunction with the Social services and the Community Mental Health Team, the person with dementia may be able to attend a Day Care centre in Wareham. This gives the Carer time to themselves – not always to attend Carers’ Group activities, but to kick up their heels for a while!

The **Short Break Service** – “**Help and Care**” is a charity which works in partnership with **Dorset County Council** to give carers a break by organising care attendants from local agencies like Pramacare to look after the person who needs care while the Carer has a break. You are allowed 26 hours a quarter and pay £2 towards this heavily subsidised service.

Help and Care also have some **40 fact sheets** covering a vast range of pertinent topics including information on local support. Phone Help and Care on 0300 111 3303 for further information. Their website is [www.helpandcare.org.uk](http://www.helpandcare.org.uk) .

They also run free **information and support sessions**, four in number (funded by Dorset County Council) covering assertiveness, stress and relaxation and where advice

will be available from a local solicitor, a pharmacist and a benefits adviser. Details of these sessions and their location are available from the carers team on 0300 111 3303.

**Harlequin Care** is a charity based in West Lulworth which gives Carers the opportunity to meet with other Carers in a friendly and informal atmosphere and they offer free treatment from a range of complementary treatments including aromatherapy, beauty treatments, and massage. Details of these day clinics are on their website [www.harlequincare.com](http://www.harlequincare.com)