

Dementia Carers Zoom Forum

17th September 2020



<p>1</p>	<p>Present</p> <p>Carers 9</p> <p>Carers in Herts Sally Stratford – Involvement and Development Worker Dementia</p> <p>Guest Speaker Melanie Herlihy – Alzheimer’s Society Service Manager</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Welcome</p> <p>All carers were welcomed and informed that it was very relaxed session, introductions were completed before moving on to a discussion regarding the services that the Alzheimer’s society offer in Hertfordshire.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>What service Hertfordshire Alzheimer’s Society offer.</p> <p>Melanie Herlihy, Service Manager at the Alzheimer’s Society, explained that the Alzheimer’s Society in Hertfordshire offer support and services for people with a diagnosis of dementia and their family and carers. There is a team of dementia support workers throughout the county working closely with people in the community. The support workers would normally complete home visits offering advice and information on all aspects of dementia; currently they are offering support remotely. They work in partnership with Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT) and their diagnosis service EMDASS (Early Memory diagnosis and Support Service), offering support right from diagnosis throughout the whole journey.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Questions and Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My wife has been ill in hospital and I am looking for a private nurse, do you know where I can find one of these? <p>We don’t recommend services but you can always ask your GP if they can recommend any or you can have a look at the https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) is something that we have discussed and are very keen on having but are unclear on how this works and where it is recorded? <p>End of life planning is a difficult subject and is touched upon during the diagnosis service EMDASS but this is often too early to discuss this. An Alzheimer’s Support Worker would be able to discuss this with you and support you around this area. It is an area that needs further discussions before the dementia deteriorates too much that the person is unable to express their wishes.</p> <p>Carers expressed that it would be helpful to have a forum around this subject – Sally to look at arranging this.</p> <p>One carer mentioned ‘Dignity and Dying’ which can be found here https://www.dignityindying.org.uk/</p>

Melanie explained that there is an advanced care plan that is available from HPFT from the Older Peoples Mental Health Team, they can send out the forms regarding this. Advance Care Planning (ACP) is there to help the person you care for make choices about their future care at a time when they have capacity to do so, in case they lose the mental capacity to make decisions for themselves in the future. The records are held on the HPFT database. It is not a legal document but a plan that works alongside the legal Advanced Decision.

Below are links for ACP and Advanced Decision:

<https://www.hpft.nhs.uk/media/2368/carer-handbook-march-2018.pdf>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/end-of-life-care/advance-decision-to-refuse-treatment/>

A suggestion was to ask Isabel Hospice to attend a forum – Sally to arrange this.

- **How can I help my dad care for my mum who does not accept that she has dementia?**

It is very common for people to be in denial after diagnosis. There is support available for your dad, even if your mum is in denial. The Alzheimer's Society, Hertswise, Carers in Hertfordshire, and Age UK Hertfordshire can all help you and your dad with information, advice, support, and groups to talk to other carers. It is important to get some things sorted whilst your mum still has capacity, such as Lasting Power of Attorney. Your mum would need to be involved in this and sign the forms, which maybe difficult. It would be a good idea to speak to the Information and Advice line at Age UK Hertfordshire about this and other benefits available.

Alzheimer's Society Hertfordshire call 01707 378365 or visit

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>

Age UK Hertfordshire call 0300 345 3446 or visit

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/our-services/information-and-advice/>

Carers in Hertfordshire call 01992 58 69 69 or visit

<https://www.carersinherts.org.uk/>

Hertswise – community services for people with Dementia and their carers:

<https://hertswise.org.uk/>

- **What other services might be able to help and support with breaks and things like singing?**

The Alzheimer's Society offer singing for the brain on line at

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/your-support-services/singing-for-the-brain>

There is also Herts Musical Memories: <https://www.hertsmusicalmemories.org.uk/>

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	<p>Turning Point also offer a sitting service for carers so that they can get a few hours break. The offer is for 18 hours free. If the service is beneficial to the carer an assessment would be completed by Hertfordshire County Council to commission the service on a regular basis. More information is found on their website: https://www.turning-point.co.uk/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What support is offered by the GP? <p>You can register as a carer at your GP surgery. This would hopefully enable you to have more flexible appointments and a yearly carers health check. This health check could be with a GP or a practice nurse. The person with dementia is also entitled to a yearly check-up. If you are not receiving invitations for these then please ask your surgery (obviously they might be delivering these slightly different now due to the coronavirus).</p> <p>Regarding medication, the NICE guidelines state that medication should be reviewed every six months, but the normal practice is for a yearly review unless you ask for one every six months. If you are not receiving any of the support that you would like from the GP, then please ask.</p>
5	Closing comments and information
	<p>Carers were thanked for attending and invited to attend the next session. Notes of the meeting will be circulated.</p> <p>The next session will be with discussing residential care/nursing homes and respite care with commissioners from Hertfordshire County Council. Please call the office to book a place if you would like to attend on 01992 58 69 69.</p> <p>Sally Stratford sally.stratford@carersinherts.org.uk</p>
