



Impact Report

2022



**Dementia
Oxfordshire**

A service provided by
 **Oxfordshire
ageUK**

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Foreword by Penny Thewlis

"Our dementia support service, Dementia Oxfordshire, is helping people with dementia to live independently in the community for as long as possible. Over the last year we have supported more people living with dementia and their carers than ever before and it becomes more important than ever to understand the impact we are having on the lives of the people that we support. We know that we are very busy, but what difference are we making?"

The Dementia Oxfordshire team are currently supporting over 5000 people across Oxfordshire. During 2022 we have completed 4,500 6-monthly reviews, received over 2000 calls to our support line, and delivered 40 carer education sessions, attended by over 200 carers.

This report reveals how much work our team do around reducing stress for carers, preventing loneliness and isolation, and improving carers confidence to carry out their caring role.

In addition, our research in preparing the report clearly showed that much of the impact of what we deliver is enhanced by our close working relationship with GPs, Memory Clinics and other local charities, as well as our delivery partners in



Dementia UK. I'd like to thank all the organisations that we work with, including our commissioners in Oxfordshire County Council and the NHS. We can achieve so much more by working together.

My warmest thanks also to all those who have contributed to this report by sharing their honest thoughts through surveys and interviews. As we look towards the future, and consider how best we support increasing numbers of people living with dementia being referred to us, your feedback will help us to continuously develop the service that we offer."

Penny Thewlis
CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire

About Us

Dementia Oxfordshire is a service provided by Age UK Oxfordshire, commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council and jointly funded by Oxfordshire County Council and the NHS.

We provide free, ongoing support for people living with dementia and their families in Oxfordshire. Support is available from the point of diagnosis until a move to residential care or end of life, through a framework of six-monthly reviews.

You can read more about our service and the support we provide on our website.



Our Mission

Dementia Oxfordshire supports people with dementia to live as well as possible for as long as possible in the community, working to ensure people have a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives. We strive to provide a service that is evidence-based and person centred.

How we Measure our Impact

This Impact Report is part of our ambition to move away from solely relying on service statistics and uncover how we impact the lives of our clients and carers.

It contains quantitative data on the support we have offered to our clients and carers over the last year and an analysis of how this support has impacted them. Additionally, we have used surveys, interviews, and case studies to collect qualitative data and used a qualitative analysis approach based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis.

We believe this approach offers a more robust and objective way to investigate our impact and that these findings can guide us in developing the service in the future.

You can find more information on our data collection and qualitative analysis on our website.



Our Support

This year we have supported:

2361

People living with dementia

2737

Unpaid carers

5098

People across Oxfordshire

We provide support to our clients and carers through 6-monthly reviews. These are calls or visits with either the client, carer or both every 6 months to find out what tailored practical or emotional support would benefit them.

5,456

Reviews completed

Our support line, staffed by Dementia Advisers, provides anonymous telephone advice and support to clients, carers, relatives, professionals and members of the community who have questions or concerns relating to dementia.

731

Support line calls taken

We support or host in-person and online groups across the county. These offer people living with dementia and carers the chance to socialise and to share and learn from each other. Most groups meet monthly.

27

Groups hosted/ supported



Education Sessions

We offer education sessions for carers to support them to care well and to look after their own wellbeing. These sessions started online, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and we have recently started in person sessions to meet the preferences of our clients and carers. We've recently launched a post-diagnostic session for people living with dementia and their carers to help them to adjust to the diagnosis and learn what support is available.

"I don't usually go to these sorts of sessions; I have always been a 'sort it out for myself' person! But I am very glad that I did; it was helpful and encouraging beyond belief. Thank you."

Awareness Sessions

We also offer dementia awareness training for local organisations or businesses that are looking to better serve people living with dementia.

We've delivered 19 sessions in 2022 to a wide variety of organisations. From care agencies and GPs to churches and running groups, supporting communities across Oxfordshire to be more accommodating and inclusive for people living with dementia.

"Very clear slides. Very knowledgeable trainer, emphasis on seeing people as people."

60

Education sessions delivered

280

Attendees at carer education sessions

19

Awareness sessions delivered

214

Attendees at awareness sessions

Our Impact

Our qualitative research has uncovered three main ways Dementia Oxfordshire makes an impact.

Reducing carer stress through tailored practical and emotional support

Preventing people living with dementia and their carers experiencing isolation and loneliness



Increasing confidence of carers in their caring role and improving the carer-cared-for relationship, through education

Dementia Oxfordshire reduces carer stress through tailored practical and emotional support

Nine out of ten carers for people with dementia experience feelings of stress or anxiety several times a week (Alzheimer's Society, 2018)

Without support, stress and anxiety can become overwhelming for carers, and they can experience carer breakdown. Dementia Oxfordshire provides tailored practical and emotional support which helps to support carers to avoid overwhelming stress.

