

Impact Report 2024



**Dementia
Oxfordshire**

A service provided by

 **Oxfordshire
age UK**

Contents

Background	3
Summary	4
Core service:	6
The challenge	
What we do	
The difference we make	
Admiral Nurse:	8
The challenge	
What we do	
The difference we make	
Education sessions:	10
The challenge	
What we do	
The difference we make	
Additional support	12
Dementia Oxfordshire in the wider community	13
Conclusion from Paul Ringer, CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire	14
Contact details	14

“We are less isolated, we have made good friends who are sharing this journey with us. Without this service we both would have fallen into depression and despair.”



83%
of survey respondents
**would recommend
Dementia
Oxfordshire**

Background

“Dementia should be seen as one of the major societal as well as medical challenges for our generation to address.”

Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer (2023)

Approximately
1 million people in
the UK are currently
living with
dementia

By 2040, it is
estimated that
around 1.4 million
people will have the
disease in the UK

6150 people in
Oxfordshire are
living with
dementia
(up from 5600 in 2020)

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.

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.



Summary

We know that dementia can be a long and lonely journey, not just for the person living with dementia, but also for their friends and family.

Dementia Oxfordshire aims to provide practical and emotional support to make that journey easier. The 2024 Impact Report examines the ways in which we do that, and reveals the difference we make to the lives of those affected.

Building on the work of our [previous impact report](#), this report aims to show that by supporting families through providing a dedicated Dementia Adviser, free information sessions, a Support Line and community activities, we continue to achieve three crucial outcomes:

- Reducing carer stress through tailored practical and emotional support
- Preventing people living with dementia and their carers experiencing isolation and loneliness
- Increasing confidence of people in their caring role and improving the carer-cared-for relationship, through education (and information)

In particular, our analysis of 75 spontaneous emails received during 2024 reveals just how important the support of a Dementia Adviser is. Three recurring themes emerged, with clients expressing:

- They felt well supported, both practically and emotionally
- An appreciation of the timely and appropriate advice and information that enabled families/carer to make better decisions
- Their gratitude for being provided with emotional comfort during difficult times

“I feel really buoyed knowing you're a part of our support team for Mum and Dad at this increasingly difficult time.”

Summary



The Dementia Oxfordshire Team

We have also explored the significant benefits of our recent two-year pilot to embed an Admiral Nurse (specialist dementia nurse) in the service, bringing clinical expertise to the team. Her role includes strengthening relationships with Oxfordshire health and social care teams, as well as providing specialist advice and training for professionals who are working with people with a dementia diagnosis. This means that we have been able to dramatically scale up the improvement in services for those living with dementia and their families across the county, as well as providing clinical expertise to our Dementia Advisers when supporting complex cases.

With almost a decade of experience in supporting people living with dementia and their families, Dementia Oxfordshire continues to grow and adapt. In the past twelve months alone, we have taken over full management of the Young Onset Dementia Team (previously overseen by Dementia UK), we have rolled out our Memory Support Service for those living with memory worries but without a diagnosis, and have introduced a dedicated Benefits Adviser, specifically focussed on providing financial information and advice for families affected by dementia.

For a more in-depth review of our latest impact research, including our methodology and copies of our surveys, see the full report on our website www.dementiaoxfordshire.org.uk.

Core service: The challenge

“...caring for a loved one with dementia is often an emotionally and physically demanding experience which has a significant impact on the carer’s quality of life and wellbeing. The effects of being a family caregiver can bring about a complexity of emotions, and though sometimes positive, undoubtedly provide major challenges. Often the caregiving experience can be described as a time filled with anxiety, heartache, uncertainty and fear.”

Gilsenan, J., Gorman, C., & Shevlin, M. (2022)*

Core service: What we do



At the heart of the Dementia Oxfordshire service is a team of 22 Dementia Advisers and 3 Young Onset Dementia Advisers who support people with dementia, their families and unpaid carers throughout their journey.

During 2024, our Dementia Advisers supported

2845
people living
with dementia
(up 20% from 2022)

3585
unpaid/family
carers
(up 31% from 2022)

Core service: The difference we make



87%

of carers and people with dementia who were in regular contact with their Dementia Adviser agreed with the statement:

“My Dementia Adviser has provided me with practical advice and information which has been helpful.”

“Thank you so much. You have no idea how much of a difference you have made already just by listening and helping to get things moving.”

“You are a true star - really really appreciate your time, enormous care and hugely helpful advice.”

“Whilst the onset of dementia is clearly not reversible, we have seen a marked decrease in the rate of decline of mum’s mental state since your original visit, so we are extremely grateful for your help and intervention.”

Dementia Oxfordshire has an up-to-date website and runs a Support Line, allowing anyone in Oxfordshire to find information or call a Dementia Adviser when they need advice or support.

81%

of survey respondents agreed with the statement:

“It is reassuring to know that the Support Line is available to me.”

789

calls taken by the Support Line in 2024. Up 8% on 2022.

Admiral Nurse: The challenge

“People with dementia and carers can face many barriers, or inequalities, in accessing a diagnosis or care. These barriers are unjust and can be addressed by the right interventions, to ensure that everyone receives equitable access to diagnosis and care. A lack of knowledge about dementia in the health and social care workforce is a recognised barrier.”

Giebel C, Marshall H, Cannon J, et al. (2024).*

Admiral Nurse: What we do

In July 2023 we started a 2½ year pilot to embed a dementia specialist Admiral Nurse within the Dementia Oxfordshire service, funded by Dementia UK. Fran Mada (pictured right) has over 20 years’ experience in the dementia sector. Her role within Dementia Oxfordshire is threefold:



To provide training

for professionals working with an ageing population, focussing on how best to support people living with dementia and to highlight the need for Advanced Care Planning.

