

# Intergenerational Community Resilience Dementia awareness project

## OVERVIEW

Intergenerational Community Resilience is a priority theme of Hywel Dda University Health Board's Foundation 4 Change programme. A key element of this is establishing how creating a more cohesive community through work such as the dementia friends can influence and affect the lives of those living in our communities. Whilst Ceredigion's Older People's Partnership is supportive of the creation of Dementia Friendly towns in the county we need to recognise the wider positives that such schemes can bring to residents and visitors. Through working in partnership with Ceredigion County Council, other statutory bodies and Third sector organisations, this project focusses on working towards making two towns in the county dementia friendly. One of which is located in a very rural part of the county and the other being a more urban environment in comparison. Importantly, this will involve engaging with those living and working within these areas, to establish how attitudes toward dementia shift during the course of the work and how experiences of those living with dementia and their supporters change over three years.

## AIMS

The project aims to ensure individuals living with dementia and those who support them are able to continue to feel part of their community. It sets out to establish what elements work well in relation to raising awareness of dementia and how experiences differ through the course of the project.

Through improving the understanding of dementia in communities and the subsequent opportunities which may arise to discuss dementia more openly, it will lead to a greater appreciation and knowledge of the options available. It is hoped that this will help encourage individuals to access support and intervention services earlier and lead to a more timely referral into appropriate health channels. This will contribute to continued independent living and use of towns and local services, helping those living with dementia and their carers to continue to feel part of their community. In so doing, potentially help earlier diagnosis, receive timely treatment, help individuals to make informed choices on future decision making and prevent unnecessary deterioration in health that could create a need for increased care.

## PRACTICE UNDERTAKEN

The person and community is placed at the centre of the process; engaging with service users and their carers, encouraging participation in a baseline assessment. This will establish how communities are perceived, recording their experiences and explore how this changes over time. Following focused work within these communities to raise awareness of dementia and challenging any stigma associated with dementia; an additional survey will be undertaken with local residents and businesses to establish how their opinions and behaviours change over the course of the 3 year project. Key to this is, is delivery of the Alzheimer Society's dementia friends information sessions and increasing the number of dementia champions in the County; ensuring a sustainable way to continue the dementia friends work over time.

From a prevention perspective, this work is embracing the PANDA's scheme (Physical Activity, Networks, Diet and Diagnosis, Alcohol and Smoking), which addresses how encouraging healthy lifestyles can reduce the risk of developing dementia

## DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

*How can we work more effectively to make a difference to those living with dementia and those who support them*



## WHY?

In 2013 the number of people in Ceredigion aged over 65 with dementia (based on average prevalence) was 1340 (StatsWales 2013) and yet in 2015, just over a third of that number of people received a formal diagnosis. The difference between the number of people diagnosed and the number of people projected to have dementia indicates that a significant number of people with dementia have not been formally diagnosed. This supports the fact that at 37.2%, the Hywel Dda University Health Board region has the lowest diagnostic rate in Wales.

Life expectancy in Ceredigion is higher than the Wales average with both men and women having a greater life expectancy than Wales, 79.9 years for men and for women 83.9 years (StatWales, ONS, 2013). Owing to the increasing ageing population people are developing complex needs such as dementia, we recognise that this is and will continue to be an issue in Ceredigion.

There is anecdotal evidence to indicate that Welsh speakers are under represented at the diagnosis stage. This project can potentially help gain an understanding as to why there is perhaps a discrepancy with regards to the diagnosis rate for Welsh speakers in the County and whether the awareness raising / support / signposting opportunities will have an impact on the referrals being made into the Memory Clinic over the duration of the 3 year project.

This also serves an important role in the broader context of work ongoing in relation to dementia in the Hywel Dda region. Through partnership working, this can have the potential to help draw together intelligence; helping to identify what the barriers are to improving the local diagnosis rate and assisting in the development of service delivery on a much wider basis.



Working in partnership with organisations and communities fulfilling the aspirations of the :

Wellbeing of Future Generations Act  
and  
Social Services and Wellbeing Act

## RESULTS/OUTCOME

Having received funding from Cynnal Y Cardi (LEADER programme), this was formally recognized as a project in June 2016. A partnership has been created with Aberystwyth University, Hywel Dda University Health Board, Ceredigion County Council, Ceredigion's Association of Voluntary Organisations and Alzheimer's Society to enhance the work in both of the selected communities.



International Older People's Day 2016. Launching the dementia friendly community concept in Cardigan town.