Dementia Advisers have in-depth knowledge of their localities and take time to get to know their clients. As a result, they can make tailored, practical recommendations based on what is available in the area and what would most suit that client and carer. This tailored knowledge helps carers to find support that is more likely to suit them more quickly.

Additionally, carers feel understood by Dementia Advisers, they can offload their worries and concerns, and are reassured they are not alone.



When asked "what effect has our support had on you?", carers answered:

"Peace of mind"

"Lowered anxiety level"

"One of relief as I now know there will be help as my husband's symptoms get worse"

"Made our lives easier"

"Feel supported"

Dementia Oxfordshire prevents people living with dementia and their carers experiencing isolation and loneliness

Receiving a dementia diagnosis or caring for someone living with dementia can be a lonely and isolating experience. Dementia Oxfordshire helps to prevent people living with dementia and carers experiencing loneliness and isolation in three ways;

1

Carers and people with dementia understand that there is a dedicated Dementia Adviser and service there to support them and to guide them through their dementia journey and it's not something they have to face alone.

2

Dementia Oxfordshire prevents loneliness and isolation for people living with dementia by connecting them into their communities, signposting to support groups or, for those who are particularly vulnerable, supporting them to engage with their communities with the help of Support Workers.

3

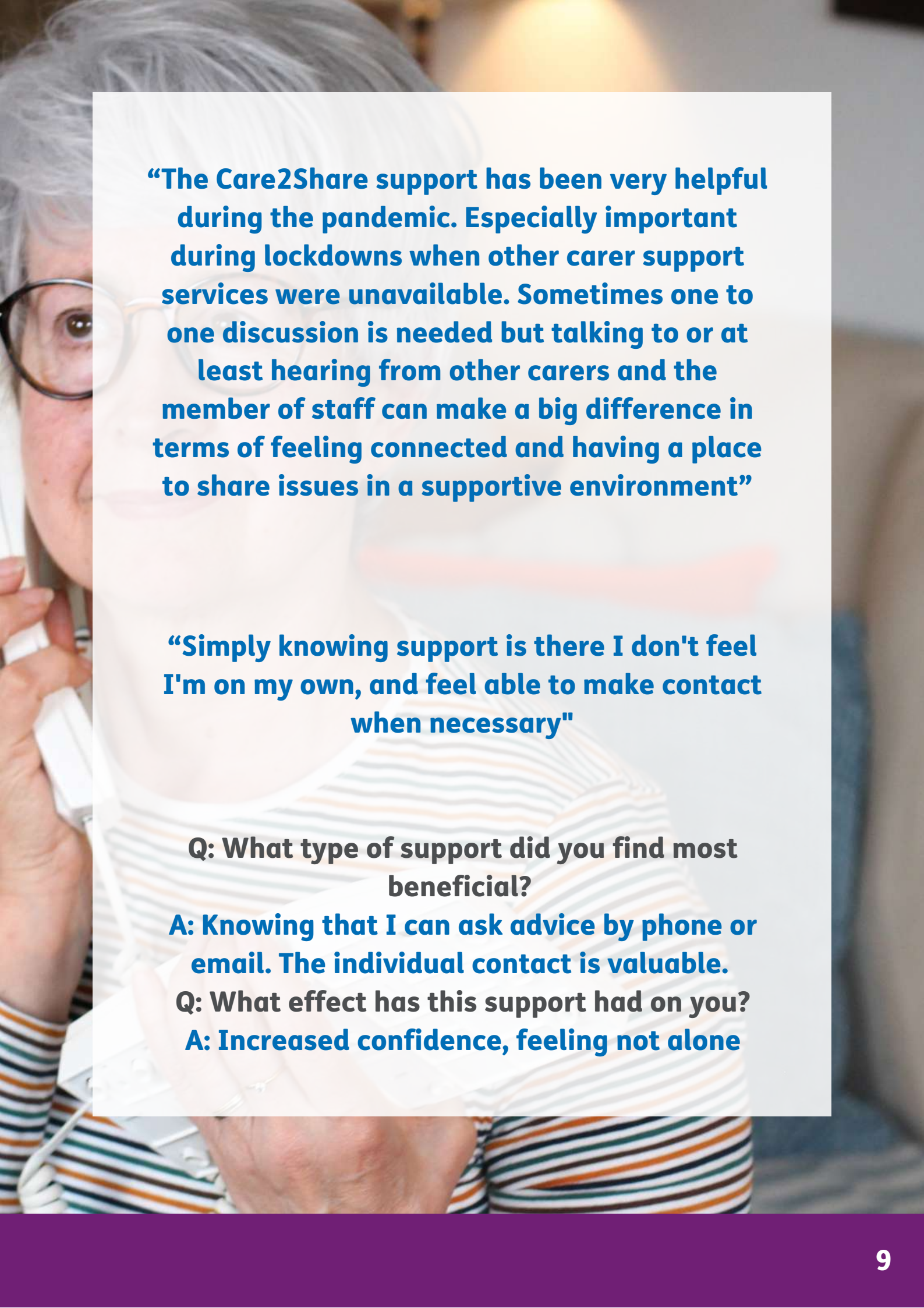
Dementia Oxfordshire prevents loneliness and isolation for carers by connecting them with other carers through their own peer support groups and other groups in the community.