To raise awareness

of the services offered by Dementia Oxfordshire and integrate the service into the wider health and social care landscape, leading to better outcomes for individual clients.

To support our Dementia Advisers

with complex cases, working with individual families and liaising with external agencies where necessary. She also leads our team of Young Onset Dementia Advisers.

Admiral Nurse: The difference we make

“I had discussions with my colleague yesterday about the amazing work you do and how we are linking in together Dementia Oxfordshire/ Oxford Health with bitesize training, care planning and specifically pain training for staff [working] with those who have dementia.”

Community Matron

Our Admiral Nurse has
worked with over

20

health and social care teams since joining Dementia Oxfordshire, including: Adult Social Care, District Nurses, Community Hospitals, palliative care teams and GPs.

96%

of professional survey respondents who had worked with our Admiral Nurse agreed with the statement:

“Having the services of an Admiral Nurse in Oxfordshire is vital for increasing recognition of the health and social care needs of people who are living with dementia.”

Young Onset Dementia

In 2024, Dementia Oxfordshire supported over 120 clients with young onset dementia (diagnosed before the age of 65). Three dedicated Young Onset Dementia Advisers, led by our Admiral Nurse, provide support and a wide range of activities to cater for the needs for those living with young onset dementia



Education sessions: The challenge

“Persons with dementia found it important to know what the dementia diagnosis entailed and how it develops over time. Informal caregivers viewed information as a requirement to care for someone with dementia.”

Persons with dementia and informal caregivers prioritizing care: A mixed-methods study (2021)*

Education sessions: What we do



Our Information Sessions are a key part of the way in which we support people living with dementia, their families and the wider community. We run three options in various venues around the county, as well as more sessions online. Our Dementia Advisers also host a more informal Care2Share online group, where carers can access peer support.

Experts by Experience

All our information sessions are designed with the help of our Experts By Experience groups, made up of people living with dementia and their informal carers.

“I’ve found that talking to people about dementia who are diagnosed, who know about dementia, makes my dementia easier to manage, because I can see that it’s not just me.”

Glenn, pictured right, was diagnosed 5 years ago and continues to co-design and present our post-diagnostic sessions.



Education sessions: The difference we make

Understanding dementia
for informal carers

15 sessions
117 participants

Post-diagnostic sessions
for newly diagnosed

12 sessions
95 participants

Awareness sessions
for wider community

23 sessions
318 participants

86%

of respondents to the post diagnostic session survey
agreed or strongly agreed with the statement:

**“I feel I can make a positive
difference to the person I support.”**

“...today helped me tremendously in gaining knowledge for my future as a carer for the health and safety of my 93-year-old mother-in-law.”

“The whole session was very useful as I had very little understanding of dementia before this.”



New memory support for those without a diagnosis

Following a successful pilot in 2023, Dementia Oxfordshire launched the Memory Support Service in April 2024.

Anyone worried about memory loss can be referred to the service by a health or social care professional. They will receive a one-off support session from a trained Dementia Adviser.

Additional support

In addition to support from our Dementia Advisers and our regular Information Sessions, we provide a range of other services to ensure that those living with dementia and their carers are supported and informed.



Groups

13

regular groups run by Dementia Oxfordshire.

36

further groups supported by Dementia Oxfordshire.

79%

of those who attend Dementia Oxfordshire groups agreed with the statement:

“Dementia support groups have a positive effect on my wellbeing.”

Clinics

Dementia clinics are held across the county in health centres, libraries and other easily-accessible venues, offering appointments with our Dementia Advisers for anyone with concerns or questions.

16

clinics were held across Oxfordshire in 2024.

Digital

Information and advice about dementia, as well as news and events, can be found on the Dementia Oxfordshire website and Facebook page.

Events

Dementia Oxfordshire hosts three information events each year.



Dementia Oxfordshire in the wider healthcare community

Dementia Oxfordshire works closely with a number of other health and social care professionals across the county, including GPs, Memory Clinic staff, Community Nurses, Occupational Therapists and Social Prescribers. Our 2024 survey showed the service is widely respected and valued.

100%

of respondents to our professional survey agreed with the statement:

“Dementia Oxfordshire makes a positive difference to the lives of people with dementia and their families.”

“I just wanted to say what a great Dementia Adviser service you and your colleagues provide. It is very reassuring when I share the diagnosis of dementia to know that there is such good post-diagnostic support out there.”

Alistair Burns, part-time Consultant at Oxfordshire Memory Clinic and National Clinical Director for Dementia and Older People’s Mental Health at NHS England and NHS Improvement



“I rely on Dementia Oxfordshire as a partner organisation with the NHS in supporting people with dementia and their families. Sharing information and knowledge across teams has been a benefit to us all.”

Nurse, Warneford Hospital

With thanks to our Funders and Partners



Many thanks to everyone who has supported Dementia Oxfordshire through donations, fundraising or volunteering.

As the number of people diagnosed with dementia continues to increase, the work of Dementia Oxfordshire has never been more important. As part of the Age UK Oxfordshire family of services for older people, Dementia Oxfordshire perfectly reflects our local and person-centred approach, making significant differences for people with a dementia diagnosis and their families.



The impact of the service goes beyond those individuals. This report reveals that Dementia Oxfordshire has become a respected and integrated part of the wider dementia support network in the county. It is now able to effectively raise awareness of the needs of people living with dementia and their families, thus raising the standard of care across the wider community. I am enormously proud of all that it achieves.

Paul Ringer, CEO Age UK Oxfordshire

*Please see our full report for details of references, available on our website.

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