

Personalised Community Supports

Living Well with Dementia
Stillorgan-Blackrock
2012-2015

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Older People – HSE Dun Laoghaire.

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Introduction

- **Information & Support Structures**
- **Supports to Maintain Connections, Reconnection and Maintain ability**
- Interventions that are inclusive of family
- Assistive Technology

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A snapshot of the Living Well with Dementia project focusing on

- Information and Support Structures
- Supports to Maintain Connection & Reconnection & Maintain Ability

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Point of Contact

Families uncertainty about what they need and/or what they can access can lead to a timing gap between diagnosis and uptake of support.

Being informed and having an identified point of contact builds trust that a service will be available when required.

Families then engage at own pace accessing services as they are needed.

‘By educating us about dementia we became more qualified, more understanding and better carers so it was a win-win situation. We became much happier and

confident carers’ Patricia Craddock Smith – family carer

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Who Needs Information and Education about Dementia



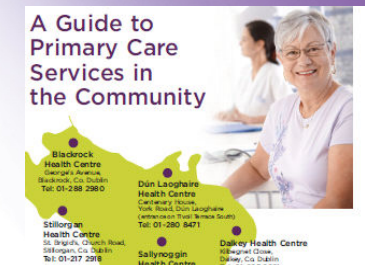
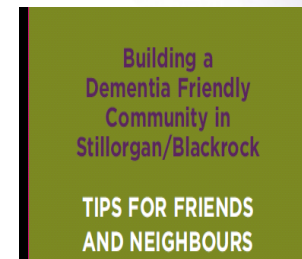
Access Points for Information

Information Requested by individuals/families

- Worried about Memory
- Post-diagnosis “who can I turn to?”
- Information about disease
- Information about available services
- Practical skills in living with dementia
- Support to plan ahead
- Peer to peer support for person with dementia
- Peer to peer support for the family

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Sources of Information Developed



- PCT
- Guide to Primary Care Services
- Tips-Family/ Friends/ Services
- Family Carer Events
- Intensive Family Carer training
- Focus / Support groups for PWD
- Drop-in Clinic

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Support Groups

Factors contributing to successful working

- Clear aim for why the group might meet
- Needs determined by the group and responded to accordingly
- Appropriate facilitation
- Small groups or within large groups use of small groupings to facilitate engagement
- Non health service environment with a social component

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Support Groups

All support groups were found to be effective and actively used alongside other supports throughout the journey of dementia

Appropriate facilitation & administration/communication functions required

Local contexts and environments need to be considered

- **Rural** – sensitivities re anonymity, difficulty in getting critical mass due to lower population densities.
- **Rural & Urban** – transport difficulties, leaving the carer role.

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Support Groups

‘The talks were very encouraging and supportive and I did not feel so isolated knowing that many families were having similar experiences’ Mary Daly – family carer

‘There was an opportunity to discuss and address any aspect of care or concern which arose for the carer. Also, any issue that could not be addressed at information evenings was followed up as soon as possible. All the talks were very practical and very informative.’ Mary McGlinchey –family carer

“We worked collaboratively in this forum and this contributed to a more cohesive pathway of knowledge for the person with dementia/family” Health care professional



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Supporting connection and reconnection

People were connected/reconnected to community initiatives of interest.

Identifying and working with these groups to support this engagement took time and a level of support to build trust and confidence.

A co-ordinating function by a key worker is required to do this well.

Volunteers or community connectors provided support to the person with dementia as they reconnected.

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***Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
Citizens***

***"Pledges of Support for a
Dementia Friendly
Community"***

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Reconnection with Groups

Examples of groups that people have been reconnected with:

- Kilmacud Walking group
- Saturday swifts ladies golf
- Elm Park Golf Club
- Donnybrook Heritage Community garden
- Goatstown Community Allotment
- Sandyford Men's Sheds
- Glenalbyn Art Group



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Supports to Maintain Connection

A number of social activities were developed in partnership with existing community or statutory organisations.

- Developed in response to the expressed need of people with dementia
- Delivered with the support of a team of dedicated / supported



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Supports to Maintain Connection

‘The Tuesday exercise class gave my husband great pleasure - it was lovely to see the smile on my husband’s face as he did the exercises. The project took away the isolation of feeling so alone in dealing with the dementia. My husband died in April 2015 and I am so glad we were able to take part in the project and I shall treasure the memories.

Olive Bain – wife of the late Alan

The choir has given Marie a new lease of life. The Dementia seems to vanish for some time before, during and after the choir’

Dr Con Power – Marie’s husband

The creative writing course was brilliant and it would be great if it would start up again. The social interaction and stimulation were great’

Jane Mullan – Sean’s wife

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Role of Community to Maintain Connection

The LWwD project could not have succeeded without enormous support from the local community. This support ranged from :

Consortium Support (Community & Hospital Health Service, People with dementia and their families, voluntary organisations, statutory organisations.)

Benefit in Kind

- Premises (schools, clubs)
- Time (healthcare staff)
- Fundraising (local shops, schools)
- Funding of Exercise Group

Reconnection with Clubs

- Walking groups, golf clubs, Men's sheds, garden clubs.

Information & Educations (supported by members of Primary Care Teams)

- Tailored training for Schools and community groups
- Information stands in public areas
- Community awareness events
- Drop-in clinics for people worried about their memory

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‘The Living Well with Dementia project is the best run and best targeted programme that I have ever come across. I have no doubt that Sheila would be in a home now without their support.

It is a very uplifting organisation, practical, caring of both the person with dementia and the carers. I have always felt supported and understood. I could not speak more highly of the project and the personnel. It provides a quality of service way beyond my expectation.’

Désirée O’Rourke – Sheila’s sister

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‘The Living Well project gives hope for the future and reassurance that you are not alone’

Maura O’Meara – family carer

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