Q: What type of support did you find most beneficial?

A: Someone to talk to who understands the journey I am on.

Q: What effect has this support had on you?

A: I don't feel so alone



“The Care2Share support has been very helpful during the pandemic. Especially important during lockdowns when other carer support services were unavailable. Sometimes one to one discussion is needed but talking to or at least hearing from other carers and the member of staff can make a big difference in terms of feeling connected and having a place to share issues in a supportive environment”

“Simply knowing support is there I don't feel I'm on my own, and feel able to make contact when necessary”

Q: What type of support did you find most beneficial?

A: Knowing that I can ask advice by phone or email. The individual contact is valuable.

Q: What effect has this support had on you?

A: Increased confidence, feeling not alone



Case Study

Gerrard*, who is in his mid-eighties and has mixed dementia, had gone from being a sociable, very active gentleman who was involved in various activities, to being very introverted and inactive, which his wife was finding increasingly stressful.

He was somewhat reticent to go out, however his Support Worker was able to persuade him to agree to a 1:1 outing which he found positive and enabled his Support Worker to learn more about Gerrard and reflect on his life history. This helped her to plan activities that would be of interest to him.

Dementia Oxfordshire had recently been approached about a dementia-pilot by FarmAbility, which the Support Worker thought would suit Gerrard well. The Support Worker had extensive discussions with the project partner to plan Gerrard's initial visit to the farm. This resulted in him feeling very welcome during his initial visit. He was given a tour of the farm and began to proactively engage in conversation, demonstrating his knowledge and interest.

Gerrard's wife was astounded when he asked to return at a later date. The project partner worked with the Support Worker and Gerrard to plan activities he might be interested in and his second visit was equally successful.

Gerrard now visits the farm weekly, independently of a Support Worker, travelling there by taxi and is re-energised and has re-connected with an old interest.

*name changed to protect identity

Dementia Oxfordshire increases confidence of carers in their caring role and improving the carer-cared-for relationship, through education

Dementia Oxfordshire provides both formal and informal dementia education. We provide formal education through our carer education sessions and more informal education through the daily conversations we have with clients and carers. As a result, carers become more confident in their caring role, in turn supporting the quality of care they are giving and helping to improve the relationship between the carer and the person with dementia.

Mr C has attended ‘Carer Information Sessions’ provided by Dementia Oxfordshire learning new skills, which has enabled him to feel more confident in his carer role.

Q: What type of support did you find most beneficial?

A: Help line advice & information

Q: What effect has this support had on you?

A: Gave me more confidence

“Explaining the way mums dementia affects her, and how to help. Makes me more patient with mum.”



Work with Partners

Dementia Oxfordshire works closely with a wide range of professionals across the county including Memory Clinics, GPs, other third sector organisations including our Age UK Oxfordshire partners, day centres, Adult Social Care, care homes, memory groups and cafes.

Our close relationship with these partners is key to helping us deliver a valuable service to our clients and carers.

Most of our referrals come from three main sources:

53.5%

Memory Clinics

14.9%

GPs

15.5%

Community Mental Health Teams

When asked how they found out about Dementia Oxfordshire in our survey, 48% of clients said they were referred through their GP or Memory Clinic. This suggests that a significant proportion of our clients are clear who generated a referral but there is still more work to do to make the referral process more transparent for clients.

“I appreciate the interaction between the GP, Warneford Hospital, Age UK and Dementia Oxfordshire. You seem to work together well. Truly.”

Developing our Service

"Based on the findings of this report and our ambition to better support people living with dementia, we are looking to develop and expand our service.

We are expanding our Dementia Adviser team to manage the increasing caseload we are experiencing. This has been made possible due to an injection of additional funding.

Additionally we are looking to recruit an Admiral Nurse - a nurse who specialises in dementia support, bringing clinical expertise to our team.

We are expanding our education and awareness offer. Over the last year we have been piloting new formats for our sessions and expanded the topics covered. The sessions are a relatively low resource, high impact way of providing support to people living with dementia and their carers.

We are developing the expertise of our team, all DAs are expected to have or complete a level three qualification in dementia care and are encouraged to continually develop their expertise.

Finally, we will be looking at developing a pilot for a pre-diagnosis support model, to support those awaiting a formal diagnosis and those more likely to develop a diagnosis.

These service developments will enable us to both offer more wide ranging support to existing clients and allow us to develop our capacity to support more people living with dementia and their carers. "

Peter Johnson
Head of Service



With Thanks to our Funders and Partners